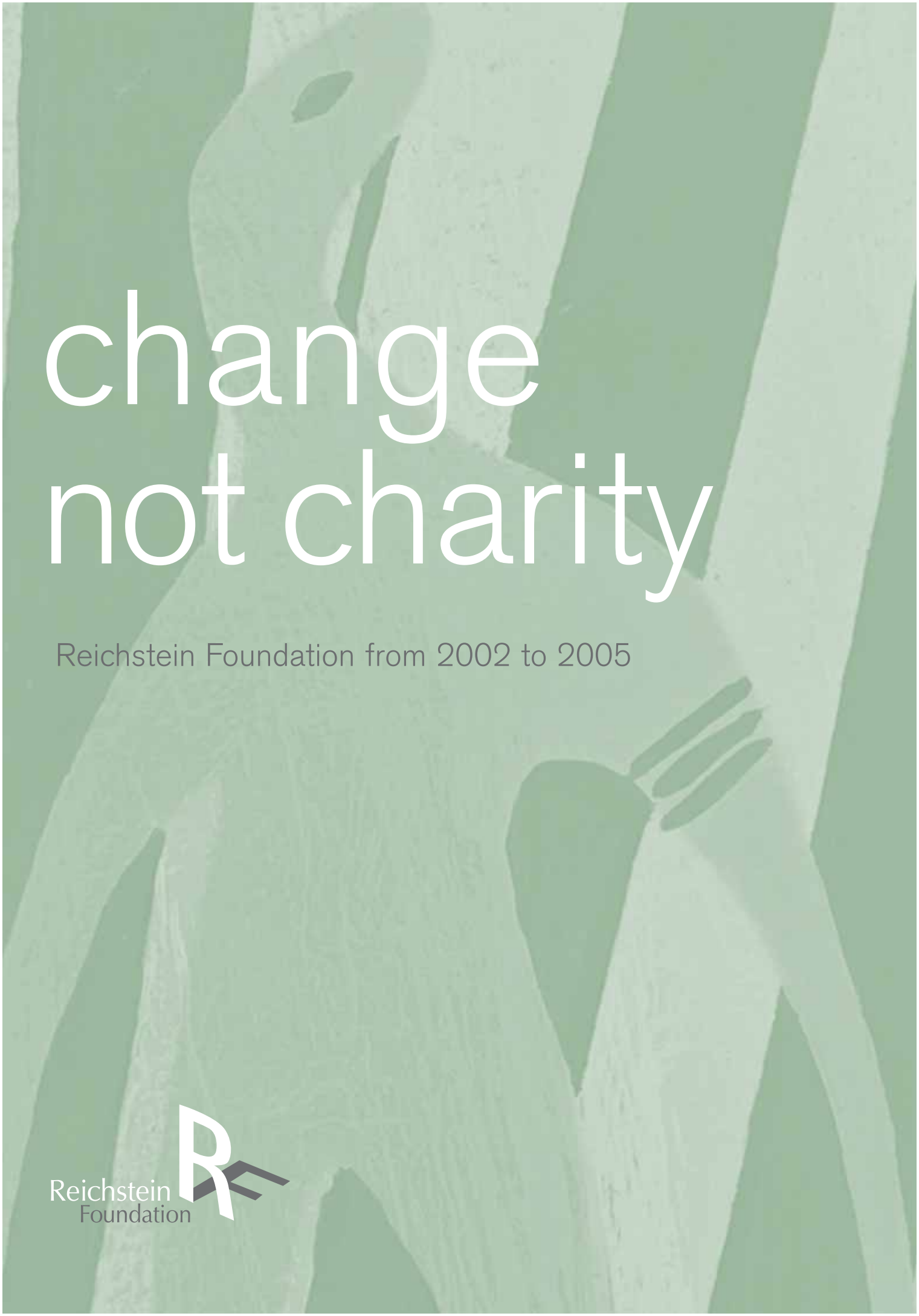

change not charity

Reichstein Foundation from 2002 to 2005

Reichstein Foundation

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our history

The Reichstein Foundation was endowed by Lance Reichstein in 1971. He was born in 1900 into a farming family at Morchard, South Australia. Lance excelled at school and won a scholarship to continue his education and to attend Adelaide University, where he studied engineering.

He founded his company, Industrial Engineering, in 1928. He was an innovator and a risk taker. His company became successful nationally and internationally.

Lance Reichstein set up the Foundation to give back to the community that helped create his wealth. The Foundation continues to build on his legacy by using community building and social justice approaches to its grant-making.

Lance's daughter, Jill Reichstein, is now Chair of the Foundation. After Jill completed a sociology degree at Monash University, she helped establish the first women's refuge in Victoria. She went on to develop community-based childcare for the City of Brunswick, where she gained experience in social planning, community consultation and community development.

Through this work Jill saw how philanthropy could be used creatively to support social change. Inspired by the work of Tracy Gary, who pioneered social change philanthropy in the US, Jill has spent the past fifteen years mentoring others who have inherited wealth. Under Jill's guidance, the Reichstein Foundation has encouraged individuals and foundations to support social change philanthropy projects. In the early 1990s Jill started the Women Donors Network, which was the genesis for the recently created Changemakers Australia, a progressive funder's network.

As Chair, Jill has encouraged the appointment of trustees that have experience working as activists in our priority funding areas.

The family involvement continues with Lucy Larkins, Lance's granddaughter, who is actively involved on the Board. In time his grandson Tom may also join the Board.

Lance Reichstein set up the Foundation to give back to the community that helped create his wealth.

from our chair

The Reichstein Foundation has always been committed to community-based organisations which work for equality and justice. Philanthropy Australia's research of their members' grant giving confirmed that gay and lesbian concerns and issues regarding the criminal justice system received the least philanthropic dollars. In 2001 we selected these two areas as funding priorities because they are often the least popular 'causes' and therefore attract the least funding.

In addition we identified seven other priority areas. These are illustrated in this report by eight project stories.

We are determined to be more accessible and relevant to organisations that are involved in these priority areas. In 2004 the Reichstein Foundation did away with closing dates and maximum funding amounts and is now committed to funding some projects for more than one year. We are growing into this new way of operating, but the response of grant seekers has been positive.

Christa Momot, our Executive Officer, has worked supportively with many of our grant seekers – giving advice about resources and assistance with applications and project development. Although time-consuming, this approach brings forward interesting projects and highlights the need for organisational capacity building by many small community-based organisations.

In 2004 Christa and Kaye Bratetich, the Officer Manager, developed and ran a capacity building program in conjunction with RMIT. It was offered to Indigenous groups that were funded by, or were in contact with, the Foundation. The course and its outcomes are detailed in this report. By all accounts it was enormously successful. If community groups have a better understanding of the way philanthropy can operate in partnership with them, they are more likely to build more sustainable and effective organisations.

With this in mind we encouraged and supported the Collective of Self Help Groups (COSHG) and Victorian Council of Social services (VCOSS) to apply to the Community Support Fund and the Victorian Law Foundation for capacity building resources. They were successful.

One of our key goals is to expand social change philanthropy and to teach people about social justice values in grant giving – for example inclusiveness and accountability. We are very pleased to be involved in the development of Changemakers Australia (CMA), an organisation which seeks to support and educate donors about community generated projects which are aimed at solving the root causes of problems. It urges donors and philanthropic organisations to become more accountable, strategic, inclusive, compassionate and collaborative. The Reichstein Foundation provided an initial seeding grant, is represented on the interim management committee and provides administrative assistance to CMA.

Over the past two years, the Foundation has initiated two donor circles - the Environment Donor Circle (in partnership with the Mullum Trust) and the Refugee and Asylum Seeker Donor Circle (in partnership with the Eastweb Fund). A donor circle brings together individuals and foundations that have an interest in a particular area in order to learn more about the issues related to it and work collaboratively to fund projects.

We also organised five project briefings - where a number of funded organisations described their projects and discussed project outcomes with donors. Briefings on criminal justice; the environment (in partnership with the Mullum Trust); refugee and asylum seekers (in partnership with the RACV Foundation); Indigenous issues (in partnership with Foundation for Young Australians); and same-sex attracted people (in partnership with the Gay and Lesbian Foundation of Australia) were held.

We are determined to be more accessible and relevant to organisations that are involved in these priority areas.

During the last few years, our work with donors has increased considerably, with 72 donors currently registered with us. Registration gives donors access to the Reichstein Foundation's grant giving information. They get access to well researched social change projects and they can work together as part of a community of donors.

It is very exciting that the number of donors who co-fund projects with the Reichstein Foundation has grown - this allows us to support many more projects.

Our vision is to effect social change through strategic, community-based solutions and we rely on our trustees, staff and volunteers, through their connection to community, to accomplish this vision. Christa Momot works creatively with staff, volunteers and trustees to refine and strengthen our model of philanthropy.

Between 2002 and 2005 a number of trustees completed their term and new trustees were appointed. Jenny Florence, Barbara Spalding and Rhonda Galbally all spent many years as trustees and each made a significant contribution to the Foundation through their commitment to innovative and challenging projects for social change outcomes. We thank them for their inspired support. I also thank Kenny Bedford for his involvement with the Foundation, before leaving to work in the Torres Strait Islands.

We welcome Fiona Smith and Ian Seal as trustees. They each bring a wealth of knowledge and direct experience of addressing disadvantage. Their professional lives and community activism are highly relevant to the priority concerns of the Foundation. All our trustees are engaged in project visits and contribute to a number of committees associated with the Foundation's work.

In 2003 we welcomed Kaye Bratetich as Office Manager. She has made a productive contribution to the work of the Foundation.

We have considerable support from volunteers. They enable us to achieve much more than would be possible without them. They add to the knowledge, skills and experience we draw on to meet our goals.

Many of our projects have achieved results beyond expectation; a number of these are highlighted in this report. The Foundation thanks our partners – both donors and community group members – for making this possible.

I thank my fellow trustees, donors, Christa, Kaye and all our volunteers for their commitment to our work. Being involved in philanthropy is a privilege and very rewarding and, whilst it contributes to community wellbeing, it also adds to the lives of all of us who are involved.

Jill Reichstein OAM

from our executive officer

There is a persistent belief that social justice grantmaking requires significant grantmaking resources. It does not. Often times, simply convening people to talk about an issue publicly is enough to begin to influence public opinion and begin to change the system.

Raising the public profile of social inequities that exist related to poor people, people of colour, women, individuals with disabilities, or gays and lesbians does not require large amounts of money. It does require the will and the courage to use the Foundation's cachet to legitimize a topic as being worthy of discussion.

Emmett D. Carson, Reflections on Foundations and Social Justice, Keynote address to the Synergos Institute's Global Senior Fellows Meeting, Oaxaca, Mexico, 2003

So often, philanthropic funding is about providing a maximum sum of money, within a time specified period (usually only one year), with strict closing dates and with an expectation that projects will demonstrate innovation whilst being risk-free.

This is not the climate in which social change occurs.

Social change is best nurtured when the funding body and the recipient form a working partnership to find solutions and when the recipient organisation involves those affected by project outcomes in all aspects of the project.

This process is slow, requires different types of support (capacity building, mentoring, leveraging pro bono support) and assistance with submission and project development. The project funding often comes later.

Various foundations in San Francisco all committed to social change funding, which I visited in 2004, affirmed this formula again and again.

The Reichstein Foundation adopted this process and developed a work plan to increase access to grants. We aligned our activities and processes to complement the way community development takes place.

My work prior to commencement at the Foundation was in community development with very disadvantaged communities in Melbourne's western suburbs, and homeless women and their children.

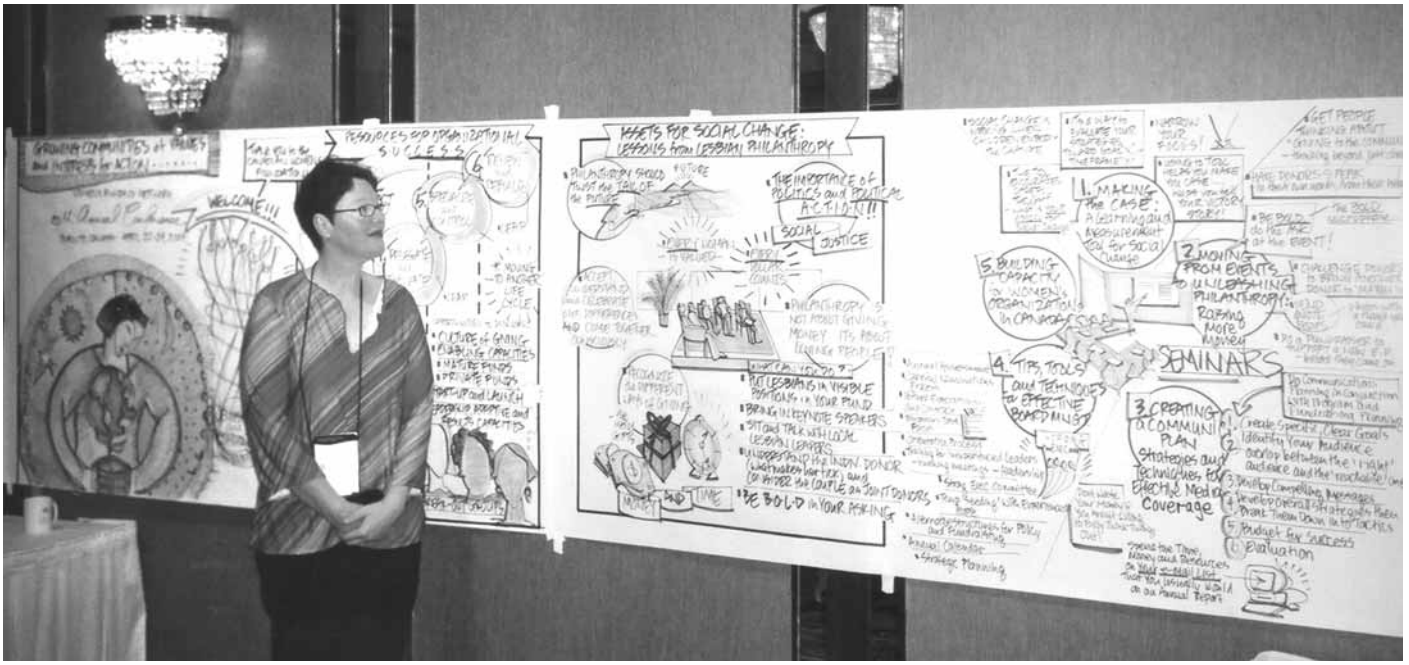
In my current role I have built on my previous experience with project development - except that I can now support this work with access to philanthropic resources.
Our strategic plan lists five goals and the strategies to achieve our mission of Change not Charity. It also outlines the approach to our work with grant seekers in a sustained and satisfying way.

Our goals state that we will work in partnership with community groups, individual donors and other foundations to assist organisations that work on priority issues identified by the Reichstein Foundation. This work includes assistance with project and submission development.

In 2004 and 2005 I ran 23 information sessions and had 52 face-to-face meetings with groups in rural areas. Rural outreach incurs expenses (time and cost) for the Foundation but the rewards are encouraging. Since 2002 the number of rural projects funded has increased.

Capacity building assistance is included as a goal. Community based, consumer controlled organisations require additional support and resources. Often these organisations and groups can't call on people with accounting, legal, management and community development experience. They are run by people who have 'life experience' of the issues but do not always have the formal skills, networks and resources of larger not-for-profit organisations.

The capacity building program (outlined in this report) is a practical way to work with Indigenous organisations. They can become more effective in governance, project development and submission writing and thus more successful in sourcing funds from philanthropy.



This investment of time and resources resulted in a marked increase in project proposals from Indigenous communities. In 2002 and 2003 we funded nine Indigenous projects. In 2004 and 2005 this rose to eighteen.

Working in alliance and collaboration is a key goal to achieve social change. Macro social issues cannot be tackled in isolation. We ask grant seekers to demonstrate their links with peak bodies and relevant stakeholders.

The Foundation contributes to this process by convening a Violence Against Women Network in collaboration with the Victorian Women's Trust. This network brings groups funded by us or the Trust together at quarterly meetings to collaborate on common issues.

Walking the talk is a goal we aspire to. The priority funding areas we have identified form the basis of our own work. We aim to be consistent in our approach to grant making and our own every day operations.

For example, our environmental work included an internal audit that resulted in significant changes to our own practices. We are coordinating a bulk purchase of environmentally friendly (post consumer waste) photocopying paper for use within the philanthropic sector with the assistance of Going Solar.

The life experience of most paid and unpaid staff and trustees aligns with our priority funding areas. This, combined with their skills and commitment to social change advocacy, makes sure that our grantmaking is relevant and accessible.

The work of the last four years has given me a sense of pride and achievement, not possible without the support of the dedicated staff, volunteers, trustees and donors I work with, in particular Jill Reichstein and Kaye Bratetich. Thank you.

Christa Momot

our trustees

Jill Reichstein (Chair)

After graduating from Monash University, Jill Reichstein helped establish the first women's refugee in Victoria. She went on to develop community-based childcare for the City of Brunswick, where she gained experience in social planning, community consultation and community development.

As Chair of the Reichstein Foundation, Jill is actively involved in developing partnerships with the many community groups supported by the Foundation. As a strong supporter of social change philanthropy, Jill was instrumental in establishing Changemakers Australia and is a member of the interim board.

Jill is also currently a board member of the Trust for Young Australians; the Koorie Heritage Trust; Melbourne Community Foundation; and Australia Centre, The University of Melbourne.

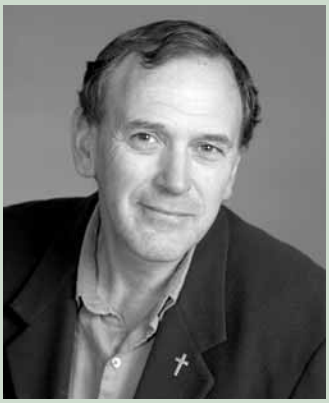
Lucy Larkins

Lucy Larkins is the granddaughter of the late Lance Reichstein. Lucy joined the Reichstein Foundation as a full Trustee in 2001 after turning eighteen. With a commitment to environmental sustainability, Lucy has been actively involved in the Australian Youth Parliament for the Environment. She also has a strong interest in the criminal justice system and, having just finished her final year of a combined Arts/Law degree at The University of Melbourne, plans to spend 2006 travelling and doing voluntary legal work overseas.

Jane Tewson

Jane Tewson moved to Australia from the UK in 2000. In the UK, Jane founded Charity Projects and Comic Relief – the organisation from which the phenomenally successful Red Nose Day was conceived. Jane also founded Pilotlight UK and since relocating to Australia, is Founder and Director of Pilotlight Australia – a catalyst organisation that seeds innovative forms of social action through creative partnerships.

Through Pilotlight, Jane continues her life work – to push the boundaries of philanthropic thinking and action - bringing fresh approaches to achieving social justice. Jane also sits on The Virgin Foundation Board, known as Virgin Unite, and Malvern Central School Council.



Father Peter Norden

Father Peter Norden is a Jesuit Priest, Policy Director of Jesuit Social Services, and an Adjunct Professor in the School of Social Science and Planning at RMIT University. Among his many previous roles, Peter was Chaplain to Pentridge Prison in Melbourne.

Over many years Peter has been involved in addressing concerns in the criminal justice system, drug law reform and strengthening communities in inner-city neighbourhoods. One of his current focuses is research and public policy work highlighting the unequal distribution of wealth in Australia. In conjunction with Professor Tony Vinson, Peter has been investigating locational disadvantage throughout the country and is mapping the concentration of poverty by postcode.

Peter is a National Board Member of the Australian Council of Social Service and the Convenor of the Victorian Criminal Justice Coalition.

Fiona Smith

With over twenty years experience as a public interest lawyer, with Federal and State tribunals, government agencies and the not-for-profit sector, Fiona Smith's energies have focussed on social regulation and policy, anti-discrimination and human services.

Fiona has a long history of involvement with self-help groups and as a human rights and social justice advocate. As a woman with a physical disability, Fiona has personal experience of disadvantage. Through work with others, she has made a significant contribution to advocacy regarding systemic discrimination.

In 2004, Fiona was appointed to a sessional role as Chairperson of the Equal Opportunity Commission. She is also Chair of the Business Licensing Authority and an Ambassador for the Melbourne Community Foundation.

Ian Seal

Ian Seal has been a teacher, a youth worker, a consultant to government, a tutor/lecturer, and a community project worker. Ian is active in a number of areas with young people who are marginalised – creating safe schools for same-sex attracted young people, advocating for improvements to the foster care system, developing models for connecting disadvantaged young people to school and community, and identifying ways in which schools in disadvantaged communities can work with families to support the wellbeing of their young people.

Ian is a member of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Gay and Lesbian Health and in 2003 was awarded a Centenary Medal for service to improving sexual health outcomes for rural and marginalised youth.

our trustees

our workers

Staff

Christa Momot
Executive Officer

Pep Dalton
Admin & Finance Officer
(Sept 2001-June 2002)

Fae Wilson
Admin & Finance Officer
(July-August 2002)

Mandy Bathgate
Office & Communications
Manager (Sept 2002-
June 2003)

Kaye Bratetich
Office Manager
(from June 2003)

Judith Freidan
Finance Administrator

Volunteers

Marlee Bundle
Administration worker

Patricia Foster
Community Development
worker

Deborah Greene
Archiving project worker

Jenni Mitchell
Archiving project co-ordinator

Beng Neoh
Community Development
worker (in training)

Adriana O'Donnell
Granting/Donor Liaison
project officer

Heather Osland
Administration and
reception worker

Mark Samuel-King
Community Development
worker

Chris Soderiou
Community Development
worker

Whitney Solomon
Administration worker

Barbara Wilson
Resource Library Co-ordinator

Students on fieldwork placement

Helen Dobbyn
Community Development
Student

Derek Fagan
Social Work Student

Rachel Lowe
Community Development
Student

Beng Neoh
Community Development
Student

Marie Theophanides
Social Work Student

Traineeships

Norma Seip
Leadership Plus

Russell Smith
Indigenous Philanthropy
Internship

Whitney Solomon
Administration Trainee
(Certificate III in Business
Administration)

our priorities for grants

The Reichstein Foundation receives many requests for assistance from very different groups and organisations. To be considered for funding community groups must:

- actively work towards the pursuit of human rights and social justice for disadvantaged members of the community;
- involve consumers in the management and decision making of the group; and
- use community development processes to address concerns.

To assist both potential grant recipients and the Foundation, priorities are set to guide our grant giving. Currently, our priority is to support:

- Indigenous peoples;
- people with a disability; and
- refugees and asylum seekers.

We also fund projects which address:

- violence against women;
- justice and correctional issues;
- environmental sustainability;
- discrimination against same-sex attracted people;
- concerns of regional and rural communities; and
- concerns of the western metropolitan region of Melbourne (in recognition of Lance Reichstein's involvement in this area).

Projects that result in structural change are our priority, with the common thread of our granting being the promotion of human rights and sustainability. By this we mean dignity, fairness and justice for all people; self-determination for Indigenous peoples; safety, respect and wellbeing for marginalised people; and care and protection of our natural environment.

In this report, each priority granting area is illustrated by a project story, one of many. Each story outlines the driving motivation for the project, the way the funded group or organisation/s acted on their concerns, the alliances and partnerships established, and the outcomes achieved.

Each story demonstrates that with vision, will, strategic thinking, collaboration, resources and hard work, groups of people can, and do, make a sustained difference – to their own lives, the lives of others, their community and the environment.

year funded 2002

Action for Community Living Leadership Plus $20,000

Action for Community Living No Limits – Disability Media $26,000

Action for Community Living with Disability Support Workforce campaign group Stakeholders Forum "Who Cares – ensuring the quality of attendant care support services" $6,500

Action for More Independence and Dignity in Accommodation Past, Present and Future (Supported Residential Services – Peer Education Kit) $8,000

Action on Disabilities within Ethnic Communities From Carer Support to Empower $15,000 This project was supported by Melbourne Community Foundation Discal Fund

Broadmeadows Uniting Care – FairWear Campaign Promotion of the No Sweat Shop Label, Accreditation Process & Homeworker's Code of Practice $20,000 This project was supported by R. Swart

Brotherhood of St Laurence and Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation Treaty Consultation Project "Fanning the flames of Reconciliation" $15,000

Brotherhood of St Laurence with Catholic Commission for Development, Justice and Peace The Human Rights Alliance of Australia $20,000 This project was supported by Fleur Spitzer

City of Port Phillip Elwood/St Kilda Neighbourhood Learning Centre $6,000

Collective of Self Help Groups A self help forum – Sharing our Knowledge $5,000

Communications Law Centre Telecommunications: Disability and Unfair Practice $12,800

Darebin Community Legal Centre Temporary Protection Visa Holders Access Worker $14,500 This project was supported by Precision Foundation

Disability Discrimination Legal Service Sexual Offences and Disability Project $20,000

Disability Justice Advocacy Inc. Safe Transport Campaign Coordinator $38,000 over two years

Elizabeth Hoffman House From Shame to Pride donation $1,000 This project was supported by Rick Begg

Environment Defenders Office On the Ground in Victoria's Native Forests: Protocol and Education $2,093

Environment Victoria Victorian Graphic Information and Logistics Database $20,000 This project was supported by Precision Foundation

Environment Victoria Save Goolengook $3,000 This project was supported by the Mullum Trust

Family Planning Victoria and Cutting Edge Same-Sex Attracted Youth Shepparton $20,000

Footscray Community Arts Centre and Performing Older Women's Circus Women Alone $5,000

Footscray Community Arts Centre with the Performing Older Women's Circus Same/Different $30,000

Footscray Community Legal Centre and Energy Action Group Redlining in Essential Services $6,500

our stories

Free Kindergarten Association of Victoria Inc. Empowering early childhood professionals to advocate on behalf of asylum seeking children and their families $15,000

Friends of the Earth Melbourne and Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation Barmah-Millewa Liaison Project $20,000 This project was supported by E.M. Horton Trust

Holden Street Neighbourhood House Inc Northern Fitzroy Housing Estate Community Participation Project – Community Development worker $3,000

Human Rights Centre for Mental Health Inc and Western Region Community Garden Group Footscray Community Garden: A food security and community building project $3,000

Jesuit Social Services – St Ignatius Centre for Social Policy and Research Prisons: The new asylums of the Third Millennium $15,000

Melbourne City Mission in partnership with Western Young Peoples Independent Network Supporting Refugee and Migrant Young People to Lead Themselves $11,000 This project was supported by Fleur Spitzer

Melbourne Workers Theatre No! by Andrea James $10,000

Mental Health Legal Service Involuntary Patient Experience of the Mental Health Review Board $40,000 over two years

Mietta Foundation Presentation of Forum Series $30,000 over three years

Lee Joachim, Chairperson Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation

Justice for land and people

Barmah-Millewa is the largest river red gum forest-wetland in the world. Its current ill health is attributed to non-Indigenous mis-management. Daily degradation by cattle grazing and logging is of great concern to Yorta Yorta Elders, but management using traditional knowledge of land can restore the forest to good health.

The Yorta Yorta see the forest from a holistic viewpoint. The forest nurtured our ancestors and provided for them…. In turn, the Yorta Yorta looked after the forest and nurtured it for the future. And when these practices and methods of forest management and care are measured against more recent events, it is clear that they have an excellent track record that stands firm in its own right.

Yorta Yorta Murray Goulburn Rivers Clans Inc

While their unsuccessful Land Claim was under appeal in 1999, the Yorta Yorta Nation considered other political strategies to achieve land justice and protection of their cultural heritage. A jointly managed Barmah-Millewa national park was seen as a way to protect a very important tract of their heartland, and to gain a big say in its management. In collaboration with Friends of the Earth Melbourne they set out to pursue the goal of making the Barmah-Millewa forest a national park.

The project was groundbreaking on two main counts. First, the project partners recognised that the Yorta Yorta Nation has sovereign rights to speak for country. The joint management model for the proposed national park contains the same principle. It proposes direct Indigenous decision-making through a majority of Yorta Yorta Nation people on the Board of Management.

Second, this model of joint management of the forest will require a legislative framework that in turn will support joint management agreements with Indigenous peoples throughout Victoria. In the Barmah-Millewa region, the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation meets to make decisions with the Council of Elders, representing the sixteen family groups of the region. All joint management agreements need to respect local decision-making processes.

Environmentalists have not always appreciated this viewpoint. As Jonathan La Nauze, Barmah-Millewa Forest Liaison project coordinator from Friends of the Earth puts it:

… greenies and traditional owners come from a different place, but we can make perfect allies. On the Murray there is so much we have in common – but it takes time and commitment to develop the necessary relationships and it requires that we (greenies) do away with our assumption of being rightful occupiers of the land.

The Barmah-Millewa Forest Liaison project, funded in partnership with a private donor, E.M. Horton Trust, goes to the heart of developing this relationship. The Yorta Yorta Nation and Friends of the Earth

Moreland Council and Y-Glam Performing Arts Project $15,000

NIDKids Support Group Ltd NIDKids Coordinator $10,000

Positive Women (Vic) Inc A Positive Pregnancy Experience: Information for HIV positive women who are considering having a baby or who are already mothers $15,000

Project Respect Inc From anecdotes to action, from recording data to creating reform: laying the foundations for effective advocacy by women in marginalised communities $15,000

Reconciliation Australia Ltd Community Education Materials $15,000

Reinforce Inc Capacity Building Grant $7,340

Salvation Army, Inner South Domestic Violence Service and Winja Ulupna Women's Service Indigenous Women's Domestic Violence Education Program $9,000 This project was supported by Precision Foundation

Star Victoria Inc Inclusive Education – Inclusive Communities $10,000

Statewide Women's Community Housing Service Women with Disability and Housing Advocacy Group $14,500

Swinburne University of Technology Action Research Project $3,000

Tenancy Support & Consultancy Services – Loddon Mallee Ltd Prison Housing Information Project $14,000

Today-Tomorrow Foundation Community Action: The Crossing Place $15,000

Uniting Church Promoting Inter-Cultural Dialogue in Victoria: A pilot project $20,000

Participants of the Dharnya Conference, Oct 2005

were funded to provide media liaison, community education, skill-sharing, and public presentations on the benefits of an Aboriginal-owned and managed Barmah-Millewa National Park.

Consultations involving Yorta Yorta people, reconciliation supporters and environmentalists have been vital in forging partnerships and the formation of a long-term community learning strategy. Through forums, camps, workshops, barbeques and gatherings, a dialogue on land rights was created in the community – with the Yorta Yorta voice at the heart of it.

And there was far more to the conversation than learning about Indigenous attachment to land. Non-Indigenous people had to think about their own interest in land, and their own connections to country. It all took time. The people involved in the partnership organisations started with discussions amongst themselves before involving other local groups and then moving to wider public forums.

This liaison project has led to better understanding and awareness of Yorta Yorta connections with country by key stakeholders and the broader local community, especially environmentalists and environmental groups. A joint statement by all stakeholders has endorsed Indigenous ownership of the proposed Barmah-Millewa National Park.

The project also added to government agency awareness. For example, the terms of reference for the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's Red Gum Investigation now include investigation of possible Indigenous involvement in land management.

Because of these new conversations, understandings and alliances, a co-managed Barmah-Millewa National Park is a lot closer to realisation. One day soon, traditional land management of this ancient place will begin the steps to restore Barmah-Millewa's delicate ecosystem to health.

Project:
Barmah-Millewa Forest Liaison
Organisations:
Yorta Yorta Nation in collaboration with Friends of the Earth, Melbourne
Priority areas:
Indigenous people
Environmental sustainability
Regional and rural concerns

Uniting Church Australia – Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Community Advocacy Project $21,000 This project was supported by Claire McNamara and Hartline a sub fund of Melbourne Community Foundation

Upper Murray Family Care Indigenous Women, Law and Leadership Workshop $1,500 This project was supported by Fleur Spitzer

Victorian Aids Council Anti Violence Project $10,000

Victorian Arabic Social Services Inc Temporary Protection Visa Refugees Support Network $10,000

Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture Inc with Pilotlight Australia Project Director $38,000 over two years

Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition VIRWC Volunteers Support $10,000

Western Region Centre Against Sexual Assault Inc (WestCASA) and Horn of Africa Community Network Partnership in Action: Addressing Sexual Assault Issues with Horn of Africa Communities $18,273

Western Suburbs Legal Service Inc It Could Be You $5,000

Western Suburbs Legal Service Inc and Refugee Action Refugee Voices Project $12,000

WiN Support Services And Western Homeless and Housing Action Network Community Advocacy to Review Local Office of Housing Policy $13,000

Women's Housing Ltd and VCOSS Housing is a Human Right $20,000

Working Women's Health Women's Report Card $15,000 This project was supported by Fleur Spitzer

Our stories:

Level crossings aren't level for all

On 25 October 2001, Chris Jones, a long-time campaigner for public transport safety for people with disabilities, was hit by a train and killed at a level crossing. Chris wasn't able to get out of the way of the train in time. Those who knew and respected him felt loss, anger, profound sadness and a determination to continue his struggle to make public transport accessible and safe for all users. Chris worked with others in this struggle – he was a board member of Disability Justice Advocacy at the time of his terrible death. In December 2001 another wheelchair user was killed at the Noble Park level crossing.

The public transport system developed at a time when most people with disabilities were hidden from view in institutions or in dependent domestic circumstances. Now people with disabilities are more visible and mobile, but public transport's rolling stock, lines, operation and maintenance have changed little. All public transport users are vulnerable, but people with a disability are more vulnerable.

With funding from the Reichstein Foundation, Disability Justice Advocacy, an advocacy organisation for people with disabilities, formed the Safe Transport Action Group (STAG). The group set about raising awareness; building alliances; promoting the importance of safety and stressing the urgency of a safer transport system. They understood the deep-seated, structural dimensions of unsafe public transport and were committed to advocating for long-term change, not a quick fix.

Members of the group point out that economic rationalist policy had a devastating effect on safety. Privatisation of public transport rationalised staff - which leaves stations without staff. Privatisation puts pressure on the bottom (financial) line – which leaves level crossing maintenance in an unsatisfactory state. Worse still, the government sold off different parts of the public transport 'system' to different companies. With no one agency responsible for all aspects of the system, the buck for safety had nowhere to stop.

Although STAG speak of the death of Chris Jones as the starting point, the project always stressed the universal benefit of safe public transport for all users. A coronial inquest after Chris' death severely criticised the Department of Infrastructure.

STAG got public transport safety issues widely publicised, and used this platform to challenge the status quo and put pressure on for improvements. Members worked on several fronts.

There was overwhelming public support for the call that something must be done. The media were interested in the story.

STAG called upon the government to take responsibility for their issues regarding safety on public transport with consistent, concerted and committed action.

Strong alliances formed and were very effective. Disability Justice Advocacy, the organisation that auspiced STAG, launched a disability discrimination complaint at the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. This concluded two years later at the Federal Court. Although the results are confidential, systemic change was achieved.

Sustained community pressure, active participation by consumers in consultations, well-formed arguments, conscientious involvement of STAG members, and the contribution of many other disability activists, combined to achieve long and short-term results. Most importantly, government has agreed that level crossings will be made safe and will be maintained to remain so - $12.5million has been allocated to this end.

Another positive outcome is that people with a disability are now represented on relevant government public transport administrative bodies. The government is willing to be held accountable and there is a better chance that future governments will attend to the needs of all public transport users.

Year funded 2003

Action for Community Living Disability Media – No Limits $20,000

Action for More Independence and Dignity in Accommodation Raising Our Voices Radio Show $2,500

ALSO Care and Benevolent Society Inc. and Victorian Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby Making it Equal – Achieving Federal Gay & Lesbian Law Reform $20,000

Asylum Seeker Resource Centre Campaign for Change $20,000

Broadmeadows Uniting Care – FairWear Campaign Promotion of the Homeworker's Code of Practice and No Sweat-shop Label and Participation in Outwork legislation Campaign $20,000 This project was supported by E.M. Horton Trust

Brotherhood of St Laurence-Ecumenical Migration Centre Making Justice For Refugees a Reality $20,000 This project was supported by Fleur Spitzer

Brotherhood of St Laurence-The Torch Project Re-igniting Community North West $5,000

CASA House, Royal Women's Hospital and 16 Days Violence Against Women Working Group 16 Days Campaign Coordination $5,000

Child and Family Services Ballarat Family Violence in the News $20,000

Clean Ocean Foundation State Ocean Outfall Audit $5,000 This project was supported by the Mullum Trust

Collective of Self Help Groups The COSHG Rural Roadshow $10,000

Community Connections (Vic) Ltd Cross Cultural Awareness in Warrnambool and the District $8,000

The introduction of a 1800 phone number to report level crossing damage and maintenance requirements is another appropriate, practical outcome of this project. Trackwalkers and engineers will be trained in disability awareness.

This project harnessed the enthusiasm, knowledge and determination of many individuals with a disability. It connected individuals and groups in solid alliances who worked together to enhance their public transport safety, dignity and rights.

Project:
STAG - Safe Transport Action Group
Organisation:
Disability Justice Advocacy
Priority area:
People with a disability

Community Connections (Vic) Ltd, Warrnambool Public Tenants Association and Portland Public Tenants Association Training for Committee Members $3,000

Daily Activities and Self Help Inc and ASPIRE Reaching Out $5,000 This project was supported by an anonymous donor

Darebin Community Legal Centre Administration and Law Reform Worker $10,000 This project was supported by an anonymous donor

Disability Discrimination Legal Service About Change – About Justice – About Time $20,000

Disability Justice Advocacy Safe Transport Action Group $20,000

Disability Justice Advocacy Inc Opening the Doors media campaign $5,000

Elizabeth Hoffman House From Shame to Pride $10,000 This project was supported by Melbourne Community Foundation E. M Horton Family Fund

Emergency Accommodation and Support Enterprises Inc. (EASE) Women's Rights and Legal Response $25,000

Emma House and Violence Against Women Integrated Services Raising Our Voice $20,000

Federation of Community Legal Centres ChangeXchange $10,800

Fitzroy Legal Service Activists Handbook – Our Rights 2nd edition $10,000

Flat Out Inc. Children: Unacknowledged Victims of Social Justice $20,000

Our stories:

Until we have a just, safe and welcoming environment...

Footscray Community Arts Centre Shadowlands $7,000 This project was supported by R. Swart & Sandra Bardas

Footscray Community Arts Centre and Wyndham Community Arts Alliance A Hole in the Ground $10,000

Free Kindergarten Association Children's Services Advocating, promoting and supporting refugee children's rights $20,000

Friends of the Earth Melbourne and Environment Victoria Biodiversity Information Strategy $20,000

Genetic Support Network of Victoria Outreach to Rural and Regional Victoria $7,000

Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Project Asylum Seeker Community Advocacy $25,518 This project was supported by Melbourne Community Foundation Morawetz Social Justice Fund & Brencorp Foundation

Inner East Community Health Service and Victorian Medicare Action Group Building Community Capacity to Improve Health Care $30,000

Jesuit Social Services Building Community Justice in Victoria $15,000

Jesuit Social Services with Victorian Criminal Justice Coalition Keeping Justice Within the Criminal Justice System $3,500

Maldon Neighbourhood Centre Inc. Social Justice Officer $8,000

Public Tenants Advice and Referral Service – Tenancy Support & Consultancy Services (Loddon-Mallee) Ltd Family Violence – Office of Housing Public Response $20,000

Refugee & Immigration Legal Centre Inc. East Timorese Legal Representation Project $30,000

When asylum seekers come to Australia for protection, they are either placed in an immigration detention centre or they live in the community, depending on their status on arrival. Complex policy dictates the different visa classes during and after the determination process. Very variable welfare, income support, education, health and employment entitlements are accorded to visa holders.

Many asylum seekers have no entitlements at all – no right to work, no income, no right to Medicare, no right to any welfare payment - they often live in extreme poverty. How do they survive?

Hotham Mission helps many with housing, payment of utilities, emergency relief money, compassionate personal support, and referrals to other groups that may be able to help.

However, Hotham Mission's response to the plight of asylum seekers does not end with practical, material assistance and support. Practical help is the beginning of a comprehensive research, policy and advocacy response to the people and their situation. Hotham Mission's advocacy is designed to persuade government to adopt more welcoming, supportive and just policy responses to asylum seekers.

Although many church and community members already support this work, Hotham Mission needs broader community awareness and understanding to grow active support for policy change and law reform, and thus strengthen their capacity to influence governments.

The Asylum Seeker Community Awareness project makes the constraints, concerns and difficulties confronting asylum seekers – both in detention centres and in the community – more visible. Greater community knowledge and understanding also comes through the involvement of more people in direct services and action for policy change. The number of asylum seeker support networks, and the number of people who work in them, has increased across metropolitan and rural Victoria.

The dire position of asylum seekers engenders deep compassion in many people, but in others their presence evokes fear, loathing and misunderstanding. This divided response causes deep social division where complex asylum seeker issues are often portrayed in 'black and white'. Through careful collation and analysis of 'real life' situations confronting asylum seekers, the Asylum Seeker Community Awareness project has contributed an essential information base for the development of alternative policy responses to detention and to entitlement rights.

Another important component of long-term policy change is engagement with decision makers on a level where they can see workable, alternative, community-based approaches to detention in action first hand. On-going liaison and invitations to visit community-based facilities create opportunities to show the impact of current policy on asylum seekers and to demonstrate the realities of an alternative approach.

This project makes anecdotes, personal stories, statistics and research available to government. Influencing decision makers with such material assists in meeting the long-term goal of policy change.

The work of the Asylum Seeker Community Awareness project is strengthened through alliances and partnerships with many organisations. Partnerships which expand community reach; change minds, views and behaviour towards asylum seekers; increase practical assistance given; complement work undertaken; confirm research outcomes; consolidate the demand for social change and give hope to thousands men, women and children.

The Reichstein Foundation, in partnership with The Scanlon Foundation, the Melbourne Community Foundation and the Morawetz Social Justice Fund, is proud to be part of this compassionate, comprehensive, collaborative and effective network of alliances.

Project: Asylum Seeker Community Awareness
Organisation: Hotham Mission
Priority area: Refugees and asylum seekers

Refugee Council of Australia
Refugee Policy and Advocacy Project $20,000

St Mary's House of Welcome
Homeless Peoples' Association $10,000 This project was supported by The Panel Christmas Wrap Ltd

Tenancy Support and Consultancy Services LTD (Loddon-Mallee), Centre Against Sexual Assault (Loddon Campaspe) and Emergency Accommodation and Support Service Access to Justice in the Loddon Campaspe Region $20,000

The Butterfly Foundation
Outside Looking In $10,000

Uniting Care Outreach Mission
Social Change Model $5,000

VicServ – Psychiatric Disability Services of Victoria Inc.
Promoting Social Justice Community Participation for Persons with Mental Illness $3,000

Victoria Mental Illness Awareness Council Rural Outreach $20,000

Victoria University and Iramoo Sustainable Living Precinct, and Friends of the Striped Legless Lizard
Advocating for Wildflower Grassland Conservation and Ecologically Sustainable Living in Outer Western Melbourne $10,000 This project was supported by Belinda Gross & an anonymous donor

Victorian Council of Social Services
Community Sector Clearing House and Governance Training Project – Stage 1 $10,000

Victorian Council of Social Services
Federal Charities Legislation 2003: Resourcing the community sector response $3,500

Victorian Women's Trust and Women for a Humane Refugee Policy Women for a Humane Refugee Policy Development Activities $3,000

Western Suburbs Legal Service
Reprint of Asylum Seeker Poster $800

Refugee children have the same rights as all children

The voices of children are amongst the least heard in our community. This is never truer than in the case of refugee children who are denied equal services, adequate care and human rights in Australia.

Real Rights for Refugee Children (RRRC) works to release children from detention; develop and distribute resources to refugee children and those working with them; and advocate for the support that children and families need to recover from the distress, harm and trauma of detention.

Project group members are early childhood professionals who subscribe to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics. These documents give all early childhood professionals a responsibility, and a clear mandate, to be concerned about and act for refugee children. Members of RRRC are acutely aware of the rights and needs of children. They recognise the vulnerability of children and their rights to a safe and healthy environment, security, respect, education, to live as part of a family with an identity, culture and language, and to have an advocate so their voices will be heard.

There are many significant outcomes from the Real Rights for Refugee Children project that will reap ongoing benefits for all refugee children and their families.

Early Childhood Australia, the peak national advocacy and policy body for the early childhood sector, now has a clear policy supporting the rights of refugee and asylum seeker children. This policy is promoted by the organisation and is displayed on its website.

Five thousand colourful posters with pictorial and multilingual information are displayed in Victoria's early childhood services. Five thousand comprehensive information sheets, which can be easily copied, are circulating in the community. Three thousand Real Rights for Refugee Children logo stickers are on fridges, cars, bikes, shop windows, notice boards, filing cabinets and students' folders. These materials spark discussion and action within centres, teacher education institutions, community services and families. Requests to RRRC for information, articles, training and speakers have a ripple effect beyond early childhood. For example, interest from primary schools led to another project, also funded by the Reichstein Foundation, to update information for primary schools and to prepare a comprehensive teaching resource for all schools.

The Real Rights for Refugee Children project has built a broad alliance between early childhood education services staff, parents and children; other children's services; refugee advocacy groups; and local government – in Victoria and in other states.

The human rights perspective of the refugee and asylum seeker issue has often been clouded by political motivations, narrow interpretations and legal jargon. This project highlighted human and human rights dimensions by promoting equality and by providing facts, information and support to a sector that understands the vulnerability of children and has some capacity to change their lives.

After pressure from many directions the federal government altered its policy regarding refugee children in detention. Neither the new policy, nor the policy of the federal opposition, fully meets the demands of the Real Rights for Refugee Children (RRRC) project group. Their demands are based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Nevertheless, the project rightly claims a significant role in raising awareness and creating the environment that led to this policy change.

Project:
Real Rights for Refugee Children
Organisation:
Free Kindergarten Association Children's Services
Priority area:
Refugees and asylum seekers

Wilderness Society (Vic Branch) Addressing Social Central Highlands Rescue Campaign $10,000 This project was supported by E.M. Horton Trust & Emil Gross

Women with Disabilities Australia Improving the Status of Women with Disabilities in Australia $20,000

Women's Health Goulburn North East/Cooroonya House Towards Integration $20,000

Year funded 2004

Action for Community Living with Attendant Care Workforce Action Group Attendant Care As It Should Be $18,000 This project was supported by an anonymous donor

Advocacy and Rights Centre Limited Loddon Campaspe Justice Campaign $9,830 This project was supported by Fleur Spitzer

Alternative Life Style Organisation Foundation in partnership with Australian Gay & Lesbian Multicultural Conference Australian Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer Multicultural Conference: Living and Loving in Diversity $9,000

Australian Conservation Foundation in partnership with Cardinia Environment Coalition Community Engagement in Sustainability Indicators in Cardinia Shire $15,000

Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative, in partnership with The Torch Project Reigniting Community – Bendigo & Castlemaine $15,000

Brenda House with Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre Violence Against Women With a Disability $3,000 This project was supported by Fleur Spitzer

Broadmeadows Uniting Care – FairWear Campaign Participation in Outwork Legislation, Community Education and Ongoing Promotion of the Homeworkers' Code of Practice $20,000

Carers Victoria Developing a Carer Voice About the Residential Aged Care System $8,000

Changemakers Australia Seeding grant $20,000

Collins Street Baptist Church – Urban Seed Fair Gambling $15,000

Disability Advocacy and Information Service Focus on Access $5,000

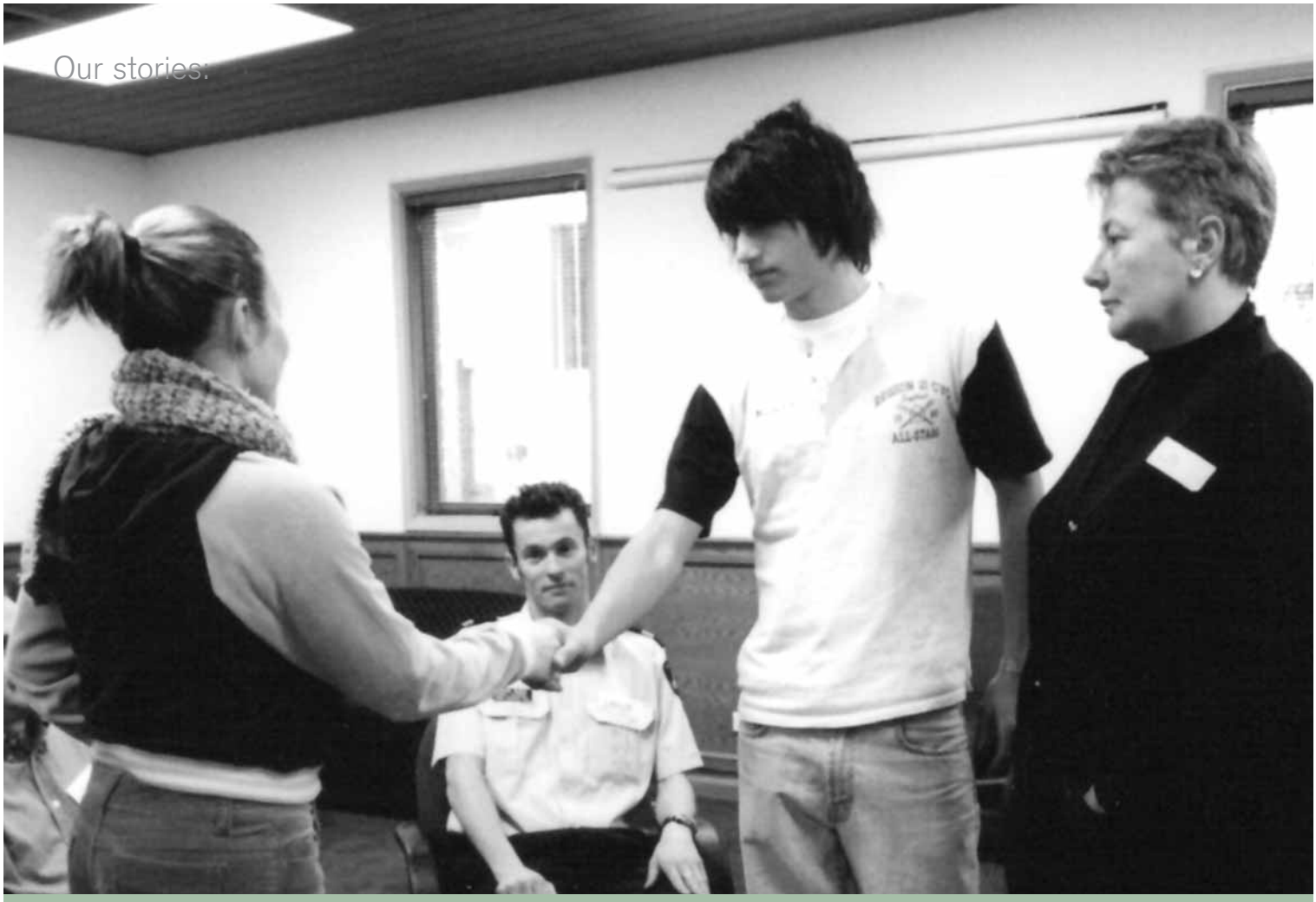
Disability Justice Advocacy Inc in partnership with Disability Australia Ltd An International Disability Convention – Why We Need It and How Can I Be Involved!! $10,000

Elizabeth Hoffman House From Shame to Pride project $1,000 This project was supported by Rick Begg

Fitzroy Legal Service Activists Rights Handbook $3,000

Friends of the Earth Australia Climate Justice Campaign $23,000 This project was supported by the Mullum Trust

Friends of the Earth Australia Climate Justice Campaign $23,000 This project was supported by the Mullum Trust



Meeting the victims, taking responsibility, making amends – that's tough justice

Friends of the Earth Melbourne and Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation Barmah-Millewa Campaign $31,000 This project was supported by E.M. Horton Trust and the Bardas Foundation

Headway Victoria Get Real $5,000

Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Project Fearing Going Home: Australia's Return of Rejected Asylum Seekers, Temporary Refugees and Others From Refugee-like Situations $15,000

Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Project Asylum Seeker Project $518 This project was supported by Melbourne Community Foundation History of Photography Fund

Inner East Community Health Service with Victorian Medicare Action Group Funding for Project Officer for Victorian Medicare Action Group $30,000

Jesuit Social Services in collaboration with Victorian Criminal Justice Coalition Prisoners and Public Health Consultations $3,000

Melbourne Workers Theatre Yanagai! Yanagai! Regional Victorian Tour $15,000

Mental Health Legal Centre Inc. Involuntary Patient Experience of the Mental Health Review – What Is It and How Does It Work Post 2004 Amendments Of The Mental Health Act $20,000

Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Indigenous Self Determination $4,000

Despite efforts by successive governments to create alternatives to custody, Victoria's prison population continues to hit record levels. This is despite the fact that crime rates are falling. In June 2003 more than 20% of the 3780 people held in adult prisons were young adult offenders under 25 years of age. More than 40% of prisoners return for a second custodial sentence, swelling prison numbers. Correctional services throughout the western world are all bearing the brunt of courts imposing longer and more frequent sentences.

Despite all this there is concern within the community that prison sentences served by many of those convicted of serious crimes are too short. Many victims of crime feel excluded from the justice system, and that their pain and suffering is not heard or valued in dealing with the crime, the punishment or the rehabilitation of the offender.

Jesuit Social Services believes that there is a way to resolve some of these concerns - by extending restorative justice solutions in corrections. With restorative justice or community justice, the victim and the offender (and their respective support networks such as family members, friends, work mates) are directly involved in the resolution of the crime. Offenders take responsibility for the harm done. The punishment fits the crime. Underlying issues are addressed and long-term solutions sought. Prison, with its inadequate resources to rehabilitate, is not always the most effective option.

Restorative justice is different from the existing criminal justice system, which tends to ignore victims and rarely actively engages offenders in their sentencing or rehabilitation. The existing criminal justice system is too often dominated by professional concerns and the punishment of the offender. Switching to a restorative approach requires a change of values, thinking and understanding by the community. It also needs a change in legal thinking, practice and procedures. Wider introduction of community justice hinges on the successful development of a coalition of individuals and organisations that have the will, interest, expertise, influence and authority to make changes. The project undertaken by Jesuit Social Services - Building Community Justice in Victoria - formed such a coalition.

Similarly, the development of community justice needs to complement other services, programs, initiatives and legal reforms. Diverse groups are involved in the project – victims, police, lawyers, ex-offenders, policy developers and decision makers. The project took into account the views and concerns of all groups. As a result, this criminal justice project has successfully influenced public debate.

By working with consumer groups, key stakeholders and decision makers the project has influenced and helped shape the policies of the Victorian Government. One example is the change to the age jurisdiction of the children's court (criminal division) whereby the definition of child is increased from seventeen to eighteen years of age, thus diverting younger offenders from the adult prison system.

The introduction of restorative community justice is a long haul venture requiring vision, leadership, resources, community support and political will for the next ten years or so. Project funding provided resources to develop a community justice framework to guide this work and to ensure that core social justice values such as fairness and respect for all individuals are the foundation of the framework.

Project:
Building Community Justice in Victoria
Organisation:
Jesuit Social Services
Priority area:
Justice and correctional issues

Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Child Removal, the Last Resort $20,000

Molly's House Women's Refuge in partnership with Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre (DVIRC) Maintain the Focus $4,000

Footscray Community Arts Centre with Performing Older Women's Circus Performing Older Women's Circus $2,000 This project was supported by the Bardas Foundation

Refugee Council of Australia Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Victoria – Promoting Policy Dialogue and Improving Outcomes $20,000

Rural & Peninsula Disability Support Inc Together We Move Mountains $10,000

SKATV Activist Awards $1,000

The ALSO Foundation Love Makes A Family $5,000

The Wilderness Society and Central Highlands Alliance Baw Baw Report $4,000

VICSERV – Psychiatric Disability Services of Victoria Inc. Promoting Social Justice and Community Participation for Persons with Mental Illness $17,000

Victorian National Parks Association Victoria's Natural Environment Is In Crisis; What Motivates Us to Protect It? $15,000

Villamanta Legal Service Community Inclusion Forums $20,000

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service Victoria AFL Grand Final Street Poster $2,000 This project was supported by Fleur Spitzer

Classrooms to talk about, hear, and understand same-sex attraction

For many same-sex attracted young people school can be a place of prejudice, harassment, and discrimination because their sexuality is ridiculed, misunderstood, or ignored. Like all young people, same-sex attracted young people have the right to safe, secure and rewarding education.

In 1996, the National Centre in HIV Social Research conducted a survey with 1200 14-16 year old rural high school students. Of these, 11% said they had experienced sexual attraction to the same sex. In 1998, Writing Themselves In: A National Report on the Sexuality, Health and Well-being of Same-Sex Attracted People reported on surveys with 750 self-identified same-sex attracted young people between the ages of 14 and 21. Of this group, 13% indicated that they had been physically abused, and 46% that they had been verbally abused. Nearly 70% of this abuse happened in school settings, initiated by both students and teachers.

There is emerging awareness that sexual orientation and gender identity are key social determinants of physical and mental health inequality. Those who are anything other than 'straight' heterosexuals often suffer from homophobia or heterosexualism – the belief that everyone is, or should be, heterosexual and that any other sexuality is unhealthy, unnatural, and a threat to society. Same-sex attracted young people experience poorer health and mental health (for example, a higher rate of self harm and suicide) than the general population.

This situation is compounded in rural areas as they have fewer health services with knowledge and expertise of same-sex attracted young people, higher levels of homophobia, and reduced access to support networks.

Cutting Edge Uniting Care and Family Planning Victoria tackled this problem in several ways: by direct support to same-sex attracted young people in the Shepparton area; support groups for their parents; training for teachers and community workers; resources for education; and building the capacity of schools and community agencies.

They conducted an audit or *report card* on schools and community organisations, giving credit to safe, non-discriminatory and harassment-free services and education, and motivating improvements where necessary.

When the whole school community is involved, attitudes, biases and misunderstandings around the issues for those who are exploring their sexuality can be uncovered. Conversations in the classroom about same-sex attraction benefit all students and staff. The curriculum can be used for informed discussion that will create a more accepting and diverse future generation.

Year funded 2005

Action for Community Living Leadership Plus $20,000

Aspire in collaboration with Daily Activities and Self Help Inc (DASH) Our Own Path, Our Own Place $10,000

Asylum Seeker Resource Centre Campaign for Change $23,000 This project was supported by Melbourne Community Foundation Morawetz Social Justice Fund, Fleur Spitzer, & Belinda Gross

Australian Conservation Foundation with The Mittagong Forum Research Project to Examine Best Options for Delivering Capacity Building $12,000

Australian Federation of Disability Organisations Media Kit & Campaign Strategy $3,520

Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative Strengthening the Voice of Indigenous People in Loddon Mallee Region $25,000

Brenda House and Domestic Violence & Incest Resource Centre (DVIRC) The Right to Safety, The Right to Services, The Right to be Heard – Violence Against Women with Disabilities $22,500 This project was supported by Nordia Foundation

Brophy Family & Youth Services with Sexual Diversity Working Party SSAFE in the South West $15,000

Brotherhood of St Laurence in collaboration with ANTaR Victoria Reconciliation is 'whitefella' business $15,000

Central Highlands Community Legal Centre Women's Voices For Justice and Human Rights $20,000

Damien Stevens, Mathew Mills and Rowena Allen, CEO - Cutting Edge, Uniting Care, Shepparton – celebrating "Diversity"

The whole school approach and collaborative work with other organisations created a model to support same-sex attracted young people and challenge heterosexualism. The model can be used by rural communities to: clarify values and attitudes; lift the capacity of the local community to build its own support; encourage active participation of young people; address the urgent need to change school policies and practice; foster strong leadership; get adequate resources; and enlist media support.

Within schools there are committed, knowledgeable and skilled teachers, keen to ensure that a school environment is created where same-sex attracted young people are acknowledged, supported, and protected. There are other teachers who, often because of an unsupportive environment, are fearful and unable to change. Training is the key to better staff understanding and practice.

This project gave people the opportunity to talk to and hear one another, to understand one another in a non-threatening way, and to demystify what it means to be gay or lesbian.

This ambitious project showed that the role of parents is complex and difficult. Parents said that there is much work to be done on how they can best support their same-sex attracted children in rural Victoria. Information and resources found in print and via the Internet are a lifeline in an often lonely, isolated and confusing situation. The project provided these materials and identified how such resources could continue to be developed, distributed and promoted.

A major outcome is a set of framework strategies to challenge misconceptions and to build understanding and support. They will have an affirming influence on the health and wellbeing of same-sex attracted young people in rural and regional Victoria, and will be an example for education in diversity within rural and regional schools.

Project:
SSAY Shepparton (Same-Sex Attracted Youth in Shepparton)
Organisation:
Cutting Edge Uniting Care Youth Services with Family Planning Victoria
Priority area:
Regional and rural concerns
Same-sex attracted people

Central Highlands Community Legal Centre Family Law Court Project $4,000

Centre for Contemporary Photography with ANTaR Vic. Black On White Exhibition $3,000 This project was supported by the R. Swart Family

Changemakers Australia Organisational support $13,000 This project was supported by Fleur Spitzer & R. Swart

Child and Family Services Ballarat/Delacombe Community House Action Group Chewing the Fat $32,500 This project was supported by Portland Foundation

Collective of Self Help Groups Improved Access to DGR $4,983

Darebin Community Health in collaboration with Al-Amel TPV Holders Association A Voice for Permanency $30,000 This project was supported by Margaret Henderson

Eastern Access Community Health Mullum Mullum Gathering Place Capacity Building Support $248

Eastern Health with Yarra Valley Community Health Service Capacity Building support $1,599

Emma House Domestic Violence Services Inc in collaboration with Violence Against Women Integrated Services Raising Our Voice: Phase II $50,000 This project was supported by Grosvenor Settlement

Federation of Community Legal Centres About Change, About Justice, About Time (Sexual Offences Project – Stage 3) $20,000

Our stories:

Through the eyes of women - police responses to family violence

The consultation paper Reforming the Family Violence System in Victoria Report - a report of the Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Family Violence 2005 states that in 2003-04, Victoria Police recorded 28000 Family Violence Reports.

Police intervention in times of family violence has the potential to do great good in women's lives. But women who experience family violence need to trust the system that police act within before they will use it to full advantage. Very often women who experience violence do not call the police.

Less than 20% of affected women report violence to the police with disinclination to report being due variously to fear of retribution, shame, reluctance to leave their homes and communities, fear and lack of knowledge of the justice system; fear of child protection services; or reluctance to potentially expose the person who uses violence to jail.

Reforming the Family Violence System in Victoria Report, 2005

If women do report, the police, despite guidelines and protocols, often fail to respond in the most appropriate way. There are a range of reasons why this is so – negative attitudes and lack of understanding, myths and misconceptions regarding family violence, lack of training and family violence seen as not real police work or a waste of time. It's true, policing of family violence is time consuming, frustrating and dangerous work.

The Women's Rights and Legal Response project researched police responses to women and children who suffer domestic violence, and worked in partnership with Victoria Police to improve police understanding of, and response to, family violence. The Foundation appreciated that this work would take time therefore funding was provided, in stages, over three years.

The project found that the quality of the police response, whether negative or positive, has a significant impact on whether a woman will report future acts of family violence. This is significant: 34% of family violence attendances by police are repeat attendances.

The project interviewed women about police responses to family violence in the Bendigo area. Police responses as described by the women are often damning.

I remember asking them (the police), 'Can you take him away?' And they said, 'Well, he lives here, too' and that's why I always had the impression that I was the one who had to leave the house. And ever since, I've had worse floggings and I just never called them… It was not an option. They just don't understand.

Woman interviewed in Through Women's Eyes – Police & Family Violence, EASE 2003

However, when officers provided quality service and information, and law enforcement action, to women experiencing family violence, women were empowered to deal with the abuse.

They took a statement and some photographs of my face…I had a little bit of swelling, nothing like there was the day after but obviously enough to indicate that there had been an assault…Police charged him with four counts of assault.

Woman interviewed in Through Women's Eyes – Police & Family Violence, EASE 2003

The information drawn from the interviews was analysed and used to formulate a comprehensive set of recommendations to Victoria Police and the Department of Justice. Community organisations looking to improve their services to women and children are using the insights of this report.

Fitzroy Legal Service The Fitzroy Legal Service Criminal Record Project $20,000 This project was supported by E.M. Horton Family Trust

Footscray Community Arts Centre in collaboration with Performing Older Women's Circus Age Shall Not Weary Her $15,000

Friends of the Earth Melbourne Port Phillip Bay $3,000

Friends of the Earth Melbourne Plantation Forestry Impacts on Water Supplies $15,000

Friends of the Earth Melbourne with Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation Diplomacy Training Program $1,634

Geelong Ethnic Community Council Sudanese Women's Support Group $1,000 This project was supported by an anonymous donor

Gippsland Asbestos Related Diseases Support Inc Asbestos Awareness and Advocacy Project $25,000

Gippsland Carers Association Inc Capacity building – Helping Gippsland Carers be in the fore-front of disability service reform $10,000

Gunditjmarra Aboriginal Cooperative Capacity building support $4,214

Headway Vic – Acquired Brain Injury Association Inc. in collaboration with the Young Persons in Nursing Homes consortium Our Futures, Our Ideas $25,000

Headway Vic – Acquired Brain Injury Association Inc. Young People in Nursing Homes $5,000 This project was supported by Hartline a sub fund of Melbourne Community Foundation

Hepburn Health Service Don't Shaft Access $1,900

... when officers provided quality service and information, and law enforcement action, to women experiencing family violence, women were empowered to deal with the abuse.

Further, the stories of domestic violence showed that the state's Intervention Order system wasn't working as intended. Inappropriate application of an Intervention Order, or no application at all, was common. An assessment of what is required for Intervention Orders to be used effectively followed.

Detailed recommendations resulting from this project form the framework for a way forward for Victoria Police and Department of Justice policies, protocols, and practice in response to family violence.

This project pinpointed a service gap. The community needed legal advice, information, advocacy and education. It needed a community legal centre.

An application by the Advocacy and Rights Centre, in partnership with EASE and Loddon Campaspe Centre Against Sexual Assault, to research unmet legal need in the region and to harness support for the establishment of a Community Legal Centre in the area (see next story), was succesful.

Developing effective responses for responding to family violence requires many strategies, including genuine self-reflection by Victoria Police. This self-reflection must acknowledge room for improvement and lead to a willingness to act. This process is well underway. The Victoria Police Code of Practice for Family Violence was launched in August 2004.

The criminal justice system alone cannot ensure the best possible response to family violence. The partnership model recommended and demonstrated in this project encourages collaboration between the courts, police, community corrections, support services and government agencies to achieve a practical, significant, effective response to the issue of family violence.

The recent government document Reforming the Family Violence System in Victoria Report - a report of the Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Family Violence 2005 recommends just that approach. The outcomes of this project detail the specific actions required to make that approach a reality.

Name of Project:
Women's Rights and Legal Response
Name of Organisation:
Emergency Accommodation and Support Enterprise (EASE)
Priority area:
Addressing violence against women
Regional and rural concerns

Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Project Asylum Seeker Community Advocacy Project $32,000 This project was supported by Melbourne Community Foundation Morawetz Social Justice Fund, Jane Abercrombie & Scanlon Foundation

International Women's Development Agency Sharing Women's Leadership to Address Violence Against Women $11,000 This project was supported by Rick Begg

Jesuit Social Services Same Sex Attractedness Education in Catholic Schools: Best policies and processes for reducing abuse $15,000

Jobs Australia Ltd, ACOSS and VCOSS Charity Now: Redefining Charity Law for a New Millennium $20,000 This project was supported by Fleur Spitzer

LaTrobe University on behalf of Gay & Lesbian Health Victoria Rainbow Network State-Wide project: Building Capacity, Sustainability and Change $45,000

Lifeline South West in collaboration with After Hours Crisis Support Working Group After Hours Crisis Support Research Centre $5,000 This project was supported by Andyinc Foundation Ltd.

Mayone Bulluk Community Association Inc. Resource the Mayone Committee $1,000

Mercy Care in partnership with Western Women's Domestic Violence Support Network (WWDVSN) Addressing Unmet Need and service gaps in relation to domestic Violence crisis and post crisis support within Victoria $15,000

Our stories:

Pie in the sky no more

The Loddon Campaspe region covers the shires of Macedon Ranges, Mt Alexander, Central Goldfields, Greater Bendigo, Loddon and Campaspe. 16.6% of regional Victoria's total population lives in these shires. Research shows convincingly that social and economic disadvantage in Loddon Campaspe has a significant, negative impact on local people, families and culture.

A Jesuit Social Services Report (2004) found Central Goldfields was the most disadvantaged local government area in rural and regional Victoria - 19% of residents earn under $300 per week and unemployment is over 12%. Only 19% of residents in the Loddon Campaspe area finished Year 12. Of all social problems, sexual assault and child abuse have the worst impact on individuals and families. Long-term drought, agricultural restructuring, inadequate services and poor infrastructure put considerable strain on individuals and communities.

Spurred on by the 2003 Reichstein funded project and the recommendations in it's report, Through Women's Eyes - Police & Family Violence (see previous story), three Loddon Campaspe community organisations set out to get a community legal centre for their region.

The Advocacy and Rights Centre managed the Access to Justice in Loddon Campaspe Region project but it was an alliance of local agencies. The partnership organisations, Emergency Accommodation and Support Enterprise (EASE) and the Loddon Campaspe Centre Against Sexual Assault knew, through their work, that social disadvantage was deepened for residents in the Loddon Campaspe region by their inability to get access to legal advice and information services. Many local residents and community workers also knew of the need for a community legal centre. However, making this a reality seemed out of reach.

Because Legal Aid is limited, and there are insufficient community legal centres across rural Victoria, far too many people are denied legal information, advice or representation. When people have to travel 120 kms to 410 kms to get to a community legal centre in neighbouring region, access to justice is impossible without a car and money. Many of those who desperately need legal help get none. Even so, overstretched community legal centres in neighbouring regions accepted around 4000 clients per year – a fraction of the demand – to tackle issues like domestic violence, debt and credit, consumer and tenancy issues, family law and intervention, disability and mental health.

The Access to Justice in Loddon Campaspe Region project raised awareness of the need for legal services in the area and mobilised the community behind the demand for a fully funded community legal centre. Supporters argued that such a centre would give their community an essential, and very different, third option for legal information beyond Legal Aid and private solicitors.

They used public forums, surveys, and consultations with both the general public and private solicitors, to make the case that local legal disadvantage, and the social problems that cluster around legal disadvantage, must have the services of a community legal centre to make a difference. Promotion of this idea through community media, a Victorian Government 'community cabinet' meeting held in the region, and education about the findings presented in the earlier Through Women's Eyes - Police & Family Violence report, built support for their powerful, evidence-based case for a local community legal centre.

If they can come and get free legal advice, and referrals, they can then resolve issues outside of legal arenas. Legal education is about empowering people to do things themselves and is the preventative work. Dealing with a situation before it becomes a legal problem.

Rachael Skipper, Acting Coordinator, Advocacy and Rights Centre

Through this work, the need and demand had been convincingly demonstrated and so in 2004 two other philanthropic organisations, the William Buckland Foundation and the Ian Potter Foundation provided funding to establish a pilot community legal centre in the area.

Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Tooleybuc Forum $1,000

Polyglot Puppet Theatre Headhunter $5,000

Project Respect Advocating For the Pathways Project $27,000 This project was supported by Andyinc Foundation Ltd and Sandra Bardas

Refugee & Immigration Legal Centre Temporary Protection Visa and Offshore "Family Reunion" Legal Assistance and Advocacy Project $40,000 This project was supported by the Ivy H. Thomas & Arthur A. Thomas Trust as administered by Equity Trusts Ltd.

Sisters Inside Women Prisoners Research Project $5,000

SKA TV in partnership with Koorie Heritage Trust Preserving Culture $20,000 This project was supported by Belinda Gross

South Western Centre Against Sexual Assault (Department of South West Healthcare) Ensuring equity for victims of sexual assault $15,000

St Lukes Anglicare and Bendigo Neighbourhood House The Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres (NH&LCs) Sector DGR Research and Advocacy Project $20,000 This project was supported by Melbourne Community Foundation Morawetz Social Justice Fund

The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture Family Resilience: Relating between Cultures $25,000 This project was supported by E.M. Horton Family Trust

In July 2005 the State Government provided on-going funding to establish and run Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre with legal advice services starting at the centre in October 2005.

This is the 'pie in the sky' outcome. It's a phenomenal achievement in the space of 2 or 3 years….a little bit of hope (and funding!), a mountain of determination and community support go a long way to positive, tangible outcomes for social change.

Rachael Skipper, Acting Coordinator, Advocacy and Rights Centre

Project: Access to Justice in Loddon Campaspe Region
Organisation: Advocacy and Rights Centre in partnership with Emergency Accommodation and Support Enterprise (EASE) and the Loddon Campaspe Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA)
Priority area: Regional and rural concerns

The Wilderness Society Cool Temperate Rainforest Survey $6,500 This project was supported by Grant Mathews, the Dadon Family & Margaret Henderson

The Wilderness Society in collaboration with The Central Highlands Alliance Water Project End Logging in Melbourne's water supply $15,000

Western Suburbs Legal Service Inc Racial Discrimination, Vilification and Harassment Project $23,400

Westgate Community Initiative Group in collaboration with Social Firms Australia Advocating for Access: Structural Changes to Workplace Culture $25,000

Women with Disabilities Australia Proposed Welfare to Work Reforms $2,000

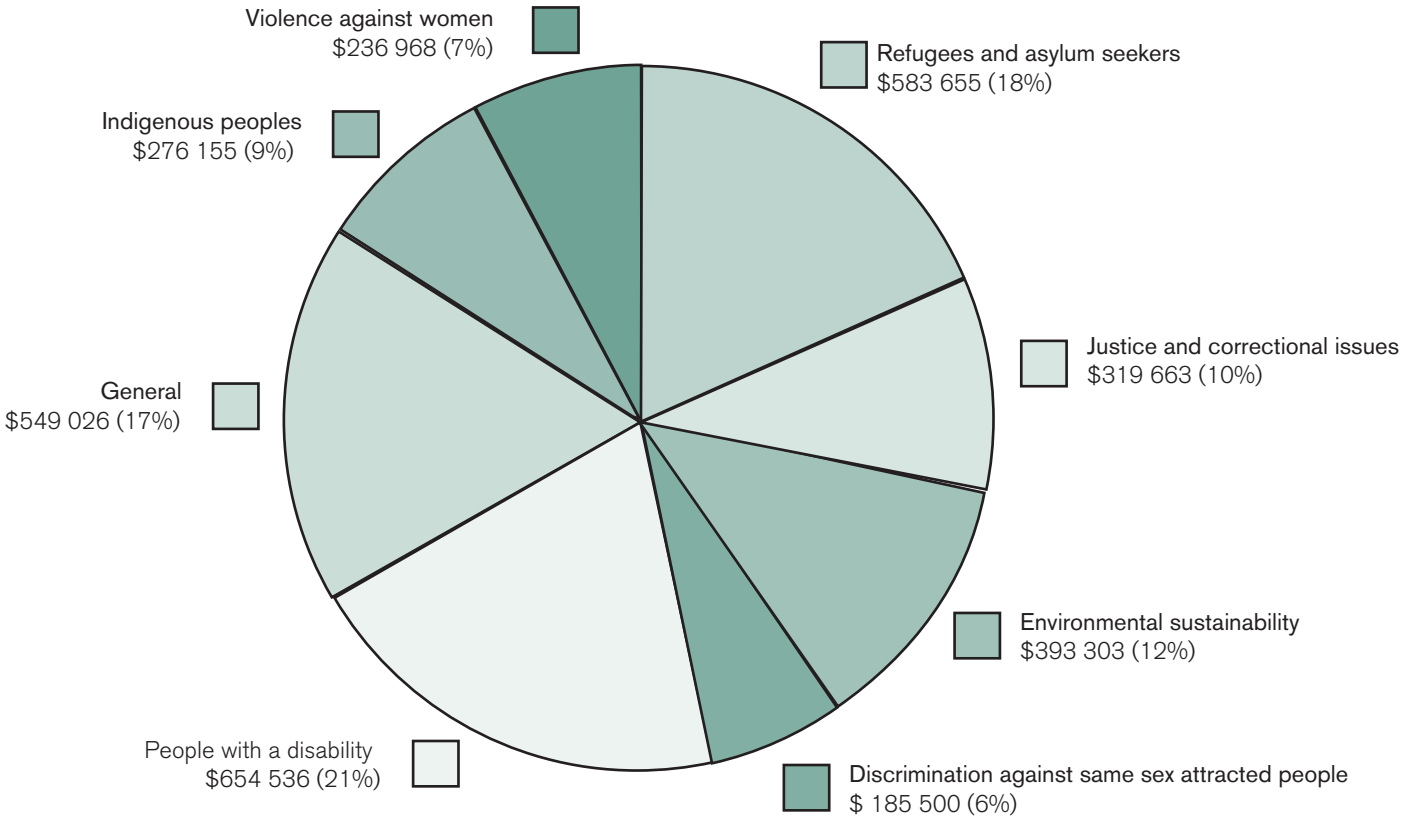
Yarra Valley Community Health Service, Eastern Health Indigenous Health Unit Bringing the Community Together $20,000

Young Peoples Legal Rights Centre Inc (Youthlaw) Log On: Write Your Rights $16,000

Youth Affairs Council of Victoria in collaboration with Victorian Student Representative Council Rural and Regional Networking of the Victorian Student Representative Council $5,000

our granting facts and figures

Total funding 2002–2005 $3 198 807



Where projects fall into more than one priority area, the funded amount is distributed equally across the appropriate areas.

Regional and Rural $739 078 (23%)
Western metropolitan region of Melbourne $309 473 (10%)

A different way to achieve our aims - our support for special ventures

Our capacity building work with Indigenous communities

When I look around the table what I see is a really wise investment. When I say that, I am saying that the investment in the people, the most valuable asset we have in all of our communities, and our Aboriginal communities across Victoria, and the investment that they - Reichstein Foundation and RMIT - have made in us by giving us all that knowledge, the tips of how to approach a world that has been so foreign to us and open those doors of opportunities. I don't think there has ever been two partners that have done that before, that I am aware of, and given that knowledge and listened to Aboriginal people. The course, for me, really strengthened my ideal of survival and hope.

Vicki Walker, participant Capacity Building Program

In 2004 we reviewed our granting profile of the past few years. The statistics showed a minimal number of applications received from, and a low acceptance rate for, Indigenous community projects. The projects were worthwhile but applications lacked the supporting information, evidence and documentation against which all applications to the Reichstein Foundation are assessed. When Christa Momot, our Executive Officer, discussed Reichstein's concern about this with people working in Indigenous community organisations they said:

We don't necessarily understand the words used by funding organisations. We aren't given feedback on why our application wasn't successful. We don't know who to apply to.

The seeds of a capacity building program for Indigenous organisations were well and truly sown. We developed an educational program to help Indigenous organisations plan and present better-developed project proposals for funding. The program included:

- Governance and infrastructure – building a strong well functioning organisation
- Project development – evidence of needs and issues; involvement and support of the sector; submission writing
- Philanthropy – who funds what; what their requirements are.

Before the program started we engaged Deb Davison, a community educator, to run a governance health check with the Indigenous organisations that registered for the program. Deb visited each organisation for discussions with staff and governing committee members about how their organisation is governed. Organisational achievements, strengths, challenges, concerns and gaps were identified, recorded, collated, reported back to the organisation, and then used by us to shape the training materials and strategies of the education program.

We asked participants to commit a substantial amount of their time and asked their organisation to support workers to attend. In return we undertook to impart the skills they needed to share the knowledge and experience they gained with their organisations and their communities.

Christa discussed a partnership arrangement with Julian Silverman, Program Coordinator, Community Work at RMIT University, for RMIT to provide the Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment. At the same time discussions were held with the Lumbu Foundation to incorporate culturally appropriate processes and communication strategies.

Invitations to express interest were sent to Indigenous organisations that Reichstein had funded or knew of, and that met Reichstein's general funding requirements. Our fear that we would get limited interest and that people would be unable to attend the quite lengthy program was blown away. We were overwhelmed by the interest and keenness of individuals to attend and by the support their organisations.

The 17 day program ran over a 6 month period in 2005, 16 participants completed the program.

I'm amazed - the majority of people have finished – it's just so encouraging.

Auntie Glenys Merry, participant Capacity Building Program

The impressive list of organisations that made enthusiastic and interesting presentations gives an idea of the range of topics covered:

Management Support Online; Good Company; Skills Bank; VCOSS; Arnold Bloch Leibler; Public Interest Legal Clearing House; Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearing House; Friends of the Earth/Yorta Yorta; Brotherhood of St Laurance Library & Information Services; Federation of Community Legal Centres; Community Support Fund, Department of Victorian Communities; Lumbu Foundation; Koorie Heritage Trust; Rio Tinto Aboriginal Foundation; Telstra Foundation; ANZ Foundation; Foundation for Young Australians; Helen Macpherson Smith Trust; Aboriginal Affairs Victoria; Social Ventures Australia; OurCommunity; and R.E. Ross Trust.

Resources came from many other organisations. An important resource was Philanthropy Australia's Indigenous Guide to Philanthropy.

I have found that this has been one of the most valuable things that I have done. I have worked in education for the past 10 years and I think it's a credit to Julian, Chris and Kaye for the tremendous work that they have done in making us feel comfortable and welcome, and in understanding all the information.

They have opened up a lot of new doors and networks and given us opportunities that we haven't had and its come at a time for us when we were feeling overwhelmed and bogged down and wondering where we were going to go for help with all this work that we wanted to do to build the capacity of our community.

Anne Jenkins, participant Capacity Building Program

The Helen Macpherson Smith Trust funded the RMIT component of the program and the R.E. Ross Trust funded the majority of requests for assistance with travel and associated costs. We also appreciate the support of Arnold Bloch Leibler and their staff - we were able to use their facilities to hold sessions in a very comfortable setting.

It just proves that there are partnerships between Indigenous and mainstream communities that can work, and do work.

Robert Johnson, participant Capacity Building Program

We put in an enormous amount of effort (and some funding) but it was more than worth it to see changes in group dynamics; confidence built; ideas formed; deeper understandings between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people; networks forged; resources used; and new funds tapped.

Capacity Building Program participants

Without this program we wouldn't be where we are today – we have put in some submissions already so we are feeling a lot more confident in where we are going in the future.

Anne Jenkins, participant Capacity Building Program

Reichstein and other philanthropic organisations are now getting high quality applications from organisations that participated. Two participating organisations, on their first application to philanthropy, were successful. They will receive significant amounts towards their projects.

The friendships and the networks made around the table have been unbelievable.

Vicki Walker, participant Capacity Building Program

Kaye Bratetich
Coordinator, Capacity Building Program

Our belief in social change philanthropy and support for Changemakers Australia

The Reichstein Foundation is pleased to be involved in the establishment of Changemakers Australia (CMA).

Reichstein is a foundation member, provided an initial seeding grant, is represented on the interim management committee and provides administrative assistance to this new organisation in the philanthropic sector. CMA encourages philanthropic organisations and individuals to work for lasting change in partnership with groups that directly experience disadvantage and discrimination.

community + social change philanthropy = changemakers australia

CMA believes that the philanthropic dollar will best solve issues of poverty, discrimination and injustice in Australia, when it is invested in community organisations that work for social and economic justice, environmental sustainability, and equality of opportunity for all.

This approach is summed up as *'change not charity'*. In the end services for disadvantaged people will not of themselves create justice and equality. Reform of public policy, new institutional practices and changed community attitudes yield more lasting benefits.

Many people see wisdom in the aphorism:
'Give a man a fish and he can eat for a day.
Teach a man to fish and he can eat for a lifetime'.

Social-change groups take this a step further. Recognising that problems like hunger have myriad causes, these groups support hungry people to ask tough questions: 'Why doesn't society teach all people to fish? Who owns the pool? Who wrote the rules about how ponds get used, and how can they be changed? Who is polluting the pool, and how can they be stopped?' Social change philanthropy supports people to work for fundamental change in political, economic and cultural institutions.

Adapted from Slepian and Mogil, Welcome to Philanthropy, 1997

CMA believes that social change philanthropy must pay attention to:

Where money is directed – so that it addresses underlying causes, rather than symptoms of social and environmental problems; and

How money is given – by urging individual donors and philanthropic organisations to become more accountable, strategic, inclusive, collaborative, democratic and creative. Grant-making must be characterised by genuine, respectful partnerships involving funders, recipients and other groups involved with or concerned about the issue.

Progressive philanthropic organisations and individuals in Australia have consciously tried to practise *'change not charity'* in recent years.

They discussed and promoted this approach informally, first through a group called Women in Philanthropy and then through Horizons, a funders' network for social change. In 2003 a number of those active in Horizons agreed they wanted a more focused and consistent approach to social change philanthropy. Two years later Changemakers Australia was born. CMA has learnt much from organisations in the United States dedicated to promoting the same model of philanthropy.

CMA will work collaboratively with Philanthropy Australia, academic centres for the study of philanthropy such as those at Swinburne University and QUT, and with other organisations that share its vision.

Whilst still an independent organisation, CMA is a partner project of the Community Advocacy Unit in the School of Social Science and Planning at RMIT University. This promises to be a mutually beneficial arrangement, with a number of joint projects in the planning stages. The partnership provides CMA with tax deductibility status for donations made to support our activities.

As part of its first five-year strategic plan, CMA will develop resource materials and hold events for grant-makers that advance CMA's vision for a society free of discrimination and disadvantage, leading to better outcomes for all.

Victoria's Public Advocate, Julian Gardner, in his speech to launch Changemakers Australia on 24 October 2005 said:

Individual advocacy - actions taken to protect the rights and interests of individuals – is and will remain important. However, the actions that we take to change attitudes, practices, funding and laws have an ongoing benefit and produce positive changes for a far greater number of people.

This message - the value of systemic advocacy - needs to be more widely understood. The establishment of Changemakers Australia is a significant step to achieving this.

To find out more about Changemakers Australia, and how to be kept informed of future activities, contact info@changemakers.org.au or visit the website www.changemakers.org.au

our thanks

The following have provided probono support to the Reichstein Foundation, or the the community groups we work with.

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Reichstein
Foundation