

Industry Plan for the ACT Community Sector: Expanding Sector Engagement

Background

In December 2014 the Community Government Partnership Improvement Group (the group that provided advice and feedback to the ACT Government on spending the 0.34% levy imposed from 2012-2015) identified a need for a strategic plan for community services through a period of significant "structural adjustment". Industry plans provide an agreed path for the development of an industry. They provide a shared understanding of the vision, challenges, relationships and actions that shape an industry's present and future.

In June 2015 the ACT Budget included a measure to continue the 0.34% sector development levy on community services funded by ACT Government.

Whilst the sector did not support imposition of the levy, we did gain agreement after the June budget announcement that the levy should be used to fund development of an Industry Plan for community services and that decisions about spending the levy would be determined by representatives of contributing organisations.

Initial Sector Engagement

In June-September the concept of an industry plan was explored by sector representatives on the Joint Community Government Reference Group (JCGRG), and the Community Government Partnership Improvement Group. It was agreed that an industry plan was needed to ensure that the community sector is well-positioned to provide sustainable, effective, strengths-based services. It is also needed to support civil society and citizen engagement that can guide the sector and hold it to account into the future.

The JCGRG and an Industry Plan steering group including representatives from contributing organisations (terms of reference and list of members provided at [Attachment A](#)) have overseen the first stage of development of the Industry Plan.

ACTCOSS support for Industry Plan

Part of the funds that remained unspent at the end of 2012-15 levy projects were used to fund ACTCOSS policy and engagement work on development of an Industry Plan (information on funds remaining from the 0.34% levy after June 2015 is provided in the reconciliation of 2012-2015 levy funds provided at [Attachment B](#)).

We have used these funds to support the non-government members of the Industry Plan steering group, policy work (including the Lost in Transition Summit) and communication with the sector about the Industry Plan.

ACTCOSS has used email correspondence, face to face forums, ACTCOSS Weekly notices articles and website publication of relevant materials to provide background information, promote the work on the industry plan and encourage participation in consultations. KPMG have used a mailing list provided by ACTCOSS to invite organisations to contribute to development of the plan.

Role of KPMG

Some funds from the 2015-17 levy have been used to fund KPMG to develop an Industry Plan vision and strategic framework, and KPMG has hosted focus groups to develop a draft plan and will conduct interviews with sector representatives to gain input prior to completing the plan. The bulk of the funds from 2015-17 are unspent.

Further work is needed to determine specific priorities for investment in sector development.

Next Steps

Minister Berry is hosting an Industry Plan Workshop for community sector industry leaders to come together to contribute ideas on what the Industry Plan is, what it will be used for and to start the conversation about what the next steps might be.

Between May and October ACTCOSS will manage a detailed "state of the sector survey" in partnership with the UNSW Social Policy Research Centre to gather detailed information from contributing organisations and others in the sector that can inform decisions about how best to invest the levy funds to support sector development. The state of the sector survey has been used in NSW (2014) and Tasmania (2015) and is well supported as a methodology by both the government and sector representatives in those jurisdictions.

The data collected via the survey will help ACTCOSS and others to:

- Develop an understanding of current models of engagement between the ACT community sector and government, including what is working well and how engagement, planning and co-ordination, capacity and sustainability can be improved
- Establish a database of core sector information, which identifies the characteristics of the ACT community sector, the sector's contribution to ACT, and the diversity in issues and challenges faced by different parts of the sector, which can be monitored over time

- Give voice to a diverse range of community sector perspectives on key aspects of service delivery in the ACT, and how these can be improved, to inform the development of the Industry Plan and priorities for investment in the sector.
- Build resources with which to raise awareness of current issues affecting community organisations in the ACT, and strategies for building strong, capable and high quality organisations to address inequality and disadvantage.

If you would like further information about the Community Services Industry Plan and how to have a say in its development please contact:

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Members of the Industry Plan Steering Group

Maureen Sheehan (Chair, Community Services Directorate)
Tim Bavinton (Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT)
Maureen Cane (Volunteering and Contact ACT Ltd) until March 2016
Rikki Anderson (Volunteering and Contact ACT Ltd) from March 2016
Darlene Cox (Health Care Consumers Association)
Sam Engele (Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate)
until January 2016
Louise Gilding (Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate)
from January 2016
Camilla Rowland (ACTCOSS President)
Helen Westwood (Australian Services Union)
Marcia Williams (Women's Centre for Health Matters)

Terms of Reference for the Industry Plan Steering Group

1. The Community Services Industry Plan Steering Group will oversee the development of an industry plan for the ACT community services sector.
2. The group will consider and provide advice on expenditure of the co-contribution levy to develop industry plan.
3. Meetings will occur approximately every 2 weeks in 2015 and every 2-4 weeks in early 2016, or as required.
4. Membership will comprise 4 representatives from the community sector, 2 representatives from the ACT Government, 1 union representative and 1 consumer representative.
5. Members will endeavour to attend meetings however may send a delegate if they are unable to attend.
6. ACTCOSS and the Community Services Directorate (CSD) may send one observer each to meetings.
7. Meetings will be co-chaired by the CSD representative and a community sector representative (TBC).
8. CSD will host meetings (TBC) and provide the secretariat function.
9. The Steering Group will work with a consultant to develop an industry plan by December 2015. Consultation will occur in early 2016 with the plan finalised by March 2016.
10. Material may on occasion need to be circulated out-of-session for feedback and/or approval.
11. The group will operate from October 2015 until March 2016.

Reconciliation of community sector levy funds provided to the Legislative Assembly Budget Estimates Committee in July 2015

Reconciliation - Community Sector Reform and Equal Remuneration Case Implementation

2012-13 Reconciliation

Income	
Co-Contribution - Community Sector Reform Levy	\$449,000
Government Provided Income - ACT	\$261,977
Total Income	\$710,977
Expenditure	
Salaries & Overheads	\$250,000
ERO Consultation	\$25,311
Governance & Financial Module	\$20,000
Total Expenditure	\$295,311
Surplus	\$415,666

2013-14 Reconciliation

Income	
Rollover from prior year	\$415,666
Co-Contribution - Community Sector Reform Levy	\$474,844
Government Provided Income - ACT	\$271,522
Total Income	\$1,162,032
Expenditure	
Salaries & Overheads	\$363,000
Governance & Financial Module	\$440,000
Development & Delivery of Modules	\$165,000
Reducing Reporting Requirements	\$76,820
Total Expenditure	\$1,044,820
Surplus	\$117,212

2014-15 Reconciliation

Income	
Rollover from prior year	\$117,212
Co-Contribution - Community Sector Reform Levy	\$479,000
Government Provided Income - ACT	\$80,000
Additional Sector Development	\$230,000
Total Income	\$906,212
Expenditure	
Salaries & Overheads	\$318,000
Development & Delivery of Modules	\$230,000
BNG Compliance Tool	\$190,000
Outsource - SROI Training	\$11,000
Total Expenditure	\$749,000
Surplus	\$157,212

Table One – Reconciliation of the 0.34% Community Sector co-contribution.