



COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE CONNECTIONS

Welcome to Community Enterprise Connections

Hello and welcome to another edition of Community Enterprise Connections.

We hope that you have all had a chance to visit our new [website](#)! At the moment—the website is dedicated wholly to our upcoming conference. Eventually, however, we would love to see this space grow into a real networking tool for people in the community enterprise sector.

As we prepare for our August conference, we thought we would use this edition of the bulletin to

introduce one of the conference themes—the future of the community enterprise sector in Victoria.

We are particularly interested in any existing networking activity that is going on—and whether there is demand for further shared resources, networking, capacity building and support throughout the sector.

What do you need to better run your enterprise? How can it best be delivered? Who do you network with?

We are looking forward to

the opportunity for gathering and discussing this and other strategic issues in the sector—as well as taking the time to hear more stories and case studies and to celebrate the achievements of the many community enterprises that will be represented at the conference.

We hope the content of this edition gets your wheels turning and that you will join what promises to be a lively and ongoing conversation of the future of this sector in Australia.

- The CEDI Team



Brotherhood of St Laurence

Working for an Australia free of poverty

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Community Enterprise in Your Town—Bright Street Enterprise Hub

The Bright Street Enterprise Hub was established in May 2007. The hub is located at the site of a milk bar that closed almost 10 years ago. A survey of the local residents conducted by the Neighbourhood Renewal resident action group, Launching Pad, found that a milk bar was a priority for the community, both to provide convenient access to food and other items, but also to provide a focal point for the residential community.

A member of Launching Pad comments, 'the milk bar used to be a meeting place for the young people. Since that's gone there's nowhere for them to sit and have a bit of privacy. [This new hub / café will] give them some-

one to get advice from, someone to say hello to.'

Bendigo Access Employment (BAE), a Bendigo employment services provider that services the Eaglehawk and Long Gully Neighbourhood Renewal areas, purchased the building and has transformed it, not only into a milk bar and café, but also offices for local agencies, a tool library, meeting space and other facilities.

In addition to the investment from BAE, the enterprise also accessed funding from the NR infrastructure grant program, Department for Victorian Communities Support Fund, the City of Greater Bendigo and the Brotherhood of St Laur-

ence. Despite a reliance on grants for planning and start up, the enterprise is projected to break even after its first year and will ensure the long term viability of the centre through its business operations.

The café and milk bar have created employment for six local people; a manager and assistant manager and four part-time trainees completing a certificate in hospitality, retail or asset maintenance.



Bright Street Enterprise Hub, Eaglehawk



Community Enterprise in Any Town—Community Enterprise Networks

Across a number of other countries, community and social enterprise have been developing for years. In response to this trend, associations have been established to answer the growing demand for support services for the sector. The roles played by these organizations vary and include advocacy and lobbying, training and education, networking and promotional opportunities, background information and resources. Four examples are highlighted below

The U.S. - Social Enterprise Alliance: The Social

Enterprise Alliance is a Washington based membership organization, comprising individual and organizational members and focusing on supporting earned income strategies for not for profit organisations. www.se-alliance.org

England - Social Enterprise Coalition: The Social Enterprise Coalition is based in London. Membership includes umbrella bodies for social enterprise, national social enterprises and others working in the sector. They work with government, financial institutions and

legal bodies and have a key focus on developing policies and campaigns to influence government for the benefit of the sector, describing themselves as the “voice of the sector”. www.socialenterprise.org.uk

England – Social Enterprise London: Social Enterprise London provide advisory services, the London Social Enterprise Network, training and events, policy and research output and an information hub which is available on their website. www.sel.org.uk

Feature: The Future of Community Enterprise in Australia

- Written by Jo Barraket, University of Melbourne

“Recent research conducted by the Victorian government identified more than 220 community enterprises in this state alone.”

Please contact Jo Barraket at barraket@unimelb.edu.au if you would like to respond to this article.

Community enterprise is a unique combination of community-based activity and a business model. Successful development requires equal attention to effective community development and effective business development. It is relatively poorly understood in Australia, and the regulatory conditions, lack of tailored financial services, and minimal government support (compared to small business development, which receives significant investment) make it difficult to get many worthy initiatives off the ground.

Recent research conducted by the Victorian government identified more than 220 community enterprises in this state alone. These enterprises identified several factors constraining their development, including: lack of finance; lack of ‘in-house’ leadership and organizational governance skills; and lack of access to technical services.

In countries where the social economy is well-developed, community enterprise development

agencies (CEDAs) play a range of roles in supporting and building the capacity of individual community enterprises and the sector more broadly.

CEDAs are usually themselves social enterprises, incorporated as not for profit entities that draw on a business model to achieve their social purpose. They are often formed as federated, or ‘second tier’ organisations by regional networks or industry sub sectors of the broader community enterprise sector.

Examples include Social Enterprise London and Greenwich Co-operative Development Agency.

CEDAs may be involved in strategic or operational development. At the strategic level, CEDAs are active in:

- Advocacy – advocating for public policy change to support the effective development of the sector and the needs of the people it serves;
- Finance – brokering and mobilizing finance from outside and inside

the sector; and

- Research – supporting and directing research initiatives to map and evaluate the contributions of the sector, major challenges and developmental needs.

At the operational level, CEDAs:

- Provide advisory and business planning services for start-up and consolidation;
- Provide leadership and staff development services;
- Provide or broker technical support and/or shared services (including general services and/or services particular to the industry sub-sector in which enterprises are involved); and
- Develop tools and operational systems (e.g. accounting software) that are tailored to community enterprise needs.

In jurisdictions where CEDAs are prevalent, it appears that there is a combination of factors present:

The Future of Community Enterprise, cont.

- A history of second-tier, or 'peak' bodies within the sectors that CEDAs serve;
- An explicit public policy agenda that supports – and usually partly finances – social/community enterprise development; and
- A critical mass of community enterprises generating demand for

the services that CEDAs provide.

In Victoria, we have some history of peak bodies and an explicit public policy agenda in support of community enterprise development.

The question for the future is do we have sufficient demand to warrant the establishment of one or more CEDAs?

If so, how might this be achieved, and what (strategic and/or operational) priorities should be addressed?

What benefits could a CEDA add to the current work community organisations, the Victorian government and others in support of sustainable enterprise development?

Facts and Figures—Measuring the Not for Profit Sector

The not-for-profit sector in Victoria is dominated by small organisations, many of which rely entirely on volunteer labour and which record low levels of annual turnover.

In a recent report commissioned by the Victorian Government, based on a survey sample of 688 not-for-profit organisations and 221 social and community enterprises it was found the majority of not-for-profit organisations in Victoria:

- Provide a community service, community recreation and leisure or other welfare service
- Have been established for more than 10 years and have an annual turnover of less than \$500,000
- A small group of not-for-profit organisations generate turnover of more than \$5 million
- Have a head office in Melbourne and provide services in a single State Government region
- Rely on a mixture of government grants, fundraising and commercial activity
- Consider predictability of finance and capacity for fundraising to be important issues that they don't manage well
- Operate with a mix of paid and unpaid (volunteer) staff.

Social and community enterprises are achieving modest success, however, they have perhaps not yet reached their full potential, in that they are still reliant on government funding and are not yet using the full array of commercial and financial opportunities available to them as commercial entities.



Community Calendar

Various dates, August, Victoria

Energise Enterprise

This month-long program encompasses a wide range of small business activities including: seminars, information sessions, workshops, networking, and special events.

Click [here](#) for more details.

21 – 22 August, Brisbane

A Triple Bottom Line Accounting Workshop

The Australian Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability presents a two-day workshop to introduce you to a Triple Bottom Line framework developed and used extensively in the UK.

Featuring **John Pearce**, Social Audit Network UK and **Marcelle Holdaway**, Accounting for Life QLD.

Click [here](#) for more details.

28 – 29 August, Melbourne

Community Enterprise Conference

Join speakers **John Pearce** and **Jill Jordan** at a two-day conference on Community Enterprise.

Visit our brand new website for more details and registration information at www.communityenterprise.org.au.

For a listing of events in your area, check the following websites:

- www.acc.gov.au and follow the links to your local ACC
- www.business.vic.gov.au
- Your local chamber of commerce

We would love to hear from you! If you have any comments or

suggestions about this newsletter, please contact Annie at 9445 2408

or adunn@bsl.org.au.

We are already looking for stories to share in our next issue of Community

Enterprise Connections—so if your community has something

to share—please let us know and we will do our best to feature your

community in issues to come.

Stronger Communities: Making it Our Business

2007 Community Enterprise Conference

Tuesday 28 – Wednesday 29 August, 2007

Melbourne Town Hall

Community Enterprises are sprouting up all across Victoria - but until now there were few resources or forums to discuss these initiatives or to build on their success.

In response to this, the Community Enterprise Development Initiative at the Brotherhood of St Laurence is holding a two-day conference that will provide the most up to date and relevant community enterprise information, support, inspiration and a chance to network across sectors and among peers.

We will be covering everything from 'what is community enterprise and how do you do it' to the core strategic issues faced when developing a community enterprise, such as social procurement, measuring social impact, community ownership and funding and finance

Keynote speakers will include **John Pearce** (UK), author of 'Social Enterprise in Anytown' and **Jill Jordan** (QLD), the driver behind the Malaney cooperative movement, making Malaney the town with the third largest number of cooperatives in the world.



Visit our new website for more conference details and to register.

Space is very limited—so register early!

www.communityenterprise.org.au

Making Connections—Community Enterprise Resources

The next time you have a few minutes to spare, check out some of these websites and resources relating to community enterprise.

Australia:

Community Builders Website
www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au

ACCORD (archived)
www.accord.org.au/

Social Ventures Australia
www.socialventures.com.au

The Australasian Institute for Social Entrepreneurship
www.aise.net.au

Mercury Centre
www.mercury.org.au

Australian Employee Ownership Centre
www.aeoa.org.au/0024/default.asp

DVC – community enterprise section
www.dvc.vic.gov.au/web14/dvc/dvcmain.nsf/headingpagesdisplay/building+stronger+communitiesconnecting+communitiescommunity+enterprise

International:
Community Action Network (UK)
www.can-online.org.uk

Social Enterprise London (UK)
www.sel.org.uk

Centre for Community Enterprise (Canada)
www.cedworks.com

Social Enterprise Alliance (USA)
www.se-alliance.org

EMES Research Network on the Social Economy (European Union)
www.emes.net/index.php?id=2

Social Enterprise Coalition (UK)
www.socialenterprise.org.uk

Books:

Dees, J. G., J. Emerson and P. Economy, (Eds.) (2001), *Enterprising Nonprofits: a toolkit for social entrepreneurs*, New York: Wiley.

Pearce, J. 2003 *Social Enterprise in Anytown* (with a chapter by Alan Kay). London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.



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the Victorian
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