

# Funding community-led place based practice

Insights and actions for funders and communities

---

## Project team



---

## Communities



We pay respect to the Traditional Custodians of all lands, past, present and future.

Photos courtesy of Logan Together

# Contents

<b>ten20 Foundation foreword</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>4</b>
Audience, focus and approach	6
Insights and observations	7
Putting insights and ideas into action	8
Taking the dialogue forward	9
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>10</b>
The challenge for community-led place-based practice	11
The funding question	12
The focus of this project and our approach	13
Project context	14
Case study communities	16
<b>Insights and observations</b>	<b>18</b>
Limited funding pool	20
Varied funder roles	22
Accountability and governance for the initiative's funds	24
Funder-initiative relationships	26
Cultural authority	27
<b>Putting insights and ideas into action</b>	<b>28</b>
Ready to use guidance materials	30
Creating learning opportunities and experiences	36
<b>Case studies</b>	<b>39</b>
Maranguka Justice Reinvestment	41
The Hive	50
Go Goldfields	58
Logan Together	66
Sanderson Alliance	74
Connecting Community for Kids	82
<b>Appendix: Participants</b>	<b>90</b>

# ten20 Foundation foreword

In 2012 the ten20 Foundation launched a 10-year place-based investment initiative committed to supporting communities to reduce child vulnerability and improving child health and well-being. Healthy early childhood development is critical to enabling a child to reach their full potential as individuals, family members and contributing citizens. Currently, there are large numbers of children across Australia at risk of poor developmental outcomes.

What drives better outcomes in early childhood development is well known. Young children need nurturing care and support to develop to their full potential. It takes supportive families, caregivers and services to provide this care; responsive to a child's social, cultural and geographic context. Belonging plays a critical role in this process. The question today is less about *what* is needed or *why*, but *how to make this change happen*.

As a legacy foundation committed to spending down its assets within a ten-year timespan, the ten20 Foundation focusses its philanthropy as a catalyst and enabler of systems innovation. To that end, ten20 has been funding community-led, place-based, initiatives concentrating on new ways of working to reduce early childhood vulnerability. The experience has led ten20 to develop 1) a clearer understanding of the skills, practices and investments that have been most helpful in supporting these types of community led change, and 2) an appreciation for the importance of pacing and

timing, given progress cannot happen at a pace that is out of sync with the individual, organisational or community learning and change capabilities.

One of the most challenging aspects of progressing community-led innovation is cultivating the funding ecosystem required to support the work and progress systems change. In Australia, funding support for the infrastructure, leadership and culture needed through this approach is limited, fragmented and short-term in nature. This places unrealistic demands on communities and can have unintended consequences on those supposedly benefiting from the work. Lack of funder-to-funder coordination can also burden communities with reporting and acquittal obligations. Notably, funding terms and requirements often stifle innovation and cultural leadership by stipulating required activities as part of commissioning arrangements. They can also reinforce the power of the funder, not community wisdom or partnership.

For this reason, ten20 commissioned and led a collaborative learning project to understand how to build and grow sustainable relationships between philanthropic funders and community-led, place-based initiatives. The approach leverages the lived experience of a small subset of philanthropic funders and community-led initiatives, influenced by thought leaders across the country. This paper is a synthesis of the output of that work. Its primary audience are the philanthropic funders and communities (in particular the backbone leaders) that engage in community led innovation. The report seeks to progress conversation and action amongst them in developing enabling relationships for sustainability and impact. The insights and tools offered may also be of relevance to new philanthropic funders considering entering this social investment space and to governments and systems influencers who shape the broader funder ecosystem.

A key learning to highlight for ten20 during this project was the critical need to ensure cultural authority, and more specifically, that the principles of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, are at the centre of all community-led collaborative activity. This issue was surfaced at ChangeFest 2018 and has been front-of-mind ever since. Indeed, it has been observed that too often, community-led change initiatives are developed, funded and delivered in isolation and without the involvement or consideration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, knowledge, voice and belonging.

If philanthropy truly accepts its role in the system including the current barriers to addressing entrenched disadvantage, transformative change will require dedicated effort by all of us, to develop new funding models and sources. It will require us to shift our mindsets and efforts to legitimise cultural authority for shared community goals. This knowledge paper reveals some elements of this challenge and offers some practical guides to start to explore how change can begin.



**Seri Renkin**

*Managing Director ten20*

The ten20 Foundation is grateful for, and respects the openness of the community backbone leaders, philanthropic funders and other practitioners who were committed to contributing their experiences to this project. Together, this group have formed a learning community around this critical element of practice. The group have unearthed insights key to progressing transformation and acknowledge the challenge of taking this from knowledge to action. They have committed to testing the themes and tools in their communities and practice and to regroup to discuss their findings. We invite you to join us in this exploration and to test out the guides in your own organisations. In this way, we hope that the learnings captured can stimulate and feed into a broader and ongoing inquiry into the role of funding in driving local, community-led change and systems innovation in Australia.



**Caroline Chernov**

*Executive Director ten20*

With particular thanks to:

- Pat Bowie, Population Change Project Adviser, LA, USA
- Karen Cieri, Sanderson Alliance, Darwin
- Matthew Cox, Logan Together, Logan
- Teya Dusseldorp and Margot Beach, Dusseldorp Forum
- Cher Gibellini and Gemma Rapson, Woodside Development Fund
- Sandra Hamilton, Go Goldfields, Maryborough
- Sarah Hopkins, Just Reinvest, Bourke
- Joan Meredith, Red Cross, NT
- Wendy Mason, Opportunity Child
- Clayton Noble, United Way
- Danielle Roderick, The Hive, Mt Druitt
- Liz Skelton and Kerry Graham, Collaboration For Impact
- Lorraine Thomas, Minderoo Foundation

# Executive summary



There is a growing movement of communities across Australia using place-based collaborative, long-term approaches to drive better outcomes for all. This work recognises the need for a new holistic approach to address the complex and persistent challenges now impacting many localities, such as child vulnerability, poverty and intergenerational disadvantage.

Despite significant progress, many of these collaborative initiatives face ongoing uncertainty, especially with respect to funding. As it stands, there is a limited pool of funders who have understanding, capacity, resource and/or appetite to engage in a way for the work to progress. Many initiatives are therefore struggling to maintain and/or grow sustainable funding streams, including with philanthropy.



# Audience, focus and approach

The report's primary audience are the philanthropic funders and communities (backbone leaders in particular) that engage in community led innovation. It seeks to progress conversation and action amongst them in developing enabling relationships for sustainability and impact. The insights and tools offered may also be of relevance to new philanthropic funders considering entering this social investment space and to governments and systems influencers who shape the broader funder ecosystem.

The aim of this project is to document and share insights on the question of how to build and grow sustainable relationships between philanthropic funders and community-led, place-based initiatives. It focuses on the sustainability of the backbone function, anchoring its inquiry on three questions:

1. How is funding for the backbone function currently structured and allocated to support community-led, place-based initiatives across Australia?
2. What helps or hinders funding to support local backbone practice?
3. What guidance and support will help funders and community-led place-based initiatives improve and grow the relationships required for creating funding sustainability of the backbone function?

Guided by the principles of a learning cycle, the project methodology involved developing an understanding of the local context to surface insights in the form of case studies and testing these with key players from across the ecosystem at ChangeFest 2018. The synthesis of this learning was then used for idea generation using co-design with the intent to legitimise and expand the views and perspectives of practice.

The project team was multi-disciplinary, including members from ten20 foundation, Social Ventures Australia's consulting group and The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI) working in a collaborative and integrated way alongside participating communities and system influencers.

This paper is a synthesis of the collective knowledge and learnings of all who participated in the project with ownership jointly held by all.



# Insights and observations

Through the project, five insights were identified as impacting on the funder-initiative relationship. Highlights of each insight are set out below.

## INSIGHT #1

### Limited funding pool

The current direct funding pool for backbone resources and activities is limited and concentrated. A small pool of non-profit organisations and philanthropic funders have invested to date alongside some promising but early stage Federal, State and Territory funding.

## INSIGHT #2

### Varied funder roles

There are different types of funder roles emerging to support the local work. Greater knowledge of these roles allows different types of funders to take up a range of complimentary positions, based on their governance structure and risk appetite, investment strategy and portfolio, as well as asset base.

## INSIGHT #3

### Accountability and Governance for the Initiative's Funds

Where and how an Initiative's funds are held impacts the progress of the community effort and its sustainability.

## INSIGHT #4

### Funder and initiative relationships

Building high functioning funder and initiative relationships is critical for systems change and sustainability yet complex, requiring the right environment to build trust, share power and act with agility.

## INSIGHT #5

### Cultural authority

Too often, community led initiatives are developed without the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. This must be addressed as an explicit focus of future work with funders, community and backbones, and as a key enabler to the systems change required for all Australian children and families to thrive.

Further detail on each of these insights with recommendations for how initiatives and funders can both action key issues is available in the chapter *Insights and observations*.

# Putting insights and ideas into action

Through the development of the case studies, we identified useful lessons about how funders and initiatives might work differently together to improve outcomes for community. We then considered how we best enable knowledge diffusion across communities and the emerging funder ecosystem so that great practices become widespread.

This is on the basis that translating new knowledge into practice is a common failure point. Notably, we formed a co-design group of funders and backbone leaders to check and refine what we learnt and to explore when and how they would use these insights.

As part of the process, the co-design informed the development of draft guidance materials that are ready for community led initiatives and funders to test and use:

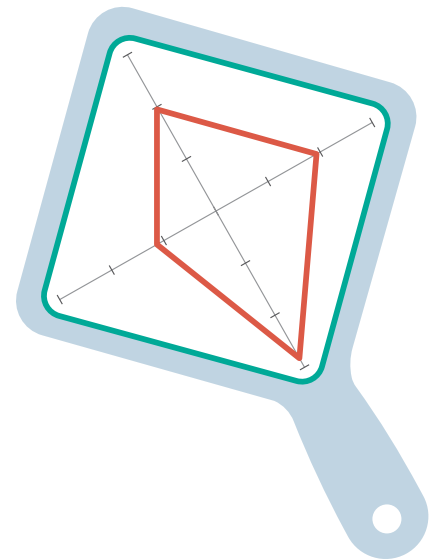
## The Funding Relationship Mirror

a simple tool for funders and initiatives to reflect on their existing relationships – to identify their strengths and where they need to grow. In particular, to better understand the role of power – what different types of power exist across the relationship? How is it used? How is it perceived by others? What impact does it have?

## The Funding Relationships Mind Stretcher

a list of conversation starter questions and though provoking videos and books that aim to stretch minds, provoke new ideas and provide new reference points.

In parallel, co-design participants also highlighted the challenge of taking new knowledge into practice and the reality that new knowledge alone is unlikely to convert to changes in behaviour. Many of the shifts required to build relationship foundations call for a fundamental reframe in how we think and act and challenge us to step out of traditional ways of working into the unknown. In light of this, the group recommended an immersive learning experience as the next step. This would provide an opportunity for funders and initiatives to come together in a community to explore the dimensions of funder relationships in a facilitated 'learn by doing' environment. Further material in the chapter *Putting Insights and Ideas into Action* could be used as input to developing content for such a learning experience.



*The Funding Relationship Mirror*

# Taking the dialogue forward

Through the course of the project, a learning community has formed in the coming together of six local community initiatives, a range of philanthropic funders alongside system intermediaries and influencers. The group have unearthed insights key to progressing transformation and acknowledge the challenge of taking this from knowledge to action.

They have committed to testing the themes and tools in their communities and practice and to regroup to discuss their findings. The report authors invite you to join this learning community in this exploration and to test out the insights and guides in your own organisations.

In this way, the authors hope that the learnings captured can stimulate and feed into a broader and ongoing inquiry into the role of funding in driving local, community led change and systems innovation in Australia.



# Introduction



# The challenge for community-led place-based practice

Communities across Australia face complex and persistent challenges including poverty and intergenerational disadvantage.<sup>1</sup> Four to six per cent of the population is classified as being in entrenched disadvantage, and there has been remarkable consistency over the last decade in the localities experiencing that disadvantage.<sup>2</sup> Few are more vulnerable to this issue than children and young people. In 2018, one in five children were at risk of poor developmental outcomes, and one in three in our most disadvantaged localities.<sup>3</sup> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were twice as likely to be developmentally vulnerable.

There is near universal agreement that the size, scale and complexity of this issue presents an unprecedented challenge in community development and public policy. There is also agreement that the current response targeting single issue areas in isolation from context will not drive the improvement in outcomes

needed across communities and that a fundamental system change in approach is required.

In this context, there is a growing movement of communities using place-based collaborative, long-term approaches to build thriving communities. These approaches are characterised by true collaboration across a defined geography as well as shared design, stewardship, and accountability for outcomes and impacts.<sup>4</sup>

Within this movement, many communities have adopted a specific place-based approach known as Collective Impact with 80 of these initiatives known to be underway in Australia in 2016.<sup>5</sup> Collective Impact is a framework to tackle deeply entrenched and complex social problems applying an innovative and structured approach to making collaboration work across government, business, philanthropy, non-profit organisations and community members to achieve significant and lasting change.

One distinguishing feature of Collective Impact from other collaborations or partnerships is the existence of a backbone function, with dedicated staff whose role is to coordinate the learning, change and decision-making process required to help all participating organisations, stakeholders and community members shift from acting alone to working together.

It is widely agreed that securing long-term, sustainable change takes many years and there is no agreed-upon or consistent timeframe that defines progress. Many scholars and practitioners relate to progress phases for systemic change that can involve iterative cycles of exploration, emergence, adaption, maturity and sustaining.<sup>6</sup>

1 Australian Institute of Family Studies (2010), *Place Based approaches to addressing disadvantage*

2 Committee for Economic Development of Australia (2015), *Addressing entrenched disadvantage*, Media Release; and Jesuit Social Services (2017) *Dropping Off the Edge 2015*, Overview

3 Australian Early Childhood Development Census (2018), *Findings from the AEDC*. Accessed at: <https://www.aedc.gov.au/schools/findings-from-the-aedc>

4 Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (Qld) and Department of Social Security (Cth), *Place-based evaluation framework – a guide to evaluating place-based approaches*, August 2018

5 Graham, K & Weaver, L (2016), *Engage for impact (presentation)*. Canberra: Department of Social Services.

6 Collaboration for Impact (2018) as referenced in Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors (Qld) and Department of Social Security (Cth), *Place-based evaluation framework – a guide to evaluating place-based approaches*, August 2018

# The funding question

Despite significant progress in innovative, community-led, place-based ways of working, many initiatives face ongoing uncertainty, especially with respect to funding. Most are supported with a combination of funds (and other resources) from philanthropy, non-profit organisations, community and government.

The current funding ecosystem plays a significant role helping or hindering the design, focus and progress of effort as it is embryonic and complex. The nature of the complex and long-term work is difficult to describe and evaluate and there is a limited pool of funders who have understanding, capacity, resource and/or appetite to engage in the emergent learning and practice needed for the work to progress. As a result, community initiatives are struggling to maintain and/or grow sustainable funding streams, including with philanthropy.

In addition the new field-building intermediaries required to help facilitate the local conditions and capabilities for this type of work, as well as build a new pipeline of skilled resources to meet the demands of local efforts, are only just emerging, and as they do they are also struggling for funding.

Further, there is little published Australian research on the role funders play in this work, particularly on how the commissioning relationship reaffirms the importance of community ownership, collaborative activity, cultural authority as well as sharing of power across a wider group. This knowledge gap presents a potential risk to the effectiveness of this work given the important role funders, especially philanthropy, play as an early catalyst to cultivate the preconditions for this work. It is in response to this funding challenge that ten20 has commissioned and led this project.

---

...there is little published Australian research on the role funders play in this work, particularly on how the commissioning relationship reaffirms the importance of community ownership, collaborative activity, cultural authority as well as sharing of power across a wider group.

---

# The focus of this project and our approach

The aim of this project is to document and share knowledge, experience and insights on the question of how to build and grow sustainable relationships between philanthropic funders and community-led, place-based initiatives (referred to going forward as the initiatives). It focuses on the sustainability of the backbone function, anchoring its inquiry on three questions:

1. How is funding for the backbone function currently structured and allocated to support community-led, place-based initiatives across Australia?
2. What helps or hinders funding to support local backbone practice?
3. What guidance and support will help funders and community-led place-based initiatives improve and grow the relationships required for creating funding sustainability of the backbone function?

Guided by the principles of a learning cycle, the project methodology has involved developing an understanding of the local context to surface insights and later testing these with key players from across the ecosystem. The synthesis of this learning was then used as the basis for idea generation using co-design.

The intent was to legitimise and expand the range of views and perspectives of what is required in practice.

The project team was multi-disciplinary, and included members from ten20 foundation, Social Ventures Australia's consulting group (SVA) and The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI). Although each organisation was charged with responsibility for leading different aspects of the work, the team worked in a highly collaborative and integrated way.

Our approach started with the development of six case studies of initiatives that broadly apply the collective impact framework to their work. These initiatives are at different stages of development and include small and large scale efforts. Emerging insights on the nature of the relationship between initiatives and philanthropic funders were tested and refined by the project team with a key group of practitioners and philanthropic funders at ChangeFest 2018. Co-design sessions were then formed with practitioners from the backbone of a number of the case study initiatives to further test the insights but most importantly to explore when and how these insights would be most useful and to develop

guidance to ensure the learnings could be translated into practice. In this way, the guidance and support materials developed through co-design built on the emerging challenges and enablers identified through the case studies and broader discussions undertaken through the co-design workshops.

This paper is therefore best characterised as a synthesis of the collective knowledge and learnings of all who participated in the project. The project team acknowledges and is grateful for the generosity of all participants whether through contributing to the development of case studies, providing feedback at ChangeFest 2018 and/or attending co-design sessions. Although the project team ultimately 'held the pen', ownership of this paper is jointly held by all who participated.

# Project context

This study has been completed at a time when considerable focus and attention is being directed towards how government and philanthropy across Australia can partner better with communities to support and accelerate the work and impact of community-led, place-based practice. This includes new funding and program initiatives being introduced by Federal and State Governments as well as increasing community attention and interest.

A highpoint of this community 'movement' was the ChangeFest 2018 place-based social change conference, which brought more than 500 people from across Australia together in Logan, Queensland to share learnings and insights about how to enable community-led innovation and change at the local level.

ChangeFest surfaced a fundamental challenge for Australia. Too often, community-led place-based initiatives are developed in isolation and without the involvement or consideration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, knowledge, voice and belonging. As a result, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants challenged all participants to recognise and involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in their efforts and work.<sup>7</sup>

This current project itself falls short of this standard. Although it includes a case study for the Maranguka Justice Reinvestment Project in Bourke (an Aboriginal-led place-based initiative) and Logan, where significant learning and re-framing has occurred, it is important to acknowledge at the outset that there has been an absence of relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, authority and participation in many of the initiatives. In this context, the forthcoming work and initiatives to build funding sustainability need to adopt a clear and explicit focus on working with, and alongside, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Further comment on this is set out in the chapters *Insights and Observations* and *Putting insights and ideas into action*.

---

...forthcoming work and initiatives to build funding sustainability need to adopt a clear and explicit focus on working with, and alongside, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

---

<sup>7</sup> ChangeFest 2018 Statements, accessible at [www.logantogether.org.au](http://www.logantogether.org.au)



ChangeFest 2018

# Case study communities

The case study communities include a range of regional and urban settings, stages of development, and funding partners. A brief overview of the initiatives is provided below, with further detail in the case studies themselves in the chapter ‘Putting insights and ideas into action’.

EST. 2013

## The Maranguka Justice Reinvestment project

An Aboriginal-led place-based model of justice reinvestment, based in Bourke, New South Wales. Its focus is on improving outcomes and creating better coordinated support for vulnerable families and children through the true empowerment of the local Aboriginal community. Bourke is a remote town located 800km north-west of Sydney, situated on the Darling River, and home to around 2,500 people. In 2013, the community became the first in Australia to adapt an American model known as ‘justice reinvestment’. Just Reinvest is auspiced through Aboriginal Legal Service NSW. The backbone employs 3.5 FTE.



EST. 2014

## The Hive

A network of people working in Mt Druitt, Sydney, to bring together the community, services, businesses, government, and philanthropy to address locally identified priorities. It uses the collective impact model. Mt Druitt is located to the west of Sydney’s CBD, is home to 60,000 residents and has one of the lowest SEIFA scores in NSW. The Hive was initiated by the ten20 Foundation, United Way Australia and NSW Family and Community Services, based on recognition that children in Mt Druitt have repeatedly poor outcomes across various domains of life. The Hive employs 3 FTE in the backbone, and 1.5 FTE through the ECEC project.



EST. 2014

## Go Goldfields

A collective impact initiative located in the Central Goldfields in Victoria, focused on working together to create positive outcomes for children, youth and families. Situated on Dja Dja Wurrung Country, Central Goldfields is a regional area with a population of about 13,000. Originally initiated by service providers, the initiative turned to a ‘bottom-up’ community driven approach when it adopted the collective impact model in 2015. Go Goldfield’s backbone sits within the local council and employs 2.1 FTE (soon to expand to 3.7 FTE).



EST. 2015

## Logan Together

A long term, whole of community campaign to create the best life opportunities for every child in Logan. Logan is between 15-50 km south of Brisbane's CBD, and is home to more than 310,000 people from more than 215 different cultures. Logan Together was conceived through 18 months of design work beginning in 2015 but built off years of community momentum. The backbone employs 12-15 staff (8 FTE), and is auspiced by Griffith University.



EST. 2015

## Sanderson Alliance

A collective impact initiative in Darwin. The initiative focuses on four suburbs in and around the Sanderson electorate – Wulagi, Anula, Malak and Karama – home to 14,298 people. Its purpose is to improve wellbeing for children and young people across the community through local and systemic change. The initiative began in 2009 and picked up speed when it secured funding from the ten20 foundation in 2016. It has since expanded its alliance partnerships and gained community traction. The Sanderson Alliance employs one person full time – the backbone leader.



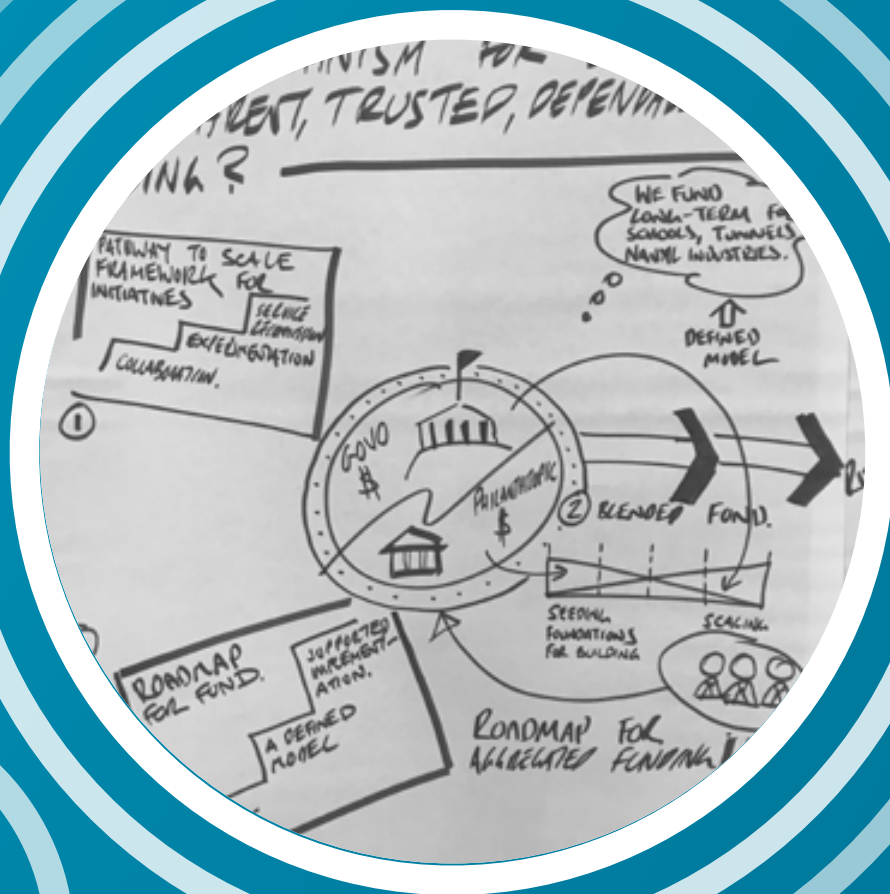
EST. 2015

## Connecting Community for Kids (CCK)

A community-based collective impact initiative designed to empower parents, children and professionals in Cockburn and Kwinana to drive change needed to improve childhood outcomes in those communities. Cockburn and Kwinana are two neighbouring cities on the coast of Western Australia, 15-25 km south-west of the city of Perth, and home to about 145,000 people. CCK was conceived by leaders from non-profit organisations and the State Government in 2014, before being tested and affirmed with the communities of Cockburn and Kwinana. The backbone is auspiced by Child Australia.



# Insights and observations



Across the project, we have identified five common themes impacting on the funder-initiative relationship. These themes help to categorise and understand the various experiences of initiatives to build a broad perspective on current activity, as well as where future efforts to improve the current environment might be focussed.

An outline of the key observations for each theme is included below with detailed insights and recommendations included in the following pages.

#### THEME 1

---

### Limited funding pool

The current direct funding pool for backbone resources and activities is limited and concentrated. A small pool of non-profit organisations and philanthropic funders have invested to date alongside some promising but early stage Federal, State and Territory government funding.

#### THEME 2

---

### Varied funder roles

There are different types of funder roles emerging to support the local work. Greater knowledge of these roles allows different types of funders to take up a range of complementary positions, based on their governance structure and risk appetite, investment strategy and portfolio, as well as asset base.

#### THEME 3

---

### Accountability and governance for the initiative's funds

Where and how an initiative's funds are held impacts the progress of the community effort and its sustainability.

#### THEME 4

---

### Funder and initiative relationships

Building high functioning funder and initiative relationships is critical for systems change and sustainability yet complex, requiring the right environment to build trust, share power and act with agility.

#### THEME 5

---

### Cultural authority

Too often community-led initiatives are developed without the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. This must be addressed as an explicit focus of future work with funders, community and backbones, and as a key enabler to the systems change required for all Australian children and families to thrive.

# Limited funding pool

### Observation

The current direct funding pool for backbone resources and activities is limited and concentrated. A small pool of non-profit organisations and philanthropic funders have invested to date alongside some promising but early stage Federal, State and Territory government funding.

### Recommendation

There is an urgent need to increase dedicated funding sources available to backbone functions, to ensure sustainability of high potential initiatives and the initiation of new initiatives where appropriate. In addition, new funding mechanisms such as dedicated pooled funds are encouraged to enable more efficient flows of funding to emerging backbones in high potential communities and to reduce duplication and inefficiencies.

### There is a limited pool of funders supporting community-led initiatives across Australia

There is only a small handful of philanthropic organisations and government agencies supporting the backbone functions of community-led initiatives across the country while the quantum of funding being provided by individual funders, and the number of initiatives they support also varies greatly.

With respect to philanthropy, there appears to be a very small number of philanthropic organisations managing a portfolio of place-based investments of sizable value where funds are dedicated to supporting backbone resources. Many other philanthropic and non-government organisations, however, are providing smaller one-off or in-kind contributions to specific backbone activities, often in communities where these funders have an existing interest and presence.

Local, State and Territory and Federal governments too are supporting initiatives across the country, albeit through adhoc arrangements and funding streams and with little strategic coordination across the funders. However, there are signs of increasing and more focused investment from government at all three levels. For example, the Federal Government has recently committed to fund ten place-based, community-led initiatives over a five-year period through the \$35 million Stronger Places, Stronger People program and supports initiatives through the Connected Beginnings program. A number of state governments have also committed to or expressed interest in similar schemes.<sup>8</sup>

8 ChangeFest 2018 Statements, accessible at [www.logantogether.org.au](http://www.logantogether.org.au) le, accessed at <https://www.dss.gov.au/families-and-children-programs-services/stronger-places-stronger-people>; Premier of Victoria (2018), *Community Partnerships program* press release, accessed at <https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/partnering-with-communities-for-better-services>.

---

## Initiatives generally have a small number of philanthropic and government funders

Most of the case study initiatives had no more than three funders, and some as few as one. Across these initiatives, however, funders and initiatives were brought together by a shared commitment to the specific geography, to the focus area (often early childhood), and to a place-based approach. Despite this commitment, many funders could only commit for shorter periods (~three years), creating an inherent tension for initiatives and the work itself, which by its nature is long term. One backbone leader noted that “even five years is not enough for the work at hand. It takes time to consult with community, build trust, get set-up, hire the right people. It took two years to get community alignment on priorities – by which point we were half way through our funding period. And we worry we’ll have done more harm than good if we wind down at the five-year point”.<sup>9</sup>

## This limited and concentrated funding pool creates significant risk for the sustainability of current initiatives and the ability of new communities to embark on such change efforts.

Given the limited size and concentration of the existing philanthropic and government funding pool, many new and established initiatives struggle to attract the required capital to resource a backbone. The experience of backbones in the case studies highlights that optimising the quantum and profile of funds to the stage of an initiative’s development is critical to enabling progress. Conversely, insufficient backbone resourcing stifles progress and threatens community trust and momentum. The current funding pool dynamics also place pressure on communities to build capacities around fundraising and sustainability – most often without the resources required to do so – and to manage differing funder expectations and learning requirements.

In this context, more attention at the system level to consider how philanthropic and government funders might engage in this work to ultimately increase the available funding for backbone functions is required. Developing clarity on the potential roles and partnership between philanthropy and government as well as new funding models is likely to be critical in this endeavour. In addition, there is a need to better understand how to determine what a good backbone looks like for the stage the community is at.

9 Interview with backbone staff from community case study

# Varied funder roles

### Observation

There are different types of funder roles emerging to support place-based initiatives. Greater knowledge of these roles allows different types of funders to take up a range of complementary positions, based on their governance structure and risk appetite, investment strategy and portfolio, as well as asset base.

### Recommendation

Funders work together to better understand their potential complementarity and how best to match their profile to community needs. Communities consider how to tailor their relationships with different funders based on their potential role.

Government and philanthropic funders play different roles in supporting backbones, informed by their governance structure, risk appetite, investment strategy and portfolio, as well as their asset base. These roles vary based on the state of engagement and maturity of the initiative, quantum of grants and the nature of funding contributions.

For instance, funders engage at different points in the maturity of the initiative. Some are early adopters, building a close relationship from early days and remaining with the initiative as it matures. Others prefer to support the establishment of an initiative but exit soon afterwards. Again, others wait until there is significant momentum, structure and established governance, process and capacity before offering support. The latter are likely to be government funders or more traditional philanthropic funders with a lower risk profile. Notably, some funders provide large tranches of funds in 3+ year blocks while others grant smaller, shorter term amounts.

We observe four types of funder roles that work to support the backbone function. Based on the case studies these roles were consistent across most of the communities.

**Lead Funder:** Lead funders have the risk appetite and adaptive strategy mindset to step in at the early stages of an initiative, supporting the emerging backbone, and build foundations for a long-term relationship. Rather than focusing contributions around dollars alone, lead funders offer time and capacities to support the initiative in accessing experts and networks, in convening and co-designing new ways of working and in leveraging their contributions to bring in other funders. These types of funders sit in the problems with the community. They help negotiate partnerships, coordinate and redeploy resources, and strengthen the capacity of community leaders to carry out complex, sustained initiatives. Lead funders typically spend more time on the ground with the backbone team and work hard to shift traditional power dynamics between funder and grantee to establish rhythms of shared power and decision making.

Lead funders may over time pass to other, larger funders who have the capacity to build-in funding sustainability. In this way, lead funders play a pivotal role, particularly in the early stages (first 3-5 years.)

---

**Support Funder:** Some funders enter alongside the Lead Funder at a point when the initiative has stabilised, and progress is being demonstrated. The Support Funder takes the advice of the Lead Funder as a due diligence source and seeks validation from them around the potential impact and sustainability of the initiative. Support funders often have a close working relationship with the Lead Funder so that information and knowledge is shared and understood. These funders will also work closely together to align touch points with community so as to reduce administrative burdens – for example working around developing shared acquittal processes.

**Core Capacity Funder:** Most initiatives that move beyond the early stage phase into some form of sustainability have been able to attract what may be called a Core Capacity Funder. This funder has the asset base to grant significant tranches of funds over a longer period to enable the initiative to build backbone capacity with resources and infrastructure. This is a critical funder role that does not always require deep hands on engagement. This role is typically taken by government or large philanthropic funders.

**Project Funder:** The final type of role observed relates to a funder who is interested in supporting a specific project within the initiative rather than core capacity across the backbone. It may be to fund particular infrastructure or resources for a specific capacity area such as data mining and IT or for story telling or community engagement and building of cultural authority.

All funder roles and types are legitimate and serve to build out the backbone function and sustainability of the initiative. These roles are complementary and provide the backbone with different types of supports – all of which are of value. A recent evaluation of the Logan Together initiative highlights the complementary value of different funder profiles. “The role philanthropists play in a movement like Logan Together is one of funding projects which seem out-of-the-box: there’s an element of “let’s try something new and give something a shot” – whereas, rightly, governments fund things that make good policy sense. Support both from governments and philanthropic organisations gives a movement the chance to work towards a good policy goal, as well as exploring new ways to get there”.<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, community leaders speak of the challenge of educating funders away from traditional notions that there are only certain types of funders that invest in community led innovation and that there are indeed many opportunities for funder engagement that can match their needs and aspirations. They observe that optimizing the mix of funders is important to enabling progress. Large core funding commitments are important for scaling the work, but smaller contributions from engaged funders offering strategic support can help overcome challenges and may help leverage additional funding.

Communities that have not secured a mix of funders have observed heightened risk around sustainability and constraints in building out a backbone that can ride through changes in the community and funding landscape. Better understanding different funder roles may support communities in “managing up” in their relationship with funders by helping them tailor their interactions to better meet funder needs.

---

10 “The Origins of Logan Together”, Nov 2018, [www.logantogether.org.au](http://www.logantogether.org.au)

# Accountability and governance for the initiative's funds

### Observation

Where and how the collaborative's funds are held impacts the progress of the community effort and its sustainability.

### Recommendation

A peak or coordinating body (e.g. Philanthropy Australia or Opportunity Child) progress inquiry into the role of the backbone and its auspicing host, including different model options, pros and cons and key success factors to build equity, trust, agility and accountability into the relationship.

When an initiative first receives funds, the backbone will often arrange for a host organisation to auspice the initiative and hold the money. Many communities, including those in the case studies, find that there is a lack of awareness and understanding of options around the accountability and governance mechanisms for holding funds as well as the supporting structures.

Case study initiatives observed that the model they used plays a significant role in the initiative's progress and sustainability. Some communities have accountability mechanisms that enable rapid response and release of funds for new resources or work effort. For others, funding arrangements are more complex and cumbersome and constrain rapid course correction and adaption or the ability to move on a new potential opportunity. Funding structures were also observed to impact on the initiative's sustainability.

Trust between the initiative and funders can be eroded when funders perceive that accountability and governance of held funds are not well managed or if funds are not being allocated in an appropriate and timely manner to the initiative. This can jeopardise future funding rounds thereby undermining the broader sustainability of the effort. Funding structures can also impact the range of funder types the initiative can attract. For example, those community trusts without DGR1 status are unable to access the PAF market, resulting in some initiatives exploring new options around how their funds are held. Logan Together Community Trust is an example of this as they continue to explore changing the structure of the community trust to have DGR1 status.

It is recommended that practice supports be developed for communities to help them navigate through this theme of accountability, governance and structures for managing initiative funds.

In the case study initiatives, three different models were observed.

Model	A: Local council	B: Community trust and university	C: NGO partner
Example	Go Goldfields	Logan Together	Maranguka Justice Reinvestment Project
Description	GG is auspiced by the local council, which retains control over backbone budgeting and staffing.	Logan has a three-party arrangement with Logan Together, a university and community trust, whereby the backbone is auspiced by the university, and funds are held in the community trust.	Funds at MJRP are auspiced through an Aboriginal Legal Service.
Pro/Con	This arrangement provides legitimacy for the backbone and ensures access to this level of government. Nevertheless, administrative decision making is retained by council so funding and decisions can be slow. Moreover, the structure was problematic when the council went into administration, creating concern for funders.	The arrangement leverages assets in the community and ensures minimal overheads for the initiative. However, with a higher quantum of funds, this structure is deemed risky by some funders. The initiative is therefore now considering becoming its own incorporated entity.	The auspicing organisation is Aboriginal-led and mission aligned and ensures minimal overheads for the initiative. However, as the initiative has increased in size, funders have requested a simpler structure. The initiative is therefore now exploring options to become its own incorporated entity.

# Funder–initiative relationships

### Observation

Building high functioning funder-collaborative relationships is critical for systems change and sustainability yet complex, requiring the right environment to build *trust*, share power and act with agility.

### Recommendation

Initiatives and funders need to dedicate time and effort to build trust, rethink decision making structures to enable *shared power* and design processes that have *agility* and collective intent to adapt to learning.

Core to systems change effort is the building of new, equitable relationships. The relational dynamic between funder and initiatives sits at the core of the mindset and emphasises the move away from transactional funding to relationship funding where the funder sits at the table alongside other community stakeholders. A high number of stakeholders participating in the project noted that trust between funders and initiatives was perhaps the most important driver of funding sustainability.

This includes trust at the personal level between funder/s and initiative personnel as well as trust at the operational level, whereby the funder/s fundamentally trust the initiative is progressing a roadmap that will help to drive large scale change.

Building new forms of relationships is challenging for both the community and the funder and warrants further interrogation around how this is best done. This was a key recommendation from the co-design group and as such is further explored in this report's next chapter.



Funder workshop.

# Cultural authority

## Observation

Too often community led initiatives are developed without the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. This must be addressed as an explicit focus of future work with funders, community and backbones, and as a key enabler to the systems change required for all Australian children and families to thrive.

## Recommendation

Embed the principles of the Uluru Statement in all community-led collaborative activity undertaken by the backbone function as well as in all funder practice.

Cultural authority frameworks and processes must be embedded in all parts of the initiatives and in funder organisations to ensure design and investment is enduringly community-shaped, community-led and community-determined. This may involve interrogation around questions such as:

- What does it mean if we see communities as the custodians of local knowledge, lived experience, and wisdom to most appropriately guide place-based change and in some cases the nurturing of networks across local and neighbouring communities? How is this reflected in the way current community initiatives are working around governance, decision making etc?
- Do the communities and funders embody the spirit of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and that of bonded common human decency through:
  - i. Voice – amplifying the voice and leadership of people and their communities to be heard and respected.
  - ii. Truth-telling – uplifting and listening to the truth of shared histories in Australian communities and celebrating and preserving that truth.

iii. Agreement-making – consensus-building with beneficiaries about how community-led change happens in Australian communities.

iv. Community leading – communities do the work they can or choose government and other partners by invitation.

- Resourcing – preservation of long-term budgets and means by which longitudinal change can be sustained.

We know that the role funders play directly creates incentives that drive behaviours that can help or hinder cultural authority and power sharing. How funders can further explore their practice in this area is covered in the next chapter “Putting insight and ideas into action”.

# Putting insights and ideas into action



Through the development of the case studies and project, we learnt many useful lessons about how funders and initiatives alike might work together differently to improve outcomes for community. But having codified these lessons from real-life practice, we asked how do we best enable knowledge diffusion across communities and the emerging funder ecosystem so that great practices become widespread?

Translating new knowledge into practice is a common failure point in projects like these<sup>11</sup>. To reduce the chances of making the same mistake we formed a co-design group of funders and backbone leaders, facilitated by The Australian Centre for Social Innovation, to check and refine what we learnt and to explore when and how they would use these insights, all the time learning along the journey. Together the co-design group named why this work matters, explored what makes 'great guidance', tested and gave feedback on drafts of guidance materials and agreed what we should do now and what next.

The first part of this section outlines draft guidance materials ready for community-led initiatives and funders to test and use:

- **The Funding Relationship**

**Mirror:** a simple tool for funders and initiatives to reflect on their existing relationships – to identify their strengths and where they need to grow. In particular, to better understand the role of power – what different types of power exist across the relationship? How is it used? How is it perceived by others? What impact does it have?

- **The Funding Relationships Mind**

**Stretcher:** a list of conversation starter questions and thought provoking videos and books that aim to stretch minds, provoke new ideas and provide new reference points.

The second part considers a more ambitious and long-term prospect to create learning opportunities and experiences for funders and initiatives working together.

11 <http://www.internationalfuturesforum.com/social-learning>

# Ready to use guidance materials

## The Funding Relationship Mirror

Reflecting on your practice is key to getting better at what you do. But reflecting on something as intangible as a relationship can be hard. This mirror makes your Funding Relationship visible, so you know where you are strong, and where there are opportunities for your relationship to grow.

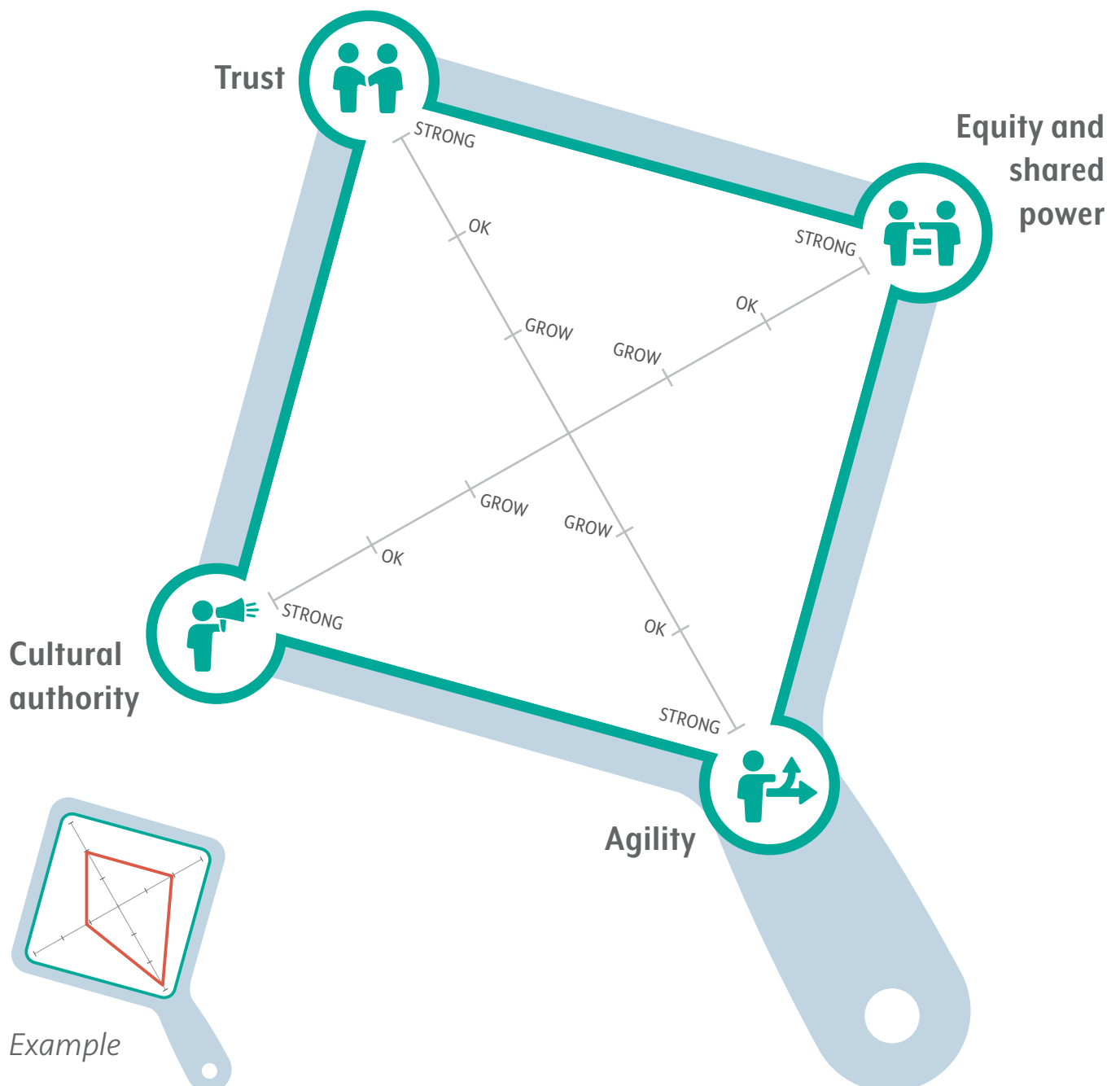
You can use this tool alone, with your team, or with your funder-initiative partnership. Work through the elements and identify where your relationships are **Strong**, where they are **OK** and where there is **Room to Grow**. This mirror is a *conversation starter* - it's up to you, your team and your funding partnership to work out what to do with your reflection. If you are short on ideas try the Relationship Mind Stretcher.

When using the mirror, you may want to consider your reflections and how they may be similar or different to your partner's reflections on the relationship (where are their potential areas of disconnect, why and how can they be addressed?)

# The Funding Relationship Mirror

## How to use this tool

Use the statements on the following pages to help you reflect on where you are *strong*, *ok* and where you need to *grow*. Mark your shape on the mirror below.



## Trust



1. We understand each other's values and what has shaped them **GROW OK STRONG**
2. We are aligned on the outcomes, the collaborative aims to achieve, the timeline and approach **GROW OK STRONG**
3. We spend good time together in community to listen, observe, learn and actively engage **GROW OK STRONG**
4. We learn together and openly share information, including challenges **GROW OK STRONG**
5. We are open and prepare to take risks with the collaborative **GROW OK STRONG**
6. We both deliver on the commitments we make to each other **GROW OK STRONG**
7. Our community collaborative understands:
  - the funder role we play in their change effort **GROW OK STRONG**
  - our intent to transition power to community, responding to its needs rather than imposing solutions **GROW OK STRONG**
  - our willingness to have new conversations and work in new ways **GROW OK STRONG**

## Agility



1. Our Board mindsets and governance frameworks allow for agility and adaption **GROW OK STRONG**
2. Funding agreements allow for adaption around timing, amounts and areas for allocation **GROW OK STRONG**
3. Funds for the collaborative are held and overseen by clear and enabling governance and decision-making structures that allow for agility and accountability **GROW OK STRONG**

## Equity and shared power



1. We openly discuss and work toward shared equity and power:
  - the different types of power in the relationship are openly acknowledged (e.g. power to decide, information power, expertise power) **GROW OK STRONG**
  - helpful and unhelpful uses of power are understood from other's perspectives (we challenge how existing systems and practices reinforce traditional power dynamics that constrain community voices) **GROW OK STRONG**
  - steps are taken to better balance power (e.g. use of accessible language, shifting who informs and makes decisions) **GROW OK STRONG**
2. We seek out and support local community-led strategies that build racial, ethnic and gender equity **GROW OK STRONG**
3. We convene and build strong networks and ensure community has access to their expertise, perspectives and influence **GROW OK STRONG**
4. We align with other funders around reporting and effort to ensure community needs are best met **GROW OK STRONG**
5. Community defines progress markers rather than funders **GROW OK STRONG**
6. We build incentives for collective and collaborative approaches at every stage **GROW OK STRONG**
7. We share all new knowledge for all to gain – not just a few for themselves **GROW OK STRONG**
8. We have an embedded learning practice which facilitates our growing awareness of our own power, how we use it and understand how it is perceived **GROW OK STRONG**

## Cultural authority



1. We challenge how our existing systems and practices may be reinforcing marginalisation of First Australian voices, perspectives and lived experience and explore how to decolonise existing structures and ways of doing things **GROW OK STRONG**
2. We amplify the leadership of First Australian peoples to be heard and integrated into decision making **GROW OK STRONG**
3. We listen and uplift the truth of shared histories in community, celebrating and preserving that truth **GROW OK STRONG**
4. Communities are empowered to choose government and partners by invitation **GROW OK STRONG**
5. Data sovereignty and cultural IP are respected **GROW OK STRONG**
6. Funders and backbone members have earned the trust and respect of First Australian community leaders **GROW OK STRONG**
7. Timelines are flexible and can move at the speed of community and account for cultural business **GROW OK STRONG**

Inspired by ChangeFest 2018 Statement and TACSI's [principles for self-determination](#).

# Funding Relationships Mind Stretcher

These conversation starter questions and thought-provoking articles, books and videos can help funders and initiatives explore some of the core concepts that enable great relationships. This guide is about stretching your thinking by exposing yourself to unusual and sometimes challenging perspectives – in order to improve your own mindsets and practices.

Working individually, with your team, or as a funder-collaborative partnership discuss the conversation starters. If you're working individually you may want to write down your answers so you can have a conversation with yourself.

Work your way through the texts and videos and then reflect again on the questions as you learn more. Does your perspective change?

## Trust



### Conversation starters

### Read, watch and listen

What does trust mean to you?	<a href="#">The Honest Truth About Dishonesty: How We Lie to Everyone - Especially Ourselves (book)</a> – Dan Ariely
How do you embody trust in your behaviours with funders/grantees?	<a href="#">Trust Based Philanthropy (paper)</a> – Whitman Institute
What does true alignment look and feel like?	<a href="#">Essential Skills Needed in the Role of a Relational Funder and Strategic Investor (article)</a> – Tracey Robertson, Tamarak Institute
What's the language you use to describe your funder/initiative when they are not in the room? Why is that?	<a href="#">At the Speed of Trust (article)</a> – Cara Priestley
What could you do to build trust?	<a href="#">Collective Impact in Neighborhood Revitalization (article)</a> – James Capraro
	<a href="#">The Speed of Trust: The One Thing That Changes Everything (book, videos)</a> – Covey, Stephen M., et al

## Agility



### Conversation starters

### Read, watch and listen

What does it mean to you to be agile?	<a href="#">Learning for Funders in Enabling Systems Change Pg.39 (report)</a> – Lankelly Chase
What gets in the way of agility in funding?	<a href="#">How Adaptive Strategy Is Adapting (article)</a> – Dana O'Donovan, Gabriel Kasper, & Nicole L. Dubbs
How do the social norms of your funding relationships encourage adaptability or not?	<a href="#">Unpacking Relational Contracting (report)</a> – University of Tennessee. (Written for a commercial context but does contain useful introduction to the principles and examples for writing relational contracts, and how to embed social norms in contracts.)
How do your written agreements encourage adaptability or not?	
What could you do to improve agility in your funding relationships?	

## Equity and shared power



### Conversation starters

### Read, watch and listen

When was the last time you felt powerless?

[Excerpt from Privilege, Power and Difference \(article\)](#) – Allan G Johnson

When was the last time you felt powerful?

[Complex Systems Change Starts with Those Who Use the Systems \(article\)](#)  
– Madeleine Clarke & John Healy

What do you love about having power?

[Justice Funders Extractive - Regenerative Philanthropy spectrum \(article\)](#) (USA)

When was the last time you gave away your power (deliberately or otherwise)?

[Philanthropy will not save us \(article\)](#) – Rodney Foxworth (USA)

When was the last time you usurped someone else's power?

[Charity is nice, Philanthropy is a Façade \(article\)](#) – Sammy Kayes (USA)

In what situations do you not trust yourself with too much power?

[Shifting the Powerplay in Co-design \(article\)](#) – Lauren Weinstein

What are your privileges and powers?

[Five Forms of Power \(article\)](#) – French & Raven

How does that play out with the communities/community members you work with?

[Design Education's Big Gap: Understanding the Role of Power \(article\)](#) – George Aye

[Power: A Users Guide. Julie Diamond: Belly Song Press. Santa Fe. New Mexico. 2016 \(book\)](#)

[Power, rank & authority. Pg. 107 – 124. The Australian Leadership Paradox, What it takes to lead in the lucky country. Aigner. G; Skelton. L. Allen & Unwin. 2013 \(book\)](#)

## Cultural authority



### Conversation starters

### Read, watch and listen

How are you putting decision making in the hands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?

[Decolonizing Wealth Newsletter](#)

What is your organisation's role in perpetuating disadvantage for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?

[Changefest Statement \(paper\)](#)

["So, what DO Indigenous people want?" and "What can I Do?" \(article\)](#)  
– Frank Hytten and Clare Land

How do the voices, perspectives, and lived experiences of historically underrepresented people influence your funding decisions?

[White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack \(paper\)](#) – Peggy McIntosh (USA)

[Decolonizing Wealth \(article\)](#) – Edgar Villanueva, (USA)

[Lost Conversations finding new ways for black and white Australians to lead together \(article\)](#)

What could you do to improve your cultural intelligence?

[The Colour of Fear \(video\)](#) – Lee Mun (USA)

[Educate yourself, then educate the people \(video\)](#) – Gary Foley

[Advice for pro-Indigenous white activists in Australia \(video\)](#) – Gary Foley

[Deconstructing White Privilege \(video\)](#) – Dr. Robin DiAngelo

[Being nice is not going to end racism \(video\)](#)

[Seeing White Fragility \(video\)](#) – RISE District

# Creating learning opportunities and experiences

The co-design participants all highlighted the challenge of taking new knowledge into practice and the reality that new knowledge alone is unlikely to convert to changes in behaviour. Many of the shifts required to build relationship foundations call for a fundamental reframe in how we think and act and challenge us to step out of traditional ways of working into the unknown.

The group recommended an immersive learning experience as the next step. This would provide an opportunity for funders and initiatives to come together in a community to explore the dimensions of funder relationships in a facilitated 'learn by doing' environment.

It was proposed that such a learning experience explore practice change along three key dimensions:

1. **Mindset change:** The mental models and beliefs that would enable stronger relationships.
2. **Skills development:** The know-how and expertise needed to build and nurture strong relationships.
3. **Process change:** The sequences in which mindsets and skillsets are put into practice, often with the support of additional tools and frameworks.

The following capability framework for funders could be used as input to developing content for such a learning experience.

---

## Mindsets

The mental models and beliefs that would enable stronger relationships.

### Relationships are required to navigate complexity

Funders see relationships as fundamental to navigating complexity and creating outcomes.

### Power needs to be balanced

Funders see their own power and its potential for good and misuse.

### Community are the experts

Funders see community as the experts in their own lives.

### Further self-determination

Funders see furthering the self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres strait Islander people as fundamental to creating place-based change.

### Work systemically

Funders see the value of adaptive practice.

---

## Skillsets

The know-how and expertise needed to build and nurture strong relationships.

### Communicating with clarity

Funders can phrase communications and agreements in plain language that is easily understood by communities.

### Making relational agreements

Funders can have conversations with initiatives to develop appropriate social norms in a relationship

Funders can shape written agreements to support the building of relationships and agility.

### Having difficult conversations

Funders can have difficult conversations with initiatives in ways that enhance rather than destroy relationships.

### Acting with Cultural intelligence

Funders are able identify their own privilege and racism.

Funders are equipped to act with cultural integrity.

### Enabling community-led decision making

Funders can identify different kinds of community-led decision making and their supporting conditions.

### Understanding place-based work

Funders can identify different kinds of place-based work, their supporting conditions and common challenges related to funding.

### Acknowledging and balancing power

Funders can enact practical strategies that can enable the acknowledgement and balancing of power in common situations.

### Reflective practice

Funders can reflect on the strong and weak aspects of their own practice, individually and as part of a group.

---

## Processes

The sequences in which mindsets and skillsets are put into practice, often with the support of additional tools and frameworks.

### Identifying high potential relationships

Funders can identify initiatives with a potential for a strong relationship.

### Building a new relationship

Funders can initiate new relationships in a way that sets them up for the future.

### Maintaining and improving existing relationship

Funders can enact a process for ongoing relationship improvement.

### When relationships go wrong

Funders can plan for making constructive contributions when things go wrong.

### Exiting relationships

Funders can enact strategies that enable a positive exit from funding.

### Reflecting and getting better at relationships over time

Funders can put in place a routine to reflect on their own practice with respect to relationships.



In thinking about creating a learning experience for funders we need to consider what is desirable and feasible for funders, and what type of experiences will create and sustain a shift in behaviour.

The answer to this will vary dependent on the type of funder and their current mindsets, skillsets and processes. More conventional, arms-length and grant focussed funders may have simpler relationships with initiatives with more limited interaction. Philanthropists that see themselves as 'catalytic'<sup>12</sup> and work alongside grantees have more opportunities to build relationships, more to gain from building their relationship capabilities and more opportunities to inadvertently misuse power. Any learning experience should be mindful of these different funder needs and expectations and tailor content accordingly.

12 [https://ssir.org/articles/entry/catalytic\\_philanthropy](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/catalytic_philanthropy)

# Case studies



# Six case studies examining the funding of place-based practice at the local level to enable funders and initiatives to build funding sustainability.

The case studies examine place-based initiatives from across Australia. The initiatives are at different stages of development. They include small- and large-scale ventures.

SVA Consulting led the development of the case studies, drawing on insights gathered through interviews with backbone organisations and funders as well as pre-existing reports and materials regarding the work and funding of each initiative. Four initiatives were selected that currently receive funding and support from the ten20 Foundation. The two others were selected to help develop a broader understanding of funding place-based practice in Australia.

Each case study gives consideration of funding partnerships and activities across three distinct elements: **the partnership profile** (who is involved in the partnership and what the structure of partnership looks like), **the partnership foundations** (why the partners are involved in funding and leading place-based practice) and the **relationship dynamics** (how the relationship and relationship dynamics between partners plays out).

Together, these elements create the conditions to support high functioning funder-initiative partnerships for supporting place-based practice. They help funders and initiatives alike to navigate the unique challenges faced by funding and leading this work, including the fact the intended changes are typically only observable in the long-term. They are likely to represent the overall funder-initiative relationship, inclusive of all funders, but will also help to inform perspectives on individual funder-initiative relationships.

## CASE STUDY #1

# Maranguka Justice Reinvestment



 Bourke, New South Wales

Maranguka Justice Reinvestment is an Aboriginal-led place-based model of justice reinvestment, based in Bourke, New South Wales. It takes its name from the Ngemba language word Maranguka, meaning ‘caring for others’.

Its focus is on “improving outcomes and creating better coordinated support for vulnerable families and children through the true empowerment of the local Aboriginal community”.

In 2013, the community became the first in Australia to adapt and develop the model known as ‘justice reinvestment’, that was being explored by Just Reinvest NSW. The justice reinvestment approach aims to demonstrate that sustainable outcomes and savings can be achieved through redirecting funding from crisis response, adult prison and youth detention.

The initiative is funded by the Dusseldorp Forum, the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, St Vincent de Paul, The CAGES Foundation, Matana, the Cameron Foundation, Uniting, the Bill and Patricia Ritchie Foundation, with contributions from the New South Wales and Federal Governments and in-kind support from KPMG, Lend Lease, Gilbert and Tobin and the Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT. Just Reinvest is auspiced through Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT.

## About Maranguka Justice Reinvestment

Bourke is a remote town located 800 kilometres northwest of Sydney, situated on the Darling River, and home to around 2,600 people. The town’s location forms part of a traditional boundary area for the Ngemba, Murrawarri, Budgiti and Barkinji Tribal Groups, and about a

third of Bourke’s population identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Like other remote communities in Australia, Bourke experiences a range of complex social issues including high levels of family and community violence and low education levels. When the project

was first floated in 2013, Bourke topped most of the crime statistics across New South Wales and had higher crime rates per capita than any country in the world.<sup>13</sup> The circumstances were particularly consequential for children, almost one in two of whom were assessed as

<sup>13</sup> Sydney Morning Herald (2013), *Bourke tops list more dangerous than any country in the world*. Accessed: <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/bourke-tops-list-more-dangerous-than-any-country-in-the-world-20130201-2dq3y.html>

developmentally vulnerable in 2012.<sup>14</sup> To support the community through these challenges, a complicated web of social services had emerged over time, characterised by service system gaps and overlaps, and a lack of coordination. Consecutive government reports identified this as a problem requiring urgent attention.<sup>15</sup>

In this context, from 2007 a coalition of community members emerged to strengthen service delivery and transform community outcomes. This began through the Bourke community's collaboration with the NSW Ombudsman, on ways to improve the delivery of community services.<sup>16</sup> Between 2007 and 2013, this evolved into a more organised whole of community agenda, called *Maranguka*.

Key to Maranguka's priorities was reducing Aboriginal young people's high rates of involvement with the criminal justice system in Bourke. This was well aligned with the goals of the justice reinvestment model which had recently established a presence in Australia. In 2012, Aboriginal leaders approached Just Reinvest NSW to develop a proposal for implementing Justice Reinvestment in Bourke. In 2013, the Maranguka Proposal was shared with key stakeholders including philanthropy and the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet and Aboriginal Affairs NSW and was successful in obtaining philanthropic support.

Today, the *Maranguka Justice Reinvestment Project* (referred to hereafter as Maranguka JR) enjoys a high level of community engagement and has made significant progress. To achieve its goal of reducing young people's involvement in the criminal justice system, the initiative is focused on three areas:

- 1 Early childhood
- 2 Young people (8 to 18-year-olds)
- 3 The role of men in community

A recent impact assessment by KPMG found "impact approximately five times greater than the operational costs [of Maranguka JR] in 2017"<sup>17</sup>. However, there is still a way to go to achieve the transformational change that Bourke's community is seeking.

## The justice reinvestment model, and Just Reinvest NSW

- Justice reinvestment is a model popularised in the United States. It is a data-driven, place-based approach to improve public safety, reduce corrections and criminal justice spending, and reinvest savings in strategies that can reduce crime and strengthen communities.
- Just Reinvest NSW formed in 2012 to build awareness about the justice reinvestment model in Australia, and why it should be adopted by the NSW government. It became an incorporated member-based organisation in 2013, auspiced by the Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT
- In 2013, Just Reinvest NSW began working with the Bourke community on the first major justice reinvestment trial in Australia – Maranguka Justice Reinvestment.

<sup>14</sup> Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data, Bourke, NSW < Percentage of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Service in New South Wales (November 2008), *Report of the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Service in NSW, Volume 1*, 257, 7.281; and the NSW Ombudsman (December 2010), *Inquiry into service provision to the Bourke and Brewarrina communities*

<sup>16</sup> Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services, *Ibid*.

<sup>17</sup> KPMG (2016), *Unlocking the future: Maranguka Justice Reinvestment Project in Bourke, Preliminary Assessment*; and interviews with Sarah Hopkins, Just Reinvest NSW, undertaken for this project in 2018.

## Timeline of events

### 2007–2012

- In 2007, the Bourke community began collaborating with the NSW Ombudsman to determine how service delivery could be strengthened.
- An initial Maranguka concept was proposed in 2011.
- In late 2012, Aboriginal leaders approached Just Reinvest NSW to develop a proposal for implementing Justice Reinvestment in Bourke.
- In 2013 a full proposal was endorsed and shared with the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet and Aboriginal Affairs NSW.

### 2013–present

- In 2013, Justice Reinvest NSW began working with Bourke on the first major justice reinvestment trial in Australia.
- In 2014, a set of justice circuit breakers were developed to bring about immediate change in the way young people interact with the criminal justice system. The initiative also received substantial multi-year funding for the work from the Dusseldorp Forum and the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation (VFFF).
- St Vincent de Paul committed ongoing funding for a backbone support role.
- Data is collected and presented in a life-course snapshot. The snapshot is the basis for community data conversations.
- In 2015, the Bourke Tribal Council develops the strategy 'Growing Our Kids Up Safe Smart and Strong'. Strategic working groups are established, and community projects are initiated.
- In 2016, CAGES Foundation commits ongoing funding for a role in the backbone team.
- Through 2016 and 2017, a number of projects were established to address community needs identified through Maranguka Justice Reinvestment, including Maranguka daily check-ins, weekly inter-agency meetings, Men of Bourke Healing and Connection to Country sessions, the Maranguka youth support model, Operation Solidarity and 3-year-old health and development checks.

Source: KPMG (2016), Unlocking the future: Maranguka Justice Reinvestment Project in Bourke, Preliminary Assessment; and interviews with Sarah Hopkins, Just Reinvest NSW, undertaken for this project in 2018.

## The initiative and funder relationship

Maranguka JR represents a large collective impact project, and the first initiative in Australia to utilise a justice reinvestment approach. It has progressed a sizable body of work across the community, over which time there has been an improvement in the community's social outcomes.

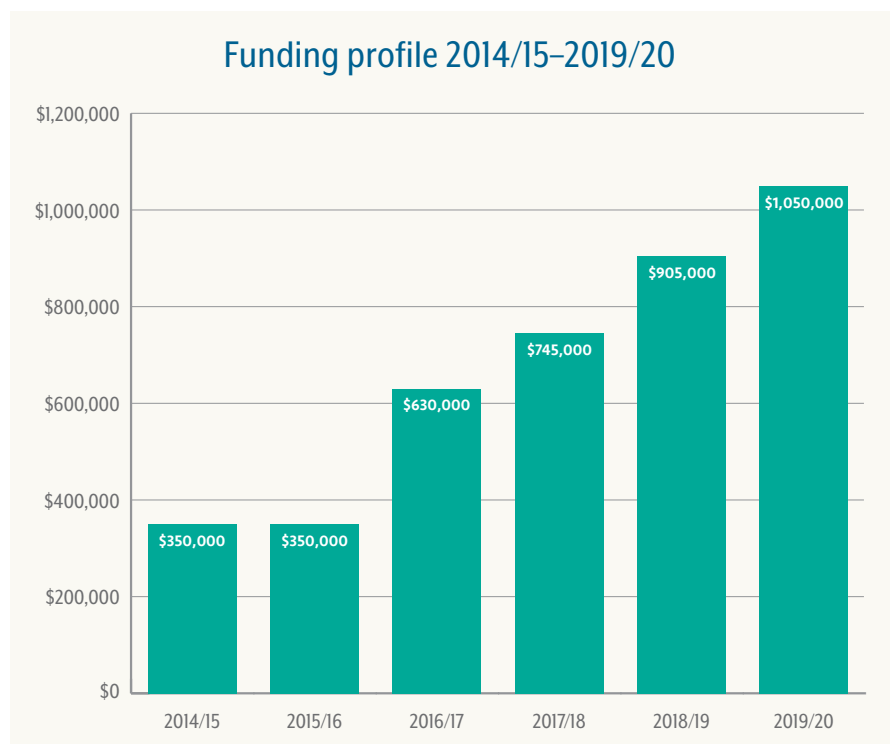
But the work has not been without its challenges. The strength of the backbone's relationships with funders has played an important role in enabling the initiative both to attract more funding, and to overcome hurdles and progress the work.

While funding for the initiative is secured for the next five years through joint Federal (5 years) and State (1 year) funding, there remains a question as to whether existing funders will stay committed over an extended period of time.

### Backbone funding profile

As illustrated in the funding breakdown on the next page, Maranguka JR has received significant funds from philanthropy, non-profits, and to a lesser extent government to support its work since 2014. The initiative's funding has ranged from \$300,000 to \$800,000 per annum. It currently receives \$800,000 (2018-19) and is seeking commitments from funders for this to increase to \$1,000,000 a year over the next three to five years.

The initiative describes there having been three waves of funding over its lifetime, throughout which it has steadily grown the number of funders committed to the work. The first supported the establishment phase from 2014 to 2016, the second supported implementation from 2016-2019, and the current wave is supporting the scaling and ongoing work of the initiative.



**“Philanthropy have allowed us the time and flexibility to work at the community’s pace. It would have been harder to do that with government.”**

– Just Reinvest NSW, 2018

## Backbone funding profile

### Funding partners

- Wide range of committed funders, drawing from state and federal government, and philanthropy
- Around \$800,000 in operational costs in 2018-19, to expand to ~\$1 million p.a. for the next three to five years

### Type of backbone funding

- Varied length of funding commitments, but generally multi-year (up to 5 years)
- Predominantly a flexible funding structure, with some additional targeted funding
- Largest quantum of funding from philanthropy to shift to government in 2019

### Backbone accountability and governance

- Backbone auspiced by Aboriginal Legal Services; and employs 4 FTE plus in-kind support of 1.5 FTE+
- Currently exploring a new governance structure with the Bourke Tribal Council

## FIRST WAVE: 2014-16

Dusseldorp Forum and VFFF were the first funders to lend support to the initiative in 2014. Their initial commitment was for a period of two-years to establish the project team. This funding was for the backbone leader's position, as well as a collective impact consultant to support the initial scoping work. The Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT provided in kind support through Just Reinvest with the provision of an external Project Director (part-time). The St Vincent de Paul Society's Foundation for Social Innovation then came on board to fund an administrative and project support position.

## SECOND WAVE: 2016-19

VFFF and Dusseldorp Forum recommitted to a further three years funding to implement the project, together with St Vincent de Paul. They were joined by philanthropists the CAGES Foundation, the Matana Foundation for Young people and the Cameron Foundation, and by the NSW State Government and the Federal Government, who contributed funding to support data roles in the backbone. Lend Lease provided a part time staff member through an in-kind contribution.

## THIRD WAVE: 2019 ONWARDS

NSW State and Federal Government have also recently committed \$1.8 million over five years to support the initiative.<sup>18</sup> Dusseldorp Forum has also re-committed to supporting the initiative and attracted new philanthropic support from Uniting and the Ritchie Foundation.

<sup>18</sup> Ministers for the Department of Social Services (2019), Media Releases, 12 March 2019, \$1.8 million for Maranguka Justice Reinvestment project in Bourke. Accessed: <https://ministers.dss.gov.au/media-releases/4641>



The largest funder of the work to date has been philanthropy, which is rare among other place-based initiatives of this scale in Australia. The initiative has credited this as critical to enabling the work in its early stages. They have now secured an increased contribution from government to enable the initiative to reach scale.

Alongside core funding, the initiative has benefited from substantial additional support from its partners. Just Reinvest NSW has provided in-kind support over the life of the initiative, and estimate their current contribution to be around 1.5 FTE. The Dusseldorp Forum's support has included capability development opportunities for the initiative's backbone staff, access to flexible funding of up to \$50,000 p.a. to help resolve issues that could sideline progress, and strategic advice. Dusseldorp Forum also allocate substantial internal resourcing to the initiative – their staff made ten trips to Bourke in 2019 for instance, to help overcome strategic road-blocks. Dusseldorp Forum along with VFFF have also been credited with attracting subsequent funders to the initiative through their networks.

With regards to the structure of the initiative, the Maranguka JR Project has two arms to its work – the Maranguka backbone team, and the Maranguka Services Hub. The backbone operates in a similar manner to other collective impact backbones – coordinating the collaborative work – and has 4 FTE. It draws on additional in-kind support and consultants as needed. The Maranguka Services Hub co-locates community services together in Bourke and is the go-to point should any other services be visiting or seeking to establish themselves in the community.

The backbone team is auspiced by the Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT (as is Just Reinvest NSW) and the Aboriginal Legal Service houses the finances. As the employer, organisational policies and procedures apply but responsibility for governance of the initiative, including decisions around expenditure and priorities sits with the Executive Director supported by the external Project Director at Just Reinvest NSW and key funders. (This will move to the skills-based board of Maranguka upon incorporation – see below). As part of the process of the Maranguka JR becoming one of the 10 place-based sites under the Stronger Places, Stronger People initiative, a collaboration agreement will now be developed to detail roles and responsibilities as well as the auspicing arrangement.

The services arm of Maranguka is auspiced by the not-for-profit Birrang Enterprise Development Co Ltd. Services and positions funded through the Commonwealth Indigenous Advancement Strategy include Picking up the Pieces (supporting families impacted by family violence), SOS (a youth support initiative) and a data manager role. A driver licensing program initially funded by philanthropy will now be funded by the NSW Government.

While the auspicing arrangement with the Aboriginal Legal Service has been well suited for the initiative to date, the backbone is now seeking to establish an incorporated entity to support its next stage of operations. The local community-led governance structure will increase decision making and self-determination.



## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

### Shared commitment to community outcomes

- Widely recognised concentration of disadvantage and high crime in Bourke, particularly consequential for children
- Funders aligned on a focus on alleviating Indigenous disadvantage, particularly in the early years

### Shared commitment to place based practice

- Long term commitment across community and main funders to place based practice
- Broad political support for initiative, and to improving local service system
- Support from philanthropy for innovative approaches, and experience supporting similar initiatives

## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

The initiative has attracted significant funding from philanthropy, non-profits and government partners due to strong alignment across partnership foundations. This includes a shared commitment to transforming community outcomes in Bourke, and to place-based collaboration as the means to achieving it.

Bourke has been recognised for some time as an area of concentrated social disadvantage, with poorly coordinated service delivery as well as an area with a high level of crime. The case for change had been established over numerous government reports and inquiries in close collaboration with the Bourke community and sector leaders. The community's effort in obtaining support for Maranguka benefited from this groundwork and was complemented by the advocacy of the newly formed and mission-aligned Just Reinvest NSW. This culminated in the first funding received for the initiative from philanthropists in 2014.

The Maranguka JR Project has also benefited from strong alignment with its core philanthropic funders, many of whom have experience backing similar initiatives – the Dusseldorp Forum, the VFFF, and the CAGES Foundation. Dusseldorp's purpose is to improve educational and life opportunities for young people, including by supporting strong communities, and VFFF is focused on alleviating disadvantage particularly through supporting new approaches. Together, the organisations have co-invested in multiple collective-impact initiatives, so have developed a strong understanding and commitment to the work. CAGES is also aligned through its support of initiatives that enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to reach their full potential. Indeed, this collection of funders has formed a strong foundation for the initiative's success.

## Funder-collaborative Partnership dynamics

The initiative's relationship with funders has been underpinned by trust, equity and adaptability, in part due to the proactive role of their primary funder, the Dusseldorp Forum.

One manifestation of this is the trust demonstrated by funders in the initiative, and by funders in one another. Dusseldorp and other funders partake in the initiative's governance as requested, but have generally taken a hands-off approach, trusting that those closest to the community are best placed to steer the work, consistent with the principles of place-based practice.

Funders have also shown a willingness to trust and work collaboratively with one another. This has been demonstrated in the first instance by funders coming on board at the invitation of Dusseldorp and VFFF, to the great benefit of the initiative.

Dusseldorp Forum's standing as a long-term funder of place-based initiatives has provided opportunity for other funders to become more aware of this work, the challenges and achievements gained through supporting communities to lead the work. The number of funders have steadily grown since 2014, VFFF and Dusseldorp have also shown a willingness to adapt. Between themselves, they have taken on different complementary roles with respect to their support for the initiative, having identified what each funder can bring to the relationship. VFFF manages the reporting, while Dusseldorp Forum manages strategy and the day to day engagement with the backbone team.

---

**“There's not been a moment when I've thought, we really need some funding for this or that and we have nowhere to go.... The challenges lie elsewhere. Recruitment is a challenge, as are administrative efficiencies, and IT needs.”**

---

*– Just Reinvest NSW, 2018*

## Funder-collaborative partnership dynamics

### Trusted and equitable relations

- Deep engagement with primary philanthropic funder, driving lighter touch engagement from other funders

### Adaptable mindsets

- Willingness from funders to adapt – such as through shared report requirements

### Aligned relationship expectations

- Agreed focus on tracking progress and outcomes of the work
- Collaborative approach amongst philanthropic funders on how and when they engage with initiative

## Conclusions, and looking forward

The Maranguka JR Project has enjoyed a steady and growing volume of funds to support its work to date. This has been made easier due to the support of highly engaged funders and a supportive network of secondary funders. But there is a long road ahead to achieve the transformational change that the community of Bourke is seeking. While funding for the initiative is secured for the next five years, there remains a challenge of long term financing of the backbone team and mechanisms developed for reinvestment of government funding into Bourke. More pressing for the initiative, however, are the operational challenges of incorporating the backbone, maintaining the right staff to support the work and building the capacity of the team.

A number of lessons can be gleaned from the experience of the Maranguka Justice Reinvestment Project and its funders to date, which will be instructive for the initiative's future funders to consider, and other initiatives nationwide.

### Insights from the Maranguka Justice Reinvestment Project funder-collaborative partnership

- 1 Having a highly engaged philanthropic funder, that engages well with other funders and attracts additional funding, has freed the initiative to focus on the community work..
- 2 The co-funding relationship established between the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation and the Dusseldorp Forum has lightened the reporting load on the initiative, and enabled philanthropic funders to best leverage their own expertise and avoid duplication of efforts.
- 3 The auspicing arrangements for the Maranguka JR Project have served the initiative and its funders well through its establishment phase. But now the community are developing the governance structure to lead this work and identifying the financial auspicing arrangements.
- 4 Funding isn't everything – the initiative identified recruitment as one area that could have impeded their success to date. There is a role for funders to play in assisting, through crafting position descriptions and accessing their job networks.

## CASE STUDY #2

# The Hive

The Hive is a collaboration in Mt Druitt, Sydney, that brings the community, social services, businesses, government, and philanthropy together to address local priorities for children and families. It uses a collective impact approach.



 Mt Druitt, New South Wales

Mt Druitt is located about 40 kilometres to the west of Sydney's CBD, is home to 60,000 residents across 12 suburbs (which share the postcode 2770) and has one of the lowest SEIFA scores in NSW. Mt Druitt has some of the highest incidences of family violence in Australia, with domestic assault four times more likely than in other parts of NSW, up to 40% of children not receiving a preschool education and only one in five children completing high school. The community has also felt stigmatised through the media, such as the Struggle Street television program.

The Hive was initiated by the ten20 Foundation, United Way Australia and NSW Family and Community Services, to drive improved child development outcomes across the community. Its focus was pre-birth to eight-year-old children and their families. All partners recognised that despite significant and long-term public investment, outcomes for vulnerable children and their families were persistently poor in all twelve suburbs in the Mt Druitt postcode. Its long-term goal is for all children in Mt Druitt to start school well. This requires a significant drop in the prevalence of early childhood vulnerability.

The Hive receives \$100,000 p.a. from both the ten20 foundation and the Sabemo Foundation, and \$150,000 p.a. from the State Government, bringing the backbone's total operating budget to \$350,000 p.a. This supports the backbone operating costs. An additional \$550,000 over three years has been provided by State Government to implement an Early Childhood Education and Care project (ECEC).

The Hive employs 3 FTE in the backbone, and 1.5 FTE through the ECEC project. The Hive's long-term funding arrangements for the backbone begin to expire from June 2019 through June 2020.



## About The Hive

Mt Druitt forms part of Greater Western Sydney and is home to a diverse mix of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Situated on the custodial lands of the people of the Darug nation, it also features the highest urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Australia. Residents describe a strong sense of community spirit that is not often seen elsewhere and a willingness to care for others and volunteer to community causes.<sup>19</sup>

Critical to the story of Mt Druitt in recent years is the role of public housing policy. In the 1960s and 1970s high volumes of public housing were built in the area, with the twin goals of expanding Sydney's urban development into the west and developing large volumes of subsidised housing at low cost. Today, an average of 20 per cent of houses in Mt Druitt are publicly owned, and in some suburbs it is as high as 60 per cent. This has contributed to a concentration of social disadvantage, with high rates of (intergenerational) welfare dependence, vandalism, poor health, unemployment, crime, anti-social behaviour, mental illness, school failure, and tenancy turnover.<sup>20</sup> This has heightened the need for new solutions to complex systemic issues that negatively impact the ecosystem in which families are raising children.

While there is a long history of service delivery in Mt Druitt, this has not achieved lasting community change. There is also estimated to be over 100 services in the 12 suburbs of Mt Druitt and, a lack of collaboration between them. There are a multitude of state and federally funded programs across various portfolios and privately funded initiatives. The ecosystem is challenging to navigate even for experienced professionals let alone families who are at the behest of a fragmented and transactional system when trying to access support services. Additionally, despite its peri-urban location, families in Mt Druitt can be stigmatized and isolated from infrastructure and opportunities available in other parts of Sydney.

This context was identified by the ten20 Foundation, United Way Australia and NSW Department of Family and Community Services, as the catalyst to pursue a new way of working to drive large-scale change. All partners felt there needed to be a new approach to work better with community, and across sectors and organisations to move from 'band-aid' programmatic work to increased community engagement in developing solutions to entrenched and complex systemic problems.

Especially as anecdotally the service system was disengaged from the very community it was funded to serve, influenced by a long legacy of a distrust of institutions.

Having secured funding, The Hive formally began work in 2014 with a backbone organisation established, and an immediate focus to build community engagement and local ownership. Over the course of 2014 and 2015, the backbone undertook extensive consultation with local stakeholders to collaboratively develop the various elements of The Hive. Much of the early work involved building trust and confidence within and across communities. While The Hive was conceived through a 'top-down' combination of funders and service providers, it has gradually increased the level of community engagement. This has been important to build trust.

The Hive is gaining momentum and sees its journey as being in its early stages. It operates in three of Mt Druitt's 12 suburbs and has a portfolio of work in ECEC as a priority area. There are ambitious plans for growth and a new focus area of health coming online in FY19/20. Recent funding commitments from the Department of Social Services provide increased sustainability for the initiative moving forward.

19 Blacktown City Social Profile (2016), *Mount Druitt Precinct: A Social Profile*

20 The Hive (2017), *Five Year Strategy and Resource Document*

## Timeline of events

### 2014–2016

- Secured seed funding from ten20 Foundation (\$100,000 p.a. for five years) and the NSW Department of Families and Community Services valued at \$100,000 over three years, as well as a backbone resource from the ten20 Foundation team.
- Early stage community engagement, research, initiative design and stakeholder engagement.
- In 2015, 'Struggle Street' SBS show shines a light on disadvantage in Mt Druitt – but is criticised for not highlighting the positive aspects of the community.
- Early stage leadership and governance functions at community and ambassador levels.
- Started to explore suburb action – launched Wilmot Working Group.
- In 2016, The Sabemo Foundation committed \$300,000 over three years.

### 2017–onwards

- Expanded work into two additional suburbs.
- Secured \$1m investment into Early Education and Care Initiatives, from FACS.
- Worked with the Centre for Social Impact to develop framework for shared measurement.
- Moved into a deeper community engagement approach with a focus on grassroots mobilisation at a community level.

Source: The Hive's 2019-2022 business plan



## The funder-collaborative relationship

The Hive represents a sizeable initiative, tackling a large and complex scope of work in Western Sydney. While it has enjoyed the funding support of its founding partners, the initiative will need to secure further funding for the backbone function to continue its work, as longstanding funding commitments are due to begin to taper off from June 2019. Further, if long-term change is to be achieved at scale, the backbone has identified a need to expand to include other roles and functions such as the costly and specialised work of measurement and learning. The need for access to untied project funds to launch innovative action remain necessary.

### Backbone funding profile

The Hive receives funding from three partners: The NSW Department of Family and Community Services and two philanthropic organisations - the ten20 Foundation and Sabemo Foundation. A significant portion of their government funding, however, is quarantined for project-specific funding. The philanthropic funding is dedicated to the backbone resource.

As illustrated in the figure on the next page, the backbone's funding has ranged from \$200,000 to \$350,000 a year since 2015, and now sits at \$350,000. Project-specific funding has amounted to \$600,000 over three years.

The funding commitments have varied between partners. Original funding was provided by the ten20 Foundation – who committed \$500,000 over five years from 2014 as well as a backbone resource for the first year. They were joined by NSW FACS, who matched ten20's annual funding of \$150,000 for 12 months to do the exploratory work

for the project. This support was later extended year-on-year (\$100,000 p.a. for the backbone). In 2016, the Sabemo Foundation came on board with a three-year commitment of \$100,000 p.a. In addition to funding, the ten20 Foundation has extended capability development and support resources through the Opportunity Child learning network and provided strategic advice to help navigate issues that have faced the backbone.

---

**“The first 12 months of funding for The Hive was pulled together from a hodge podge of unexpended funds from FACS central office... It was seen as an opportunity to fund an innovative model. The Hive doesn't neatly fit into any of the department's funding streams”**

---

– FACS employee

### Backbone funding profile

#### Funding partners

- Two philanthropic and one government funder
- \$350,000 annual funding for the backbone in 2018-19
- \$600,000 project specific funding over three years for ECEC
- \$161,000 project specific funding for FY19/20 from FACS directly delivered to NSW Health for a partnership project

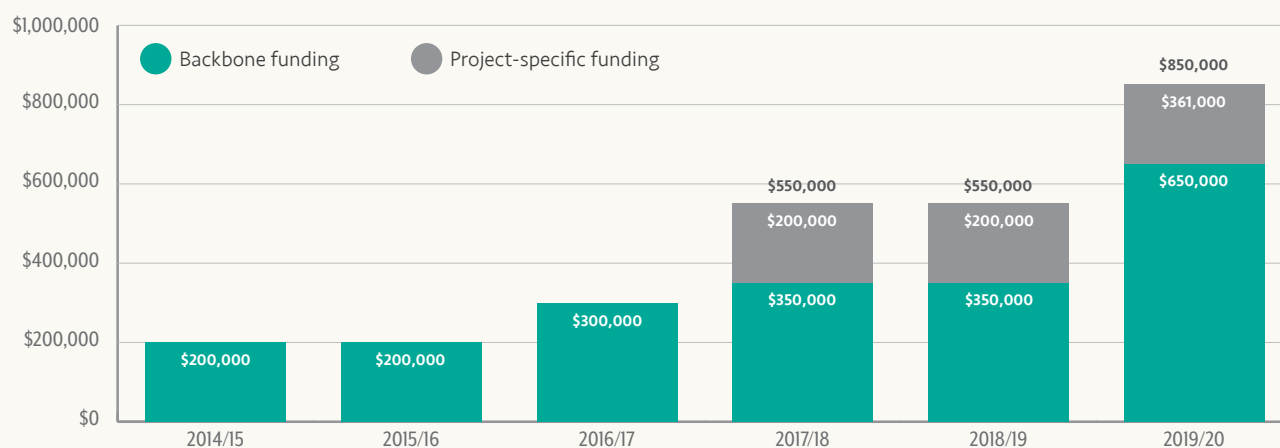
#### Type of backbone funding

- Mix of flexible and targeted funding structures adopted
- 1-5 year funding commitments

#### Backbone accountability and governance

- Backbone auspiced by United Way
- Change in backbone leadership

## Funding profile 2014/15 to 2019/20



NSW FACS' provision of funding for an Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) project, however, has shaped some of the initiative's momentum. Starting in 2017, FACS committed \$1,050,000 over three years to support the cost of rolling out training to local ECEC providers, to improve the quality of their service delivery. The Hive has employed 1.5 FTE to manage this work. This work is mission aligned – working directly to identify with community and the system areas for opportunity to directly address non-participation in ECEC and quality. This can be seen as a departure from a traditional definition of a collective impact backbone and represents a flexibility to respond to local needs in an adaptive manner. It demonstrates how The Hive have responded to demands in the local context and works collaboratively across the community and service system to bring groups of people together around issues.

The backbone is auspiced by United Way Australia (UWA), a local not-for-profit involved in the project setup. The backbone has 3 FTE, which funds the backbone leader position and community mobilisers, in addition to the 1.5 FTE committed to project work, outlined above. The auspice arrangement with UWA is regarded by both parties as working well and the work aligns with key aspects of the United Way Worldwide Strategy.

UWA provides operational support through managing the fiduciary governance responsibilities of the organisations and 'back office' functions such as payroll, accounts management and insurances.

Budgetary and strategic decision making is at the local level of The Hive, and not directed from UWA. UWA executive and board play an important Ambassadorial role in The Hive and have had significant involvement in procuring meetings with government and potential funders.

The leadership and governance of the initiative has shifted over time. Originally quite top down in its orientation – focused on NGO leaders and funders – a change in the backbone's leadership brought a different perspective to the work. It has since adopted a greater focus on community engagement. The Hive now has vibrant leadership groups embedded in practical aspects of the work, including two suburbs and ECEC and health work.



## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

### Shared commitment to community outcomes

- Historical disadvantage
- Shared commitment of funders to focus on the early years
- Government funder has specific interest in targeting those in social housing

### Shared commitment to place-based practice

- Current funders committed to place-based approach, as founding partners of the initiative
- Community has mixed level of buy-in
- Other potential government funders support 'competing' place-based initiatives in the community

## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

The Hive was initiated by philanthropic and government funders due to a shared commitment to place-based, collective impact approaches and supporting children through the early years.

The start-up of the initiative was made easier by the clear rationale and commitment for developing a different approach in Mt Druitt. The community had long been a hot-spot of social disadvantage, with one of the lowest SEIFA scores in NSW, and over a hundred social service providers delivering services.

The groundwork by the partners in collectively establishing the case for the initiative also meant funding support was assured. A downside of establishing the initiative in isolation from the broader community, however, was the absence of a broader support base for the work. The Hive is still feeling the impact of this. There's building momentum, but not yet widespread buy-in for

the initiative. And while other State Government agencies have showed support to the initiative there has been limited funding commitment, except minor one-off project funds from the NSW Department of Education and Communities.

One source of FACS funding for The Hive has been FACS social housing strategy. While many of The Hive's target cohort are considered to be 'clients of NSW Housing' due to residing in, or waiting on, a social housing property they are not exclusively so. This does however have implications on the initiative's profile.

## Funder-collaborative partnership dynamics

### Trusted and equitable relations

- Strong relations with funders

### Adaptable mindsets

- Willingness from funders to adapt
- Some limitations however around expenditure

### Aligned relationship

- Agreed focus on tracking progress and outcomes of the work

---

**“Funders were keen that The Hive stayed on track with regards to its key focus areas (early childhood). But they provided flexibility to allow The Hive to work out how that funding would be allocated and how we structured ourselves.”**

---

– Backbone director at The Hive

## Funder-collaborative partnership dynamics

The Hive enjoys strong collaborative and trusting working relations with its funders, which have enabled the initiative to focus attention on the community work and shifting priorities on the ground. After the top-down start, significant time and resources have been needed to be allocated to building trust, generating initial ‘wins’, creating strong relationships and a momentum for meaningful change.

The relationships between the initiative and its funders differ across its funding base. Ten20 has played an active role as a key catalyser of the work. FACS’ regional staff have also been personally engaged from the outset but challenged at time by the politics and policy shifts within their own and other related state departments.

The funding agreements with both philanthropic bodies are broad, specifying that the funds are to support the backbone and pursuit of agreed outcomes. Ongoing FACS funding is more specific and less about the backbone – with some money tied to project costs, as outlined above, with project specific KPIs.

Notably, though, is the intentional shift in power dynamics between philanthropic funders and the initiative over time. In the initiative’s early phases, the ten20 Foundation and Sabemo Foundation took a more active role in guiding the initiative’s priorities. These were grounded in evidence around the early years, so were regarded as a sensible starting point. Over time, however, as community engagement has increased, the funders have stepped away, enabling community priorities and evidence to guide the initiative’s priorities.

With regards to tracking progress – this work is in its early stages. Some work had been outsourced to the Centre for Social Impact (valued at \$100,000) and other work progressed with Opportunity Child. A program logic has been agreed and there are isolated evaluation pieces in production. But, work remains challenging on an overall measurement system that is fit for purpose and can enable the project to constantly learn and iterate. And while work in each of The Hive’s focus areas has made strong progress – it’s too early yet to see a change in population level outcomes in Mt Druitt.

## Conclusions, and looking forward

The Hive is at a pivot point, as it looks to secure funding for the next five years of operations. The initiative believes that it has had enough funding to enable its activities to date. However, it is gaining momentum and believes an injection of additional funds to the backbone will enable it to capitalise on the heightened community engagement.

This will enable the continuation of community engagement and momentum building, while bringing in data and measurement capabilities to assist the local collaboration to keep on learning in action. Additionally ongoing funding towards project elements will ensure we solidify the systems changes developed locally that are generating positive results for the ECEC ecosystem, including service leadership and mentoring, community grassroots family engagement and a Preschool Linker service to directly support families into ECEC.

A number of lessons can be gleaned from the experience of The Hive and its funders to date, which will be instructive for other initiatives and funders to consider.

### Insights from The Hive funder-initiative relationship

- 1 The Hive's auspicing arrangement with an NGO has proved beneficial due to minimal interference in The Hive's operational decision making and expenditure. This has been important in enabling the backbone's adaptivity to local context and sole focus on The Hive, as opposed to other organisational priorities.
- 2 The Hive has adapted to the funding environment and community needs in Mt Druitt to take on, in part, a more active service delivery role than is common for a backbone. This adaptability has enabled the initiative to access funds it may not have otherwise and leverage these for tangible impact on an agreed priority. Whether taking on this dual role complicates the backbone 'pitch' for a prospective funder remains to be seen, but it does highlight the challenges of securing untied backbone funding in current government commissioning arrangements.

## CASE STUDY #3

# Go Goldfields

Go Goldfields is a collective impact initiative located in the Central Goldfields in Victoria supporting collaboration between local community, services and government to improve outcomes for children, youth and families.



Central Goldfields, Victoria

Since 2009, momentum has been building to transform the underlying community conditions in the region through a whole of community approach. Originally initiated by service providers, the initiative turned to a 'bottom-up' community driven approach when it adopted the collective impact model in 2015.

Go Goldfield's backbone sits within the local council and employs 3.7 FTE. The initiative's main funder is Regional Development Victoria. It has also attracted philanthropic support from the ten20 Foundation and Sabemo Foundation. Currently, the backbone's annual budget is ~\$900,000 p.a., \$800,000 in FY19/20 however, its current funding sources will expire in 2020.

## About Go Goldfields

Situated on Dja Dja Wurrung Country, Central Goldfields is located in regional Victoria with a population of around 13,000 people<sup>21</sup>. It includes the communities of Maryborough, Talbot, Majorca and Dunolly, to name a few. The region is known for its Box Iron Bark forests, waterways and Gold rush-era history and monuments.

Much like other regional communities, a range of complex

social issues are experienced across the community including family violence, high unemployment, low education levels and inter-generational poverty<sup>22</sup>. When the initiative was first floated in 2008, Central Goldfields Shire had 11.9% unemployment, and the lowest socio-economic ranking in Victoria<sup>23</sup>. Not surprisingly, this context has a significant flow on effect for children and their families. Children

in the Central Goldfields are more developmentally vulnerable compared than their peers across Victoria and the prevalence of family violence incidents is amongst the highest in the state<sup>24</sup>. And while available services dealing with these issues have had occasional success, they have too often failed to provide high quality and accessible support across the community.

<sup>21</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016 Census data

<sup>22</sup> Murdoch Children's Research Institute (2018), Go Goldfields Evaluation: 2015 – 2017.

<sup>23</sup> Central Goldfields Shire Gold Prospects Report, 2008, Dr Marcia Perry

<sup>24</sup> According to the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC), the proportion of children developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains was 27.9 percent in 2015 in the shire, compared to ~20 per cent across the state. Further, In 2016-17, the rate of family incidents per 100,000 population in Central Goldfields was more than double that of Victoria as a whole. Central Goldfields had the fifth highest rate of family incidents per 100,000 population in 2016-17 (by Victorian local government area), with 330 recorded incidents.

In this context, the community was catalysed to improve outcomes and transform the underlying community conditions. Starting in 2010, an alliance between local services was formed to better coordinate efforts and work being delivered across the region. This included improving the integration of service delivery as well as improving the referral process to ensure services were better meeting the needs of the community.

The alliance was buoyed by the provision of significant support and resources from across the community including funding from local services and state government. However, there was recognition that the focus on the service system was limited and would not support the systems change required to transform outcomes. In light of this, the alliance was reconfigured as a collective impact model in 2015 with a clear focus on driving transformational change for children and families.

Since adopting a collective impact model, the initiative has been characterised by a community-centred and driven approach. Through 2015-16, Go Goldfields consulted with over 400 community members, established a common agenda and priorities, and set up action groups led by community members and service system leaders. This work is supported by a dedicated backbone organisation, sitting within the Central Goldfields Shire Council.

Today the focus of the initiative is on four areas, identified by

the community, and with efforts coordinated by the backbone:

- 1 Children in our community are confident, creative, safe and healthy.
- 2 Our community celebrates our young people as they strive to reach their full potential.
- 3 Our community supports everyone to learn, earn and achieve.
- 4 Everyone lives equally, safe and free from all forms of violence.

Go Goldfields enjoys a high level of community engagement and continues to have momentum. Its work has manifested in numerous specific actions and initiatives, including:

- the establishment of the Goldfields Family Centre (an integrated service model)
- literacy training for parents
- early years forums
- development and commitment to a shire-wide family violence plan, support for local action by Maryborough Rotary club and other community groups
- youth services alliance advocacy for increased services for youth to address high rates of vulnerability (young people presenting with 10 or more complex social needs – up from reported 7 complex needs a couple of years ago)

- strengthening services - networks working together in education and employment, with local businesses to address high youth unemployment in the shire

In some areas, community outcomes are starting to shift, but there's recognition that there is a long way to go to make the desired population level change.

---

**“At the end of 2014, there was growing recognition that while service providers were able to make significant, user-centred improvements in the delivery system, they did not have enough leverage to bring about broader change in the community. Consequently, the alliance decided to shift from a service provider alliance to a community-based collective impact initiative to tackle the underlying community conditions and achieve transformational change. Commencing in 2015, this new approach was known as Go Goldfields.”**

---

*– Go Goldfields Evaluation Report, MCRI, 2018*

## Timeline of events

### 2008–2014

- *Gold Prospects* report highlights complex social issues in Central Goldfields and focuses community leaders on taking action to improve community conditions (2008).
- *Go for Gold* strategy developed in response to the *Gold Prospects* report (2010).
- Go Goldfields Service Alliance established to deliver local solutions to complex and long-term social issues (2010).
- Investment of \$2.5 million over three years from Regional Development Victoria (2012).
- Go Goldfields Alliance focuses efforts on: communication, literacy and numeracy; strong communities; strong and safe families; and youth employment (2012–2013).

### 2014–present

- Decision made to move from a service provider alliance to a community-based 'collective impact' initiative and share power and decision making with the community (2014).
- Leadership held by Manager Go Goldfields throughout this period.
- Further investment of \$2 million over three years from Regional Development Victoria, and commencement of Go Goldfields (2015).
- Community engagement process, to determine priorities for action (2015).
- Established community-led governance (2015–16).
- Received funding commitments from the ten20 Foundation and Sabemo Foundation (\$100k p.a, each) and invited into the Opportunity Child learning community (2016).
- Extended backbone support and communication systems (2015–16).
- Developed a common agenda and priorities. Established action groups. Developed a shared measurement system (2016–17).
- In 2018, Regional Development Victoria commits to a further investment of \$1.4 million over two years (expiring in 2020).
- In 2019, initiative is in restructure to find a new and qualified full-time backbone leader and greater neutrality within council.

Source: Adapted from Go Goldfields Evaluation Report, MCRI, 2018, and Go Goldfield Aspiring and Achieving: The Next Wave (2017)

## The funder-collaborative relationship

Go Goldfields represents a large-scale collective impact project. Its vision is bold and it has progressed a sizeable program of work across the community.

Nevertheless, its journey has not been straight forward with internal and external issues placing the viability and impact of the work at risk. The strength of its relationship with flexible philanthropic funders has played an important role through these issues; whereby these funders have provided emergency resources to renew shared commitments to the work and played an active role in enhancing the profile of backbone leadership.

However, the long-term funding for the initiative is unconfirmed, with current philanthropic funders committed to the project until 2019/20 and Regional Development

Victoria (RDV) to 2020. This RDV funding from state government, is critical to supporting the scale of resourcing and effort being pursued through the initiative.

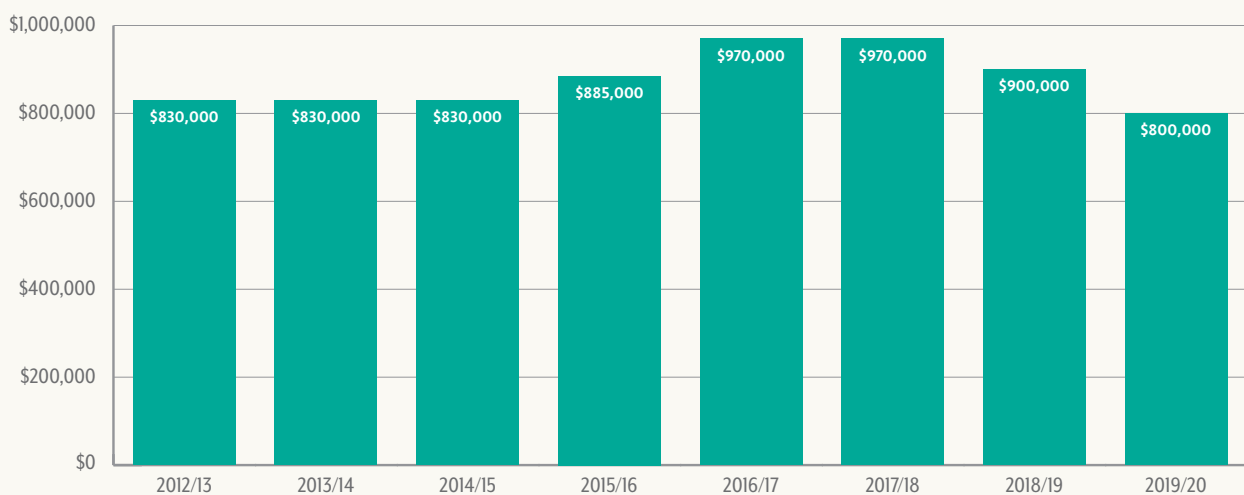
### Backbone funding profile

As illustrated below, Go Goldfields has received significant funds from state government and philanthropy to support its backbone function. The initiative's funding has ranged from \$800,000 to \$1 million p.a. It currently receives approximately \$900,000 (2018/19). RDV has committed \$5.9m from 2012 and 2020, as part of three 2-3 year grants, while ten20 and the Sabemo Foundation have each provided \$100k

p.a. as part of 3-5 year commitments. The local council also committed \$100,000 p.a. from 2015, on an ongoing basis in addition to providing corporate support including office space, IT, HR, payroll, finance and records.

Alongside its granting, ten20 has extended capability development and support resources through Opportunity Child and provided strategic advice to help navigate issues that have faced the backbone. It has also provided access to its 'Rapid Response Fund' that provides small grants to help resolve issues that otherwise could sideline progress whether governance,

Funding profile 2012/13 – 2019/20



## Backbone funding profile

### Funding partners for backbone

- Mix of philanthropic and government funders: ten20, Regional Development Victoria and Sabemo Foundation
- 900k funding per annum

### Type of backbone funding

- Mix of flexible and targeted funding structures adopted

### Backbone accountability and governance

- Backbone auspiced by local government
- 2.1 FTE working in backbone, moving to 3.7 FTE in 2019
- Changes in leadership have challenged direction of work

### Clear roadmap for work

- Priority 12 month plans developed for initiative impact areas

strategic planning, or loss of staff in the backbone. This funding proved instrumental in assisting Go Goldfields navigate the issue of community leadership in 2015.

In addition, Go Goldfields has leveraged the strength of their community relationships to secure significant levels of in kind-resourcing from local service organisations. Also their local small business and Rotary network has mobilised significant support around communication and action. This has complemented funder dollars and strengthened the initiative's ability to adapt to changing context.

The reporting arrangements associated with Go Goldfields funding have varied between funders. RDV's contractual reporting arrangements have adopted a standard project plan template. Ten20 and the Sabemo Foundation have had a lighter touch reporting approach, involving occasional meetings and debriefs.

Go Goldfield's backbone sits within the Central Goldfields Shire Council and employs 2.1 FTE (soon to expand to 3.7 FTE). Until recently, the initiative has been overseen by a General Manager at the Council, who oversees the initiative amongst other council duties. The backbone role for the family violence focus area is outsourced to a not-for-profit alliance partner alongside data and evaluation services. The Council holds and manages the funding that

is allocated to Go Goldfields, and retains decision making power on budget allocation and appointment of key staff. The most substantial change to the backbone has been a change in leader – which occurred in 2017. This has been followed in 2019 to recruit a qualified, full-time backbone leader whose time is dedicated to the collective impact effort.

Housing the backbone within the Council enhanced the credibility of the backbone initially and ensures ongoing access to this level of government. It has also had its challenges. In 2017, the Central Goldfields Shire was dismissed following serious governance failures<sup>25</sup>. Being located within the council constrained the ability of the initiative to position itself as an independent brand at this sensitive time. It also led to concern from Go Goldfield's funders that funding could have been mis-handled, and that the incoming Shire council leadership would not appropriately prioritise the initiative and enable it enough autonomy and authority to operate. Funders responded by tightening controls on allocation and use of funds. These concerns have since been resolved but serve to highlight the importance of the enabling environment for the backbone. To note, there has been full support of the incoming administrators and the chair of Go Goldfields.

---

**“Funding is not the only constraint on progress. The initiative could have endless funds and still have challenges. The more important enablers are having the right skillsets and experience to deliver on this type of work”**

---

*–Interview with Go Goldfields backbone staff, 2018*

25 ABC Online; 2017, “Central Goldfields Shire To Be Sacked”. Access at: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-08-23/central-goldfields-shire-to-be-sacked-by-state-government/8833888>

Go Goldfields has an agreed common agenda in place and theory of change, informed by strong community engagement. This engagement has featured largescale community consultation and the ongoing involvement of community members and leaders on the Collaborative Leadership Table and Action Groups. Looking forward, a focus for the initiative in 2019-20 will be the development of a long-term business plan. However, evidence of population level changes attributable to the initiative may be some years off.

## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

The initiative has attracted significant funding from state government as well as philanthropic sources, due to a strong shared commitment to changing the conditions in the Goldfields Shire – and that a community-led, place-based approach is the way to achieve it. This alignment has also enabled the initiative to leverage philanthropic funders support when tackling obstacles to the work.

Go Goldfields benefited from years of groundwork building political, community and social sector support for the initiative's early stages through the *Gold Prospects* report and *Go for Gold* strategy. This culminated in the first funding received for the initiative from RDV.

RDV funding has been critical to supporting the scale of work and effort delivered through the backbone function. This has been underpinned by strong political support and a state-wide commitment to driving regional renewal across regional Victoria. This support was leveraged when Go Goldfields faced gridlock when navigating one of its projects through bureaucratic red-tape. The security provided by this long-term partnership, however, may have lowered the impetus for Go Goldfields to secure a broader funding base for the work, and hampered their capability development in this area. This will be consequential, should RDV revert to its more traditional focus on supporting economic activity and enterprise – and discontinue support for the initiative.

Go Goldfields has also been fortunate to partner with two mission-aligned philanthropic organisations. The shared commitment of these funders to seeing its success has enabled Go Goldfields to successfully wrangle a path through crisis meetings in 2015, detailed later in this case study.

## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

### Shared commitment to community outcomes

- Shared focus on transforming community context
- Shared focus on improving outcomes for children and families

### Shared commitment to place-based practice

- Long-term commitment across community to place-based practice, albeit threatened at points in time
- Broad political support across the region for approach, but the longevity of this support is unknown

## Funder-collaborative partnership dynamics

The dynamics of Go Goldfield's funder-collaborative relationships highlight the importance of cultivating a trusted collaboration that can navigate a clear path for the work.

The relationships between the collaborative and its funders differ across its funding base. Ten20 has played an active and engaged funding role as has in more recent times the Sabemo Foundation while traditionally RDV has played a less hands on role though participating in governance at the Collaborative Table.

The relationships with all funders, however, has proven adaptable.

Ten20 has also provided flexible funding terms. For instance, in late 2015 the initiative was being called on to shut down as several community partners had changed leadership and no longer recognised the need or benefit for the collaboration. Recognising the risk, the backbone worked closely with ten20 foundation to source emergency funding to support

capability development sessions that renewed support for the initiative. Leveraging philanthropic networks enabled community to access experts. While the willingness of the initiative to take up this opportunity enabled action and progress. The funding enabled targeted activities and support to be delivered, which successfully brought a renewed shared commitment from participating organisations for the outcomes and work.

The expectations of funders have also influenced the initiative's development. More recently, RDV and philanthropists increased their expectations on Go Goldfields to develop a data and reporting framework, work on which is now underway. In parallel, philanthropy invested in bringing external data experts into community and has identified the need for a full-time backbone leader.

## Funder-collaborative partnership dynamics

### Trusted and equitable relations

- Strong partnership and relationship with ten20, engaged relationship with other funders

### Adaptable mindsets

- Willingness from funders to adapt their practices to support the work – e.g. government changing reporting expectations, or ten20 providing emergency funding

### Aligned relationship expectations

- Clear and agreed focus on tracking progress and outcomes of initiative, albeit this focus was prioritised by funders
- Relationship expectations differed between funders, reflective of funders level of engagement

## Conclusions, and looking forward

Go Goldfields is now at an inflection point – with core funding commitments coming to an end in 2020. There's both a desire in the community, and a need, for continued efforts to drive transformational change. Go Goldfields is looking to government funders, as well as philanthropy, to support its ambitious agenda into the future.

A number of lessons can be gleaned from the experience of Go Goldfields and its funders to date though, which will be instructive for the initiative's future funders to consider.

### Insights from Go-Goldfields funder-collaborative relationship

- 1 Government and philanthropy play different roles in supporting the backbone function. Large amounts of government funding have enabled Go Goldfields to set up required backbone resources and infrastructure and provide political legitimacy. Philanthropy's role has provided funding flexibility to divert resources where needed or provide emergency top up funds. It has also provided access to broader expertise and networks to build capacity and sustainability.
- 2 Aligning funder effort and voice can increase funder impact. It ensures more effective use of backbone resources in acquittal and reporting and in sharing information. It enables funder points of view to have greater influence in the initiative's direction.
- 3 Backbone auspicing arrangements, including how funds are held, governed and spent, affects the ability of the initiative to be agile and responsive to changing context.

# Logan Together

Logan Together is a long-term, whole of community movement to create the best life opportunities for every child in the Logan community. Logan is between 15-50 kilometres south of Brisbane's CBD, and is home to more than 310,000 people.



Logan Together was conceived through 18 months of design work beginning in 2014 and funded through in-kind contributions from partners which included Griffith University, local service providers, and all levels of government. It culminated in the initiative's first grants from ten20 Foundation, government and NGO partners totaling \$800,000 in 2015. That funding has since expanded to an estimated \$2 million in 2020, from a mixture of philanthropy, federal and state government sources (in almost equal proportions). The backbone employs 10-12 staff (8 FTE), and has been hosted by Griffith University with funds held in the Logan Child Friendly Community Trust. Logan Together is currently establishing a new independent company to host the initiative.

## About Logan Together

Situated on the traditional lands of the Yuggera and Yugambeh language speaking people, Logan is a diverse, young and growing community. It is home to people of more than 215 cultures, including many new migrants, and a notable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Almost six percent of Logan's children under 15 identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Around 50 per cent of Logan's residents are aged 30 or younger. It's also one of the fastest growing areas in Australia, with an extra 200,000 people coming to live in the city over the next 20 years.

Logan features prominent commercial, retail and manufacturing precincts, as well as over 1000 environmental and recreational parks. However, Logan has been a community long associated with social disadvantage. Today, Logan's families are more likely to have no working parent than the state average, and Logan's children are more developmentally vulnerable than their peers across Queensland<sup>26</sup>.

It is against this backdrop that in 2009 local community services coalesced around the need for a different approach. At this time, the *Child Friendly Community Consortium* was formed by service providers in recognition that the service sector was overly fragmented and not achieving the desired outcomes. It used a collective impact framework, and at its peak in 2014, involved around 65 organisations, with a range of action groups.

<sup>26</sup> Logan Together (March 2018), *The State Of Logan's Children And Families*.

A few years on, NGOs across Brisbane were getting together to talk about how they too could address the fragmented delivery of social services – by pooling resources to improve outcomes. In 2012 they formed the *CEO Conversations Group*. Part of their work looked at place-based collaborative responses to achieve that aim.

But it took a catalysing event to heighten the urgency and gain alignment for a new approach. In 2013, the 'Woodridge riots' occurred in Logan, in response to rising racial tensions following the death of a local teenager. The council established the City of Choice Summit and convened a collective of different working groups in response, involving many key stakeholders from across the community. This led to the efforts of key stakeholders coalescing around the new 'Logan Together' initiative, building on the place-based and collective impact work. In 2014, 18 months of design work went into developing Logan Together's Prospectus and Roadmap, leveraging in-kind contributions from NGOs.

The objective and endeavor of the new initiative was ambitious. Logan Together would be a 10-year community movement to ensure Logan kids grow up as healthy and full of potential as any other children in Queensland. This would be achieved via a cross-sector, collaborative partnership

of government agencies, service providers, and community representatives committed to using a place-based, collective impact framework. As part of this framework, the partnership established shared aspirations and goals, prioritised investment decisions and identified "game changing" programs. Logan lobbied to get government and funders on board, resulting in the first funding commitment from the ten20 Foundation in 2015, and then commitments from all levels of government. This is the first place-based initiative that has had the three levels of government sitting at the table.

While Logan Together began with some 'top-down' characteristics, it has community at its core. It has worked hard to integrate community into the initiative and its decision making, and since 2017 has supported increasing levels of engagement at the community level. Notably, the movement continues to grow and has now amassed a number of successful projects. Logan Together is building stronger connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Logan to ensure wisdom and way of working is central to the planning and delivery of projects. But change takes time, and while early indicators are healthy, Logan Together will need ongoing support to help it embed the change it wants to see.

---

**"We knew something different in Logan was needed... Sometimes working in the sector you would spend your whole week attending meetings and nothing would happen. It was a talk fest. Everyone is sitting at the table talking about how deadly they are."**

---

*– Community services professional and Logan community member quoted in The Origins of Logan Together*

## Timeline of events

### 2009–2015

- In 2009 the *Child Friendly Community Consortium* was formed by service providers in Logan and used a collective impact framework. At its peak in 2014, around 65 organisations were involved.
- In 2012 the CEO Conversations Group formed in Brisbane, consisting of CEOs of major NGOs interested in pooling resources to improve outcomes. They began to look into place-based responses.
- In 2013 the 'Woodridge riots' occurred in Logan, in response to rising racial tensions following the death of a teenager. The local response resulted in the City of Choice Summit and working groups. This was a catalysing event.
- In 2014, 18 months of design work went into developing Logan Together's Prospectus and Roadmap, leveraging in-kind contributions from NGOs.

### 2015–present

- In 2015 ten20 came on board as the first funder to Logan Together, committing \$100,000 p.a. over five years.
- The *Logan Child Friendly Community Trust* agreed to be the fund holder for the initiative, ensuring 100 per cent of funds went to the initiative.
- Mid-2015 Griffith University was confirmed as host of the Logan Together backbone organisation.
- August 2015 state and federal government committed funding for the initiative, together with NGOs and philanthropic partners. Total funding for first year of operations was \$800,000.
- In 2016 funding contributions increased to a total of ~\$1.2 million, maintaining an event split from philanthropy, state government and federal government.
- By 2018 Logan Together is attracting \$1.7 million in annual funding, maintaining a similar split between funder types. By 2020 funding is anticipated to reach \$2 million.

Source: The Origins of Logan Together (2018), accessed at: <http://logantogogether.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/The-Origins-of-Logan-Together-FINAL-1-1.pdf>

## The collaborative and funder relationship

Logan Together has attracted and retained significant funding from a diverse range of funders, leveraging strong relationships and engagement with local, state and federal government, service providers, and philanthropy. It most recently received funding from the Federal Government's, Stronger Places, Stronger People initiative.

However, while Logan Together enjoys substantial and steady funding to support its work, it continues to look for dedicated, longer-term backbone funding and support to reach a scale where it believes it can achieve its full potential.

### Backbone funding profile

Since its inception, Logan Together has been attentive to its funding sustainability, and it now finds itself in a robust funding position in the medium-term.

As illustrated in the figure on the next page, the backbone's expected resourcing for 2019-20 is \$2 million, having grown from the \$800,000 it received in its first year in 2015. Federal, state and local government have remained committed throughout, and the initiative has enjoyed the support of a growing number of philanthropic partners.

The ten20 Foundation was the first to lend support to the initiative in 2015, providing \$450,000 over a five-year period. This vote of confidence was quickly followed with support from the Federal and Queensland governments and the Australian Red Cross. Other philanthropic partners

have since come on board including the Dusseldorp Forum, Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation and the Bryan Foundation.

The backbone has been conscious to draw on a diversity of funding partners; leveraging the collective roles and aspirations of funders. The funding split between philanthropic and government partners is relatively even, with a roughly 40:30:30 split between philanthropy, state and federal governments, although the government share will increase into the future.

The initiative has also received notable in-kind contributions. As early as 2014, before the initiative received financial support, approximately \$200,000 worth of staff time was contributed by prospective partner organisations including service organisations, government and Griffith University. This support was provided with the express purpose of pursuing a viable collaborative opportunity. Once funding was received, these contributions have continued from various partners, ranging from contribution of staff time to the use of Griffith University's facilities.

### Backbone funding profile

#### Funding partners

- Wide range of committed funders, drawing from all levels of government, and the philanthropic sector
- \$1.7m annual funding in 2018-19, rising to expected \$2m in 2020
- Attentive to attracting a pipeline of funders

#### Type of backbone funding

- Mix of flexible and targeted funding structures adopted
- Varied length of funding commitments, but generally multi-year (up to 5 years)

#### Backbone accountability and governance

- Backbone auspiced by Griffith University
- Funding held by community trust
- Currently exploring a new governance structure

#### Clear roadmap for work

- Significant investment on the roadmap and evaluation framework has created clarity for all partners

---

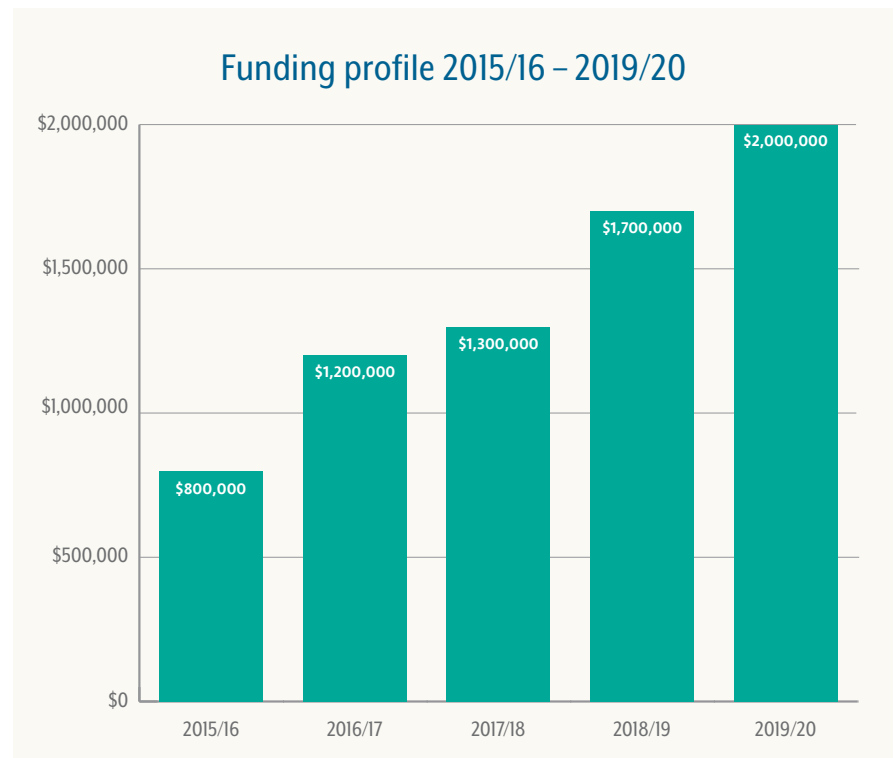
“Funders have agreed to shared reporting requirements. Twice a year we provide a report that goes to all funders – in an agreed format. But government will then ask for additional information to meet their reporting requirements, or philanthropists will ask for a briefing for their board meeting.”

---

– Backbone Director, 2018

The initiative also benefits from strategic support and capability development from philanthropic partners. Through ten20, the initiative has joined the Opportunity Child learning network and gained access to the insights of communities tackling similar challenges across the country as well as access to international community engagement experts, such as Richard Harwood and the Harwood Institute. Dusseldorp Forum also provides in-kind support through its staff and strategic guidance.

With such a large number of funders, the reporting requirements of those funders could expend significant time. Fortunately, Logan has worked with funders to reach agreement on a shared reporting format, but there’s still often additional reporting that sits around the edges.



Logan Together’s backbone structure is enabled through a unique host arrangement with Griffith University and the *Logan Child Friendly Community Trust*. The backbone’s offices and administrative support are provided through Griffith University, while all funding for the backbone is held by the Trust. The Trust was established prior to the Logan collective impact initiative, so was a ready-made and purpose-aligned structure to hold the funds. While this arrangement has served the initiative well to date, a recent review of Logan Together’s governance arrangements identified there would now be merit in Logan moving towards establishing its independent corporate governance, as a non-profit limited by guarantee, to reduce risk of any changes in the arrangement.

The backbone has attracted a large and highly skilled team and leverages external experts as necessary. The backbone currently employs around 12 staff (8 FTE). It is overseen by a backbone Director and a deputy Director, supported by a dedicated team including communications specialists, community engagement and empowerment officers, and administrative staff. The size of the team provides some continuity, should any key staff move on after a period of time.

The backbone has invested in highly skilled people, to ensure their staff have clout when engaging with other system leaders. They leverage subject matter experts to guide the initiative and generate new systems level thinking as necessary. For example, Logan Together has been working with Clear Horizons consultancy and government to develop an evaluation framework for place-based initiatives, and TACSI to look at organisational governance. The backbone has also benefited from having a highly skilled leader, with experience engaging with senior levels of government, non-profits and philanthropy. This has laid the groundwork for effective engagement with funders.

---

**“We found that if we just had mid-career officers, we didn’t have people with the skills and experience to execute - as we wanted to deliver a systemic change. We needed people who could work with leaders. So, we ratcheted up our salary bracket about 50% after the first year or two. That was a bit controversial at the time.”**

---

– Backbone Director, 2018

## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

Logan has formed many long-term funder partnerships across government and non-government that are built on the foundations of a shared commitment to shifting community outcomes through the early years, and to place-based practice.

Early stage momentum for this change initiative came from locally based service providers and political, business and civic leaders who shared a commitment to improving outcomes for Logan’s children and families. Many of these stakeholders have been involved in Logan Together since its inception with Red Cross, Salvation Army, Griffith University, Local, State and Federal government representatives all considered long-term funders.

Logan Together has also been fortunate to partner with mission aligned philanthropic organisations, who’ve been drawn to Logan Together as a perfect testing bed for implementing a community-led, place-based collaboration focused on the early years.

## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

### Shared commitment to community outcomes

- Widely recognised concentration of inter-generational disadvantage and social issues in Logan, particularly acute for children
- Funders aligned on a focus on the early years

### Shared commitment to place-based practice

- Long-term commitment across community to place-based practice
- Broad political support for initiative
- Significant assets to draw on at a local level

## Funder-collaborative partnership dynamics

Logan Together with their philanthropic and government funders have invested significant time into engaging, collaborating and joining up their collective efforts. The resulting partnership is one of trust, which has enabled the traditional power dynamics between funders and the community to begin to shift.

An example of this work in action is Logan Together's 'critical friends' meetings. Through these meetings, funders are invited to come together with the backbone team to understand and advise on the challenges that the team are encountering. This serves not only to keep funders engaged but build their understanding of the work on the ground and leverage their knowledge and networks.

Through this spirit of collaboration, Logan Together's funders have agreed to shared acquittal and reporting against funding. While this format does not serve a funder's every requirement, it demonstrates how funders have been willing to adapt their standard practices in the spirit of enabling the initiative to focus on the work that matters. Through Logan Together, funders are also exploring other innovative arrangements – such as untying funding for a local service provider. This would enable a provider who currently administers dozens of contracts from numerous funders to deliver a user-focussed service, rather than ticking the boxes of dozens of numerous contracts.

Funders have also demonstrated their confidence in the partnership relationship by supporting Logan in bringing in new philanthropic funders. Logan Together's capacity to leverage opportunities presented from the funders network has accelerated the initiative's progress.

## Funder-collaborative partnership dynamics

### Trusted and equitable relations

- Strong and engaged partnerships with wide number of funders

### Adaptable mindsets

- Willingness from funders to adapt – such as through shared reporting requirements

### Aligned relationship expectations

- Agreed focus on tracking progress and outcomes of the work

## Conclusions, and looking forward

Four years into its ten-year effort, Logan Together is on strong footing. It enjoys a sizable funding base, a wide array of cross-sector funding partners, and a pipeline of funding commitments. It is also at a scale that it may be regarded as a less-risky proposition for funders.

Moving forward, there is now the question of whether Logan can successfully mount the case to funders for the additional support it believes is required to sustain its ideal scale. The backbone is currently lobbying for a sustained increase in its funding to a peak of \$2.5 million, to enable it to achieve the transformational change that will really shift the dial for the children of Logan.

A number of lessons can be gleaned from the experience of Logan and its funders to date though, which will be instructive for other funders and initiatives across the country to consider.

### Insights from Logan Together funder-collaborative relationship

- 1 Logan Together's backbone capacity for building and nurturing funding relationships and the funding pipeline has been key to its progress.
- 2 Strong funding for the backbone has made it easier for the backbone team to be attentive to maintaining and expanding funder relationships and look beyond its immediate needs to plan for the future.
- 3 Having a skilled team and leader, with experience engaging with senior levels of government, NFPs and philanthropy laid the groundwork for effective engagement with funders.
- 4 Keeping funders closely engaged and informed, including through the 'critical friends' meetings, has been beneficial in building funders understanding of the work, and leveraging funders expertise.
- 5 Logan Together benefited from the existing assets in the community to establish fit-for-purpose governance arrangements, but now that it has grown, is looking to establish a more permanent and independent entity. This highlights the merit in an initiative periodically revisiting their governance arrangements to ensure they still meet their needs.
- 6 Since ChangeFest 2018 was hosted in Logan, in partnership with Griffiths University, Opportunity Child and Collaboration for Impact there has been national interest in how Logan is working differently with its community. In particular, it has led to a re-frame for the backbone in the way they were working with the cultural leadership and authority in their area. This was a potential breaking point for the collaborative but instead has become a fundamental shift in the way they are working to ensure the effort is community-led, community-determined and community-owned.

## CASE STUDY #5

# Sanderson Alliance

The Sanderson Alliance is a collective impact initiative in Darwin. The initiative focuses on four suburbs in and around the Sanderson electorate – Wulagi, Anula, Malak and Karama – home to 14,298 people. Its purpose is to improve wellbeing for children and young people across the community through local and systemic change.



The initiative began in 2009 when a number of schools began working in partnership with The Smith Family on ways to better support local children and families, with funding from the Federal Government. The initiative picked up speed when it secured funding from the ten20 Foundation in 2016 and was invited to join the Opportunity Child learning community. It has since expanded its alliance partnerships and gained community traction.

Currently, the Sanderson Alliance employs one person full time – the backbone. However, with funding for the role only secured until mid-2019, the financial sustainability of the initiative is in jeopardy, and they are in talks with the Northern Territory government and alliance partners to secure ongoing funding.

## About the Sanderson Alliance

The suburbs of Sanderson sit on the traditional lands of the Larrakia (saltwater) people. The community is a residential area, with extensive parklands and community facilities. It is typical of many of Darwin's Northern Suburbs; the bulk of the population – around 10,000 – is less than 40 years old with around 3,200 young people aged between 0 and 19. There is also a high level of child vulnerability across the community. For instance, over half of

all children in the area (53 per cent) were considered developmentally vulnerable when entering school in 2015, compared to the national average of just 22 per cent<sup>27</sup>.

The story begins in 2009, when four schools (Malak, Manunda Terrace and Karama Primary Schools and Sanderson Middle School) began working in partnership with The Smith Family with the help of Federal Government funding on ways to support children and families. They

continued to meet after funding finished in 2013 and, in 2015, they were joined by Wulagi and Anula Primary Schools. Notably, the impetus for the creation of the Sanderson Alliance came from a recognition that too many of the community's children were not starting school with the best chance for success. There was 'long-term disquiet' among workers of local community services who were ready for change.

<sup>27</sup> Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) 2015 data. 70 children, or 31 per cent of children entering school in the area, were developmentally vulnerable in one or more of the domains listed above. 52 children, or 23 per cent, were developmentally vulnerable on two or more domains

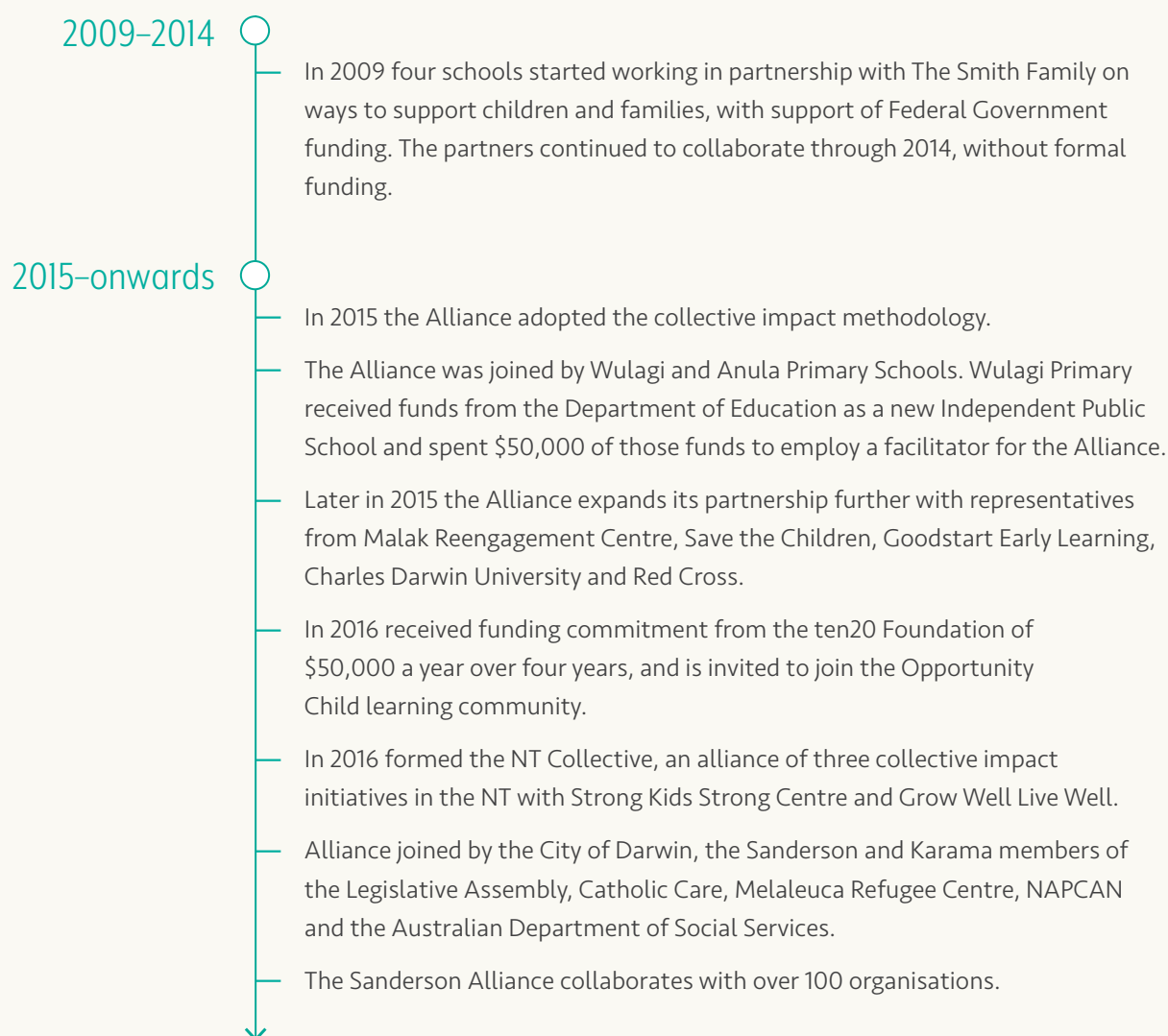
In 2015, the initiative adopted a collective impact approach, when one of the school principals involved came across the framework. The original partners were then joined by local representatives from Malak Reengagement Centre, Save the Children, Goodstart Early Learning, Charles Darwin University and Red Cross. Since 2016 more local organisations have joined including Catholic Care, City of Darwin, the Sanderson and Karama members of the Legislative Assembly, Melaleuca Refugee Support Centre, National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) and the Australian Department of Social Services.

The number of organisations who have participated in a Sanderson Alliance activity is now over 100. Most actively collaborated with Larrakia Nation; Families and Schools Together (FAST) NT; Multicultural Council of the NT; Darwin Aboriginal and Islander Women's Shelter; Healing Foundation; YWCA; Territory Families, Top End Health Service, NT Department of Education, Danila Dilba Biluru Butji Binnilutlum Aboriginal Medical Service, Anglicare; NT Council of Social Services; Casuarina Shopping Square; Karama Shopping Square; Public Health Network; Darwin Community Arts; Alabut Families; Yarning; Indigenous Wellness Centre; NT Domestic Violence Directorate; Corrugated Iron; Dawn House; and the NT Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation.

The initiative gathered momentum when it secured funding from the ten20 Foundation in 2016 and was invited to join the Opportunity Child learning community. At that time, the initiative jointly initiated another learning community, the 'NT Collective', involving itself and two other collective impact initiatives in the Northern Territory – Strong Kids Strong Centre in Alice Springs, and Grow Well Live Well in Palmerston, which neighbours Darwin. Together, these learning and support networks have enabled Sanderson Alliance to achieve more than might have been possible with its limited resourcing. Sanderson works particularly closely with Grow Well Live Well.

The focus of the initiative today is to increase the number of children in Sanderson who are developmentally 'on track' from 47 percent to 78 percent over ten years, to meet the Australian average.

## Timeline of events



Source: The Sanderson Alliance Story (2018)

## The collaborative and funder relationship

The Sanderson Alliance is a small scale collective impact project but has made substantial progress on the initiative's agenda while operating on a shoe string budget. It has historically attracted small funding from philanthropy and government which at the time of writing was due to expire. The future of the initiative is therefore in jeopardy.

### Backbone funding profile

The primary funder of the Sanderson Alliance has been the ten20 Foundation, with contributions from the NT Department of Education and Training, and Wulagi School. As illustrated in the figure below, since 2015, the Sanderson Alliance has attracted funding of around \$50,000 per annum. All funding provided to date has been relatively short term in nature – with commitments of one to three years in length. Existing funding commitments will cease in 2018-2019.

The ten20 Foundation's support included access to the emerging Opportunity Child network which has provided capability development opportunities.

One-off grants to NFP partners have also brought to life pilot programs emerging from the Action Groups, including:

- \$3,800 for Kind and Brave initiative
- \$8,720 for trauma informed training
- \$50,000 for fostering community integration
- \$96,000 for trauma informed youth activities
- \$4,000 for video story telling

### Backbone funding profile

#### Funding partners

- Historically have had a philanthropic government and NFP funder
- \$50,000 annual funding for the backbone in 2018-19
- \$5,000 discretionary budget after salaries

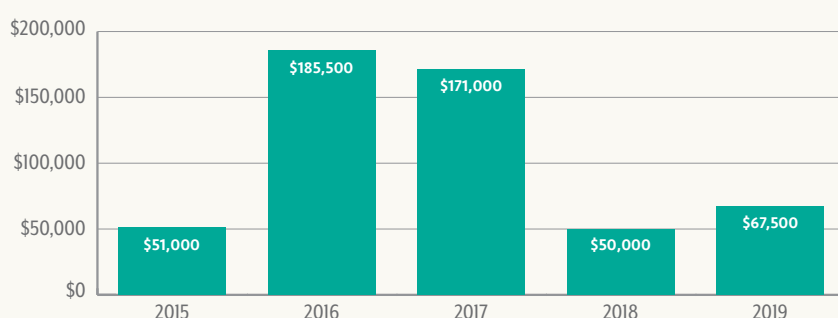
#### Type of backbone funding

- Flexible and targeted funding structures adopted
- 1-4 year funding commitments

#### Backbone accountability and governance

- Backbone auspiced by Wulagi Primary School
- 1 FTE only – backbone leader

Funding profile 2015 – 2019



The initiative also received contributions for operational expenses from NFP alliance partners which totaled \$20,400 from 2015-18, and in-kind contributions, ranging from assistance with data and measurement, through to providing premises for the backbone staff.

The scant funding has made it difficult for the backbone to resource and complete the required work. The backbone consists of 1 FTE – the backbone leader – who is co-located within the Wulagi Primary School. In the early days, this leader was a hired consultant. This shifted with the hiring of a permanent backbone leader in 2016. However, with only one resource, the initiative faces a significant dilemma in allocating time and effort between leading the work of the initiative versus dedicating time to securing future funding.

## Funding the Sanderson Alliance, 2014/15 to 2019/20

### Human Resources 2015 to 30 June 2019

Wulagi	\$51,350
NT Department of Education	\$266,600
Ten20 Foundation	\$150,000
Territory Families	\$10,000
Reform Management Office	\$47,610
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$525,560</b>

“There is just one person who has this huge responsibility... But I have to write funding applications to ensure the security of my job. One of the things that we’ve asked for is an extra person to do the community relationship and participation work. I’m not putting any energy into communications at the moment.”

– Interview with backbone leader

## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

Sanderson Alliance has formed partnerships with funders and service providers based on a shared commitment to lifting outcomes for children in Sanderson, and a commitment to place-based practice as the means to doing so.

The initiative's first partnering schools were drawn together in acknowledgement of the need to lift outcomes for their students, who were more likely to be developmentally vulnerable than their peers across Australia. This rationale saw the head of the NT Department of Education offer funding to back the work (for one year), and later drew the attention of the ten20 Foundation who is mission aligned in support of place-based approaches.

However, the initiative has to date struggled to attract the attention or investment of a broader group of funders. The neighbouring city of Palmerston, on the other hand, has drawn attention for stagnating and deteriorating results through the Australian Early Development Census, for example. The Grow Well Live Well initiative has attained government funding from two tiers of government<sup>28</sup>.

The proximity of the Sanderson Alliance to the Grow Well Live Well initiative is a notable and unique characteristic of Sanderson and may have contributed to funding challenges for Sanderson.

Further complicating the funding context for the Sanderson Alliance is the stressed fiscal position of the Northern Territory Government. The government recently announced it was facing a significant fiscal deficit and sought assistance from the Commonwealth<sup>29</sup>. In this context, it may be more difficult for the initiative to prosecute a case for investment. Sanderson has also had challenges in bringing government into the initiative – in part due to the high turnover of staff in relevant government departments. This turnover affected the cessation of the initiative's funding from the NT Government in 2015, with a change of the department's CEO.

## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

### Shared commitment to community outcomes

- Historical disadvantage in the community, but not a high-profile hot-spot of disadvantage in Australia
- Shared commitment of previous and current funders to focus on the early years

### Shared commitment to place-based practice

- Previous philanthropic partner committed to place-based approach. Mixed buy-in from current funder
- Other potential government funders support 'competing' place-based initiatives in the community, and are cash-poor

28 AEDC (2014), *A is for AEDC, Palmerston*. Accessed at: <https://www.aedc.gov.au/Websilk/Handlers/ResourceDocument.ashx?id=9ab92664-db9a-6d2b-9fad-ff0000a141dd>

29 ABC (2019) *Scott Morrison says Commonwealth taxpayers won't bail NT out of budget blues* accessed at: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-14/prime-minister-rules-out-northern-territory-government-bailout/10712244>

## Funder-collaborative partnership dynamics

The Sanderson Alliance has had a light touch but trusting relationship with its primary funder, the ten20 Foundation, and a strong relationship with its backbone and in-kind supporter, Wulagi primary school. The initiative has also had ad-hoc relationships with government as mentioned above – who have provided limited funding over time.

ten20 has enabled the community to set its own agenda and roadmap for work, consistent with principles of collective impact. At the same time, the foundation's funding conditions have been flexible, relying on meetings to understand the progress and challenges facing the initiative rather than elaborate reporting templates. Nevertheless, the location of the initiative in Darwin has been a factor contributing to lighter touch engagement given ten20 is based in Melbourne.

The initiative enjoys a strong and trusting relationship with the Wulagi school. The backbone leader has worked from a number of the school premises and hot desks in member organisations. Currently the backbone leader is based at Wulagi school and has built strong professional relationships with the school's staff and leadership. This has culminated in the school offering emergency funding support in the final months of 2018-19, to tie the initiative over until a funding partner can be identified.

The Sanderson Alliance has made steady progress engaging with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Through 2018, the Sanderson Alliance worked closely with the Darwin Aboriginal and Islander Women's Service and members of the Stolen Generation community. These conversations resulted in the creation of a multicultural Community of Practice for Trauma Informed Care and Intergenerational Healing. This community has deepened trust and buy-in from the community who have helped frame the conversation about the future of The Sanderson Alliance as *"How do we work together to achieve what Aboriginal families want?"* This puts the conversation about the leadership and governance model of the Sanderson Alliance squarely about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander power and is attracting many more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to participate.

## Funder-collaborative partnership dynamics

### Trusted and equitable relations

- Light touch relationship with funders

### Adaptable mindsets

- Flexible funding from some funders in the past

### Aligned relationship expectations

- Agreed focus on tracking progress and outcomes of the work.

---

**"We know we're in a dangerous position with our funding expiring... We're looking for more government funding, but are cautious to be overly dependent on government as they cannot offer neutrality..."**

---

– Interview with backbone leader

## Conclusions, and looking forward

The Sanderson Alliance is at a critical crossroads. While momentum continues to build particularly around community engagement, the funding landscape remains tight across government and non-government sources.

The initiative continues to work with the support of the local community and is in discussions with potential government funders to extend funding to 2021. They are also interested in how they might attract funding from local businesses.

A number of lessons can be gleaned from the experience of The Sanderson Alliance and its funders to date, which will be instructive for other initiatives and funders to consider.

### Insights from The Sanderson Alliance's funder-collaborative relationship

- 1 The skeleton resourcing available to The Sanderson Alliance has made it challenging to dedicate enough time to fostering relationships with potential funders, while being attentive to the core community work of the initiative.
- 2 Place-based work is heavily relationship focussed – this makes the work of The Sanderson Alliance fragile having just one staff member. Should the leader change or leave, substantial work would be required to re-build those relationships.
- 3 The skills and capabilities required for work of this nature are broad – and impossible for a single person to possess. This is a constraining feature of a backbone of this size.
- 4 The profile of a community, and its location, may have a bearing on the ease of which it can attract funding, particularly from philanthropists.

## CASE STUDY #6

# Connecting Community for Kids

Connecting Community for Kids (CCK) is a community-based collective impact initiative designed to empower parents, children and professionals in Cockburn and Kwinana to drive change needed to improve childhood outcomes in those communities.



 Cockburn and Kwinana, WA

Cockburn and Kwinana are two neighboring cities on the coast of Western Australia, 15-25 kilometers south-west of the city of Perth, and home to about 145,000 people.

CCK was conceived by leaders from non-profit organisations and the State government in 2014, before being tested and affirmed with the communities of Cockburn and Kwinana through 2015 and securing a five-year funding commitment from Woodside Energy through the Woodside Development Fund (WDF). The backbone is auspiced by Child Australia and employs 7 staff (4 FTE).

## About Connecting Community for Kids

Situated on the traditional lands of the Noongar people, the communities of Cockburn and Kwinana are rapidly growing outer-metropolitan areas on the outskirts of Perth, each with their own unique characteristics.

Cockburn has an estimated population of around 112,000, and has a rich mix of historical sites, industrial, commercial and residential areas ranging in age and demographics<sup>30</sup>. Around 2.4 per cent of the population identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. The city is considered a high growth area and has a higher proportion of preschoolers and households with young children than the Greater Perth area. Cockburn also encompasses suburbs with significant SEIFA (Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas) disadvantage.

Kwinana has a population of around 44,000, expected to grow to over 85,000 by 2031<sup>31</sup>. Around 4.5 per cent of the population identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander<sup>32</sup>. The city has a unique industrial and farming history and is home to an impressive nature reserve in The Spectacles. The City is home to a high percentage of young families with children 0-4 and 5-11 years old when compared to the Greater Perth

area, and an increasing culturally and linguistically diverse population, fly-in fly-out families, and long-term residents as a result of housing affordability and availability.

The communities of Cockburn and Kwinana also share an aspiration for their children to have the best start in life. They are home to over 19,000 children between the ages of 0-8 years old<sup>33</sup>. But children here are more likely to be developmentally vulnerable than their peers in Perth, and the services that support children and their families face common issues of service systems gaps and a lack of coordination<sup>34</sup>.

It was in this context that in September 2014, leaders from non-profit organisations and the State Government, identified the benefits of implementing a collective impact initiative in Western Australia. They endorsed an early-years, place-based initiative in the Cities of Cockburn and Kwinana. The idea was then tested and affirmed with the communities of Cockburn and Kwinana through 2015, with seed funding from Woodside Energy, through the Woodside Development Fund. A five-year funding commitment from the WDF was secured in late 2015.

The goal of CCK is to raise the Australian Early Development Census results for Cockburn and Kwinana to the same level of development as the Perth metro area by 2024. Following extensive community consultation with over 825 conversations, the initiative committed to a shared agenda in 2017 which sought to address four common themes to address childhood vulnerability: health; parent isolation; financial strain; and safety. There are now five action groups underway to address these themes.

30 ABS 2018. Regional Population Growth, Australia 2017-18. Catalogue 3218.0

31 Ibid.

32 .id. Accessed: <https://forecast.id.com.au/>

33 ABS. Census 2016.

34 According to the Australian Early Development Census, 2018, 1 in 4 children (27.2%) are developmentally vulnerable in Kwinana, and 1 in 6 in Cockburn (.16.9%)

## Timeline of events

### 2014–2015

- In September 2014 a working group of leaders from State Government agencies and the non-profit sector endorsed an early-years, place-based initiative in the Cities of Cockburn and Kwinana. The two cities committed to the approach.
- In late 2014 one-year funding was provided by the WDF to develop the preconditions for collective impact, as well as develop a governance and operating model.
- Community engagement was undertaken to raise awareness, harness support and identify readiness for the notion of social change and collective working. It also assisted in building community capacity and encouraged ongoing active community representation, participation, engagement and commitment to improve outcomes for children pre-birth to eight in Cockburn and Kwinana.
- In late 2015, the WDF commits to a 5-year, funding agreement. The Partnership Forum Early Years Working Group transitioned to the Joint Commissioning Committee (JCC) and the Joint Leadership Team (JLT) was formed to include service providers directly working in the communities of Cockburn and Kwinana.

### 2016–present

- In 2016 the Collective Team was established to provide the backbone of CCK.
- In 2017 significant community consultation undertaken – with 825 conversations across a diverse range of groups, including with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents.
- In 2017 a shared agenda was agreed between government, community and service providers, which set a high level strategic direction for CCK consisting of five separate approaches identified and agreed upon by the community.
- Launch of the early intervention rapid trials, and the South West metropolitan parenting service.

Source: Community for Kids website, 'Our History', accessed at: <https://www.connecting4kids.com.au/our-history/>

## The initiative and funder relationship

CCK is a medium-scale collective impact initiative that has enjoyed six years of support from a dedicated funder, Woodside Energy, through the WDF. CCK is now looking to build on its success to date and increase the scale of the work. However, they have struggled to attract funding from other sources, particularly state government, and without that support the long-term viability of the initiative is in question. The initiative's current funding contract with Woodside concludes in 2020.

### Backbone funding profile

CCK's resourcing has remained fairly stable. The initiative received funding to develop preconditions for collective impact including the initiative's governance and operating structure. Funding was increased in late 2015, following Woodside's commitment to provide support for the initiative for five years. In the last few months, the CCK has also received a small amount of funding from the WA Department of Communities for a data support role.

The nature of the funding support from the WDF has been flexible. The funding is purposed to support the backbone, with bi-annual reviews on progress against key outcomes undertaken. While Woodside's funding predominantly covers staff costs, some has also been used to support backbone projects.

The backbone employs six staff part time and is auspiced by Child Australia (CA). Staff include a backbone leader (the Partnership Director) as well as two community facilitators, two community engagement officers, and their new data officer. CA receives the funding from Woodside and passes it through to CCK, creating reporting requirements for the initiative to both CA and Woodside. The initiative is governed through the Joint Commissioning Committee and the Joint Leadership Team, and the community work is led by action teams.

### Backbone funding profile

#### Funding partners

- One core funder, Woodside Energy, through the Woodside Development Fund (WDF)
- Recent funding from government for a data role
- Five-year funding commitment followed one-year of initial funding, focused on developing the preconditions for collective impact
- Additional one-off donations and grants, as well as in-kind contributions directed towards action group projects

#### Type of backbone funding

- Five-year funding agreement from the core funder

#### Backbone accountability and governance

- Backbone auspiced by Child Australia and employs 4 FTE (7 staff)

---

**“It means we’re operating at two speeds. We get buy in from community and some momentum, but it then takes time to apply for and get funding. To be able to time it correctly we would need to apply for grant funding ahead of the community’s decision about what action needs to be taken – so pre-empting what the community will decide. Not really authentic collective impact if this is how it is done.”**

---

*– Interview with CCK backbone staff, 2018*

In addition to core funding, the initiative has raised small amounts of funding to enable projects and events emerging from the action groups. These funds have totalled about \$40,000, but each grant has been worth no more than \$5,000. The backbone team has found this process time consuming, estimating it consumes as much as 20 per cent of their attention. The delay in getting access to funding also has implications for maintaining momentum for the community work.

The backbone has a five-year implementation plan that guides their efforts. This informs conversations with Woodside about how CCK will use their core funding in any given year and is used somewhat as a checklist towards the end of a year, allowing flexibility should priorities shift in response to community conditions.

## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

CCK has attracted significant funding from a single funder, Woodside Energy, though the WDF – with whom it enjoys strong strategic alignment.

The WDF has committed \$20 million over 10 years in support of programs and organisations working to decrease developmental vulnerability and improve outcomes for children aged birth to eight years. The WDF was therefore a strong strategic foundation for CCK’s work – which shares a focus on supporting children to thrive.

The WDF is also aligned on the means to achieving this aim – place-based collaboration – and has a history of funding other innovative initiatives across the country. The WDF has supported a range of collaborative models including the Opportunity Child learning network, the Connecting Early Years Networks (WA), and a collective impact initiative on the Dampier Peninsula, in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. While the WDF is committed to making the collective impact approach work with CCK – there are inherent challenges in communicating the impact of this kind of work to a corporate executive – more accustomed to more traditional programmatic funding arrangement, with short-term outputs.

The WDF has evidently navigated this hurdle to date – but it elevates the importance of effective monitoring and evaluation over the medium-term to demonstrate the impact of the initiative, and keep funders aligned.

The political funding ecosystem of Western Australia, however, has proven less accommodating. The timing of the CCK initiative has coincided with a change in government in 2017, which has made it difficult to build awareness and a case for supporting long-term change. The government has since announced support for an alternative early childhood initiative, sidelining existing place-based initiatives across the state<sup>35</sup>. The initiative has some ongoing engagement with government through CCK’s governance groups, but not at senior levels of the bureaucracy.

## Funder-collaborative partnership foundations

### Shared commitment to community outcomes

- Woodside and CCK aligned on a focus on supporting children to have the best start in life

### Shared commitment to place-based practice

- Support from the Woodside Development Fund (WDF) to pursue the collective impact approach, but challenges in raising understanding among Woodside’s internal stakeholders about the nature of the work (non-programmatic, long-term)
- WA Government pursuing alternative early childhood investments

35 Western Australian Department of Communities, ‘Early Years Initiative Launched’, May 2018, accessed: <https://www.communities.wa.gov.au/news/early-years-initiative-launched/>

## Funder-collaborative partnership dynamics

### Trusted and equitable relations

- Supportive relationship and trust between funder and CCK

### Adaptable mindsets

- Willingness from funders to adapt – such as accommodating deviations from the business plan

### Aligned relationship expectations

- Agreed focus of the work and required levels of engagement

## Funder-collaborative partnership dynamics

CCK has a supportive relationship with their core funder, Woodside Energy which is characterised by trust, flexibility and a high level of engagement.

Engagement between CCK and Woodside is in the context of bi-annual reporting, Woodside's participation in the backbone's governance (Joint Commissioning Committee) and other ad-hoc support.

The backbone's reporting has met the needs of Woodside. Albeit, it has been difficult to show progress against defined outcomes given the timeframes required for the work. Woodside is challenged from stakeholders internally, more accustomed to traditional programmatic funding mechanisms, to demonstrate immediate outcomes. Going forward, this may manifest in more detailed bi-annual reporting against outcomes for CCK. The WDF portfolio manager, however, has a sophisticated understanding of the nature of the work, and is supportive of CCK's approach.

With respect to governance, Woodside has a seat at the table but does not intervene in the community-identified direction of the work. Woodside has also leveraged the insights generated through funding other place-based approaches and learning networks, to the benefit of CCK. And has taken an active role advocating for the initiative with government.

## Conclusions, and looking forward

CCK has been fortunate to have the support of a long-term committed funder, providing substantial levels of investment.

This has enabled the initiative to make considerable progress, with five action areas enjoying high levels of community engagement and participation from local services. However, the initiative is feeling contained by its current funding levels and is seeking additional support to enable it to capitalise on community momentum.

The initiative has not been able to attract a wider range of funders to date, and its current funding with Woodside concludes at the end of 2020. The initiative is therefore at a crossroads and will need to turn more of its efforts to securing the funding pipeline over the coming period.

### Insights from Connecting Community for Kids funder-initiative relationship

- 1 Philanthropic funding has provided CCK the flexibility required to adapt to the emerging community needs and pace of progress on the ground – crucial through its establishment phase. To reach scale and achieve maximum impact, however, complementary government funding may be required. CCK suspects that without ongoing government investment, government may also not be as invested in the initiative's success.
- 2 Core funding for the backbone has enabled the backbone's progress, however, CCK would benefit from quick access to funding for pilot projects that stem from the action groups. Chasing project-specific funding has consumed considerable attention for the backbone, and hindered community momentum.
- 3 Aligning community members on a shared agenda is crucial work, but its difficulty can't be underestimated. It requires long lead times and resourcing.
- 4 CCK has benefited from the stability provided by a five-year funding commitment, but the work will take far longer to achieve the change they're seeking.

# Appendix: Participants

## Communities

Daniel Roderick  
Clayton Noble  
**The Hive, Mt Druitt**

Matthew Cox  
**Logan Together**

Karen Cieri  
**Sanderson Alliance**

Sharon Tomas  
**CAPP Dubbo**

Shane Phillips  
**Growing Lachlan**

## Funders

Margot Beach  
**Dusseldorp Forum**

Wendy Mason  
**Opportunity Child**

Caroline Chernov  
Seri Renkin  
**ten20 Foundation**

## Intermediaries

Doug Hume  
Nick Perini  
**Social Ventures Australia**

## Facilitators

Chris Vanstone  
Lauren Anseline  
**TACSI**






---

## Project team




---

## Communities

