



Official Newsletter of the Australian Learning Communities Network

Incorporated in NSW. No: 9883167

Spring Edition 2019

Welcome to the Spring Edition

We trust that you will find items of interest and we would appreciate any feedback.

We thank those who made contributions

In most cases, a synopsis of the articles is specified. Generally, you can obtain the whole article by placing the mouse over the **READ MORE** icon and then clicking. Click on **Return to top** to return to index page.

[COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIANS](#)

Sustainability report

Our nation benefits significantly from the activities of university libraries.

Libraries — through their resources, services and engagement — strengthen the impact of education and research and disseminate knowledge to power the world. Libraries are an essential part of our education system. They play a key role in the development of the nation's capacity by contributing to student learning experiences. These students then go on to power the economy and reshape our world.

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[A PLAYBOOK FOR INCLUSIVE PLACEMAKING](#)

When New York's High Line opened in 2009, it was hailed as both a landmark in landscape architecture and a grassroots success story. The project began in 1999, when two strangers sitting next to one another at a community meeting, Joshua David and Robert Hammond, began lamenting the planned destruction of a privately-owned elevated railway in Manhattan. They mounted a successful five-year campaign to save it, and then started the design competition that would later transform it into one of the country's most visited parks.

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[A SMART INVESTMENT FOR A SMARTER AUSTRALIA](#)

The Front Project commissioned PwC to undertake an economic analysis of early childhood education in Australia. The analysis focusses on the early childhood education provided to children in the year before they start school – often known as either preschool or kindergarten

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[FROM AROUND THE NETWORK](#)

Items from members of the Australian Learning Communities Network

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[GUIDELINES AND TOOLS FOR REGIONAL ARTS AND CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT](#)

These guidelines and tools are to assist those working in regional communities achieve a more rewarding level of involvement in cultural activities. They show how to strengthen decisions, build productive partnerships and develop positive outcomes for both local hosts and visitors to rural, regional and remote Australia. Good practice enables strong participation in arts activities, saves time and money and achieves positive results regardless of the nature of the collaboration, the scale of the project, or the artform.

[Read more](#)

[DON'T FORGET THE FOOTPATH](#)

When we think about public spaces, we often imagine large open areas such as squares and parks. The humble footpath is overlooked, although it is an equally if not more important public space for urban social life. Every day, most people will at some point use a footpath. Their ubiquity makes them a fundamental part of cities.

[Read more](#)

[DO EMPLOYMENT FOCUSED SOCIAL ENTERPRISES PROVIDE A PATHWAY OUT OF DISADVANTAGE?](#)

This evidence reviews, drawing on secondary analysis of existing evidence from academic and grey literature, addresses whether and how employment redresses disadvantage; the current costs and future implications of unemployment and underemployment; and the potential and impacts of employment-focused social enterprises on employment creation and reducing disadvantage. A secondary goal of the review is to identify where there are significant gaps in evidence that may be limiting policy, practice and effective philanthropy

[Read more](#)

[FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS](#)

Members of Parliament regularly receive enquiries about funding opportunities for community groups, either directly or through their electorate offices. This *Issues Backgrounder* is designed to assist Members and their electorate office staff to respond to these enquiries. This guide provides links to selected funding opportunities for community groups and is organised under the following sections:

[Read more](#)

[GENERATION GAP: ENSURING A FAIR GO FOR YOUNGER AUSTRALIANS](#)

Australians aspire to leave the world a better place for future generations. Previous generations have largely succeeded in doing so. Australia's population is healthier, wealthier and better housed than 100 or even 20 years ago. Generation-on-generation economic progress has been the norm for the past century. Continuing progress is not guaranteed. Older Australians today have substantially greater wealth, income and expenditure than older Australians three decades ago, but

living standards have improved far less for younger Australians.

[Read more](#)

[HOW PUBLIC LIBRARIES CAN HELP PREPARE US FOR THE FUTURE](#)

For generations, libraries have helped people explore knowledge, information and culture. The invention of the public library meant more and more people got to use these collections and services. In the digital age, a public library can connect even the most remote community to networks of knowledge and information. Today's public libraries work to engage marginalised communities as users; pioneering projects like Townsville's Murri Book Club explore ways to make the library meaningful to Indigenous people.

[Read more](#)

[REGIONAL POPULATION GROWTH: ARE WE READY?](#)

Regional Australia is changing, and with this transformation comes boundless opportunities to rethink what regional Australia will look like in the future and how we want to shape our country as a whole. This report addresses key issues fundamental to our future settlement patterns that challenge decision-makers to prioritise regional Australia and divert future growth to connected regional cities. Policies which seek to encourage population movement to regional centres would be instrumental in the transformation of regional Australia.

[Read more](#)

[SERVICES FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES](#)

Australian libraries recognise the needs and the barriers for migrants and refugees and are working to fulfil the first and break down the latter. This report shares just a few examples of the library projects to be found in different states and territories.

[Read more](#)

[SOCIAL ENTERPRISE: A PEOPLE CENTRED APPROACH TO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES](#)

This report outlines why employment-focused social enterprises offer an alternative people-centred approach to mainstream employment solutions. Far more than just being a different way to do business, employment-focused social enterprises can build capacity and create positive impacts for the people they aim to help, as well as society as a whole.

[Read more](#)

[TURNING LOCAL LIBRARIES, POOLS AND PLAYGROUPS INTO SITES OF SURVEILLANCE.](#)

The program aims to get parents “work-ready” after child-rearing. Single parents receiving the ParentsNext benefit are required to report their attendance at particular activities with their children to providers. Activities are based on an approved list, which includes story time at a local library, swimming lessons, or a playgroup. Payments can be stopped for “not taking part in set activities”.

[Read more](#)

2019 CAUL REPORT:

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

4 JUL 2019

[Council of Australian University Librarians \(CAUL\)](#)

[Council of Australian University Librarians \(CAUL\)](#)

DESCRIPTION

Our nation benefits significantly from the activities of university libraries.

Libraries — through their resources, services and engagement — strengthen the impact of education and research and disseminate knowledge to power the world.

Libraries are an essential part of our education system. They play a key role in the development of the nation's capacity by contributing to student learning experiences. These students then go on to power the economy and reshape our world.

The collections and services of libraries also contribute to research that develops international understanding of issues in science, social sciences, humanities, technology and medicine. Australian universities are leaders in making this research knowledge available.

Society is transformed through the power of research, teaching and learning. University libraries are essential knowledge and information infrastructures which enable student achievement and research excellence.

This paper has been prepared to report on the efforts of the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL), the peak leadership organisation for university libraries in Australia. Members are the lead library executive of the institutions that have representation on Universities Australia.

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A PLAYBOOK FOR INCLUSIVE PLACEMAKING:

COMMUNITY PROCESS

MAY 31, 2019

EQUITY & INCLUSION

543

By Katherine Peinhardt and Nate Storning

This article is the first in a four-part series on equity in public spaces.

When New York's High Line opened in 2009, it was hailed as both a landmark in landscape architecture and a grassroots success story. The project began in 1999, when two strangers sitting next to one another at a community meeting, Joshua David and Robert Hammond, began lamenting the planned destruction of a privately-owned elevated railway in Manhattan. They mounted a successful five-year campaign to save it, and then started the design competition that would later transform it into one of the country's most visited parks.



Crowds on the High Line. Photo Credit: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

But the story doesn't end there. In the decade since it opened, neighbourhood around the High Line have soared. "Starchitect" buildings sprung up along the disused rail tracks, and most recently, its northern end has been capped by the ludicrously luxurious and critically panned Hudson Yards development. Magnified by the virality of the High Line concept in other cities, the struggles of the new public space were thrust into the spotlight, prompting its creators to gentrification around similar projects. New processes and programs at the High Line itself have also aimed to rectify the inequalities spurred by its popularity, but all of these efforts would without a doubt have been more effective if they were baked in from the beginning.

The High Line is only an extreme example of a common issue. What the founders hadn't accounted for were what economists call the "externalities" of a public space. Because the places we share are so intertwined with our daily lives and with our broader urban systems, altering them can impose unforeseen costs and benefits on the community that often mirror or even exacerbate existing inequalities. Some cutting-edge public space projects, like Broadway Corridor in Portland, OR, which we have had the privilege to provide placemaking services for, or 11th Street Bridge Park in Washington, DC, have been working out new models to account for housing, workforce, educational, and social goals by combining placemaking, equitable development, and community agreements. But these projects are still few and far between.

Because these externalities are often complex and unpredictable, we at Project for Public Spaces believe that a placemaking process is the best way to address them—one that starts with broad public input and pursues implementation through a feedback loop of experimentation, evaluation, and evolution. This flexible, incremental, community-driven approach can help ensure that public space designers and managers discover and address issues of equity as they arise. But who is "the community" anyways? How do we ensure that community voices not only get heard once, but continue to be felt in a public space as it evolves? And what do we do when some voices overpower or conflict with others?

The work of making our public spaces more open and fair is hard, and you should never trust someone who claims to have all the answers to these questions. We certainly don't, and recently we have been working hard to up our game. When it

comes to equity and inclusion, we as place makers should always strive to keep learning, both from the many skilled people who already work with local communities that are left out of traditional planning processes, and from best practices and examples around the world. Only you can do the former, but we can help with the latter.

That's why we collaborated with [Emily Manz](#) of EMI Strategy to create a playbook for putting inclusion into action in our own work, based on recent research in the field, and now we want to share it with you. Over the next few weeks we will release it in four parts. This first week is all about broadening and deepening the community engagement process and in the next three instalments, we will focus on programming, design, and management and governance.

We hope you will consider these ideas a start, not an end, in exploring how we can broaden the benefits and mitigate the costs of placemaking. Unlike theory, practice is never perfect. But in every placemaking project, we can always push to include more people, to listen more closely, to share more power, and to follow through more fully.

A COMMUNITY-POWERED PROCESS

“Effective engagement of community tops the list of crucial characteristics of successful placemaking.” —[Places in the Making](#), MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning

At Project for Public Spaces, we often say, “[The community is the expert.](#)” In other words, ordinary people often know a great deal about what their needs are, how their public spaces work—or don't work—and what ideas might do well in those spaces. An effective placemaking process engages these experts at the very beginning to set the priorities and vision for the project and keeps them involved throughout implementation and beyond.

But when we are aiming to make public spaces that are truly for and by the public at large, simply turning the traditional planning process on its head is not enough. Starting with community engagement will not ensure that everyone knows about the project, let alone that they get to weigh in as much as they would like to. These four strategies can help place makers reach out more broadly and dig more deeply with the full diversity of communities affected by a public space.

Demographic data is important context for any project. This mapping tool, which creates a visual display of Census Block data, shows White respondents as blue dots, Black respondents as green dots, Asian respondents as red dots, and Hispanic respondents as orange dots. Credit: [Dustin A. Cable, University of Virginia](#)

1. CULTIVATE CULTURAL COMPETENCY.

Cultural competency, as [outlined by Julian Agyeman and Jennifer Sien Erickson](#), must be the basis of an equitable placemaking project. Placemaking can only ensure equitable participation if the process operates with an adequate understanding of the community: factors like age, class, and gender; issues and concerns of nearby cultural groups; language and communication; and existing power dynamics. This type of “[deep knowledge](#)” is enhanced through observation, ethnographic research, and above all, *listening*.

In addition to understanding how best to interact and communicate with your stakeholders, understanding the demographics of a public space’s potential [catchment area](#) can help you set benchmarks to assess whether your public process has reached an accurate cross-section of the community.



Participants in PPS's Making It Happen training demonstrate inclusive meeting techniques, like small group conversations. Photo credit: Katherine Peinhardt/PPS

2. FACILITATE MORE INCLUSIVE MEETINGS.

Making space for everyone to contribute starts with inclusive meeting strategies, such as providing childcare, gender-neutral restrooms, interpretation and translation services, nursing rooms, and wheelchair-accessible entrances, among other considerations. And when it comes to how the meeting runs, professional facilitation and small meeting sizes can ensure more equal participation among attendees.

But even with all these considerations, simply “inviting in” diversity to a meeting does not make it inclusive. As writer and meditation guide Kelsey Blackwell writes in “Why People of Color Need Spaces Without White People,” sometimes it takes more than one meeting, by more than one group, to have all voices be heard. One common pitfall of workshops-as-usual is tokenism, where an attendee is unfairly subjected to pressure to speak for their entire community. To combat this, the placemaking process can incorporate the practice of “caucusing,” where communities of color and other frequently tokenized groups are invited to hold their own spaces before the broader group convenes.



Young people can be encouraged to lead and participate in the process of community outreach, like at this PPS workshop in Englewood, New Jersey. Photo credit: Katherine Peinhardt/PPS

3. RECOGNIZE WHEN WORKSHOPS ARE NOT ENOUGH.

Beyond workshops, outreach methods should focus on meeting community members where they are. New voices can be brought into the mix when design ideas are discussed outside of meeting rooms and made visible in everyday spaces and at cultural events. Whether that's with an idea-gathering "lemonade stand," or with sticker-based visual surveys posted on the side of a school bus, it is crucial to find new and creative ways to engage locals in the spaces where they feel most comfortable.

For example, transportation agencies in New Jersey have reached out to millennials using [Set the Table! Civic Dinner Parties](#). Providing hosts with a "meeting in a box" kit designed by the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center Public Outreach and Engagement Team (POET), the agencies were able to gather feedback on local transportation infrastructure projects. In this case, meeting millennials in a comfortable home setting and allowing for self-directed conversations elicited new ideas that might otherwise have slipped through the cracks.



Young people can be a part of Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper public space activations, like spray-chalk bike/walk lanes. Photo credit: Katherine Peinhardt/PPS

4. FOLLOW THROUGH.

Keeping promises is one of the most powerful tools at a placemaker's disposal to build trust with communities that have been historically wronged by urban planners, designers, developers, and policy-makers. According to a 2013 publication from MIT called Places in the Making: How placemaking builds places, "the projects that are most successful at engaging their communities are the ones that treat this engagement as an ongoing process, rather than a single required step of input or feedback." By testing out crowdsourced ideas through Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper (LQC) experimentation, placemakers can demonstrate that they listened in good faith, keep early stakeholders involved through volunteer opportunities, and generate community buy-in as the stakes get higher throughout the project.

GET STARTED!

A public space is only as community-driven as its process. It follows that public spaces can only exist for everyone if the conversations in which they are envisioned include everyone. If we are going to do better than a status quo that reinforces existing inequalities in public space, placemaking must become a process of broad listening and deep learning—from the first workshop, through programming, design, and management.

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A SMART INVESTMENT FOR A SMARTER AUSTRALIA:

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF UNIVERSAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN THE YEAR BEFORE SCHOOL IN AUSTRALIA

1 JUN 2019

[PricewaterhouseCoopers Australia](#)

[The Front Project](#)

DESCRIPTION

The Front Project commissioned PwC to undertake an economic analysis of early childhood education in Australia. The analysis focusses on the early childhood education provided to children in the year before they start school – often known as either preschool or kindergarten.

The analysis has considered the benefits of early childhood education for children, their parents or carers, governments and employers against the costs of providing that early childhood education. It has used a methodology that is consistent with similar past studies and accepted approaches to economic analysis. It considers a broad range of short, medium and long-term benefits, all of which are strongly supported by either Australian or international evidence and use contemporary Australian data.

RELATED INFORMATION

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From Around the Network

Colour Me Calm - Bateau Bay Library



Date

Saturday, 10 August 2019 - 10:30am to 12:00pm

Saturday, 24 August 2019 - 10:30am to 12:00pm

Join in this increasingly popular activity which has been shown to have positive effects on wellbeing. Designs and pencils provided, or you are welcome to bring your own. Supervised children and grandchildren welcome.

Enquiries: 4350 1580

TOWNSVILLE

MESSY PLAY

Unleash the mess! Increase your child's confidence and develop their fine and gross motor skills by exploring fun, sensory and creative Messy Play Wednesday's

9:15-10:00am & 10:30-11:15 am. City Libraries Aitkenvale.

MESSY PLAY IN THE PARK

We take the activities outside on the last Wednesday of the month, 9:30-11:00 am

Contact City Libraries Townsville for park details.

DADS READ

Dads read recognises the vital role Dads play in helping children develop reading skills. Each school holidays, City Libraries hosts a Dads Read activity to encourage Dads and their children to read together. Activities have included Lego and marble play.

STORY BOX LIBRARY

Story Box Library as an online reading room. It's a place where the wonderful world of Australian Children's Literature is on permanent exhibit and children can connect, engage and be inspired by a range of quality Australian stories read on film by some wonderfully engaging storytellers

- [View the full range on the StoryBox webpage](#) or
- [Read the StoryBox User Guide](#) (PDF) or
- [Search on the CityLibraries Townsville catalogue for titles](#)

BALLARAT

Preserving your Memory

As part of Seniors Week, come along to this session to use scrapbooking techniques to turn your own photos and memorabilia into a visually pleasing record of life events.

This session has been organised by U3A Ballarat as part of Seniors Week.

Intergenerational Maps all ages arts project

In the intergenerational Maps all ages arts project, Gallery Sunshine Everywhere is working with University of the Third Age to link younger people, including families who may be recent Brimbank residents with those who have lived in all areas of Brimbank including Sunshine, St Albans, Deer Park.

During August pairs or groups made up of the recent and long term residents will visit an area they choose in Brimbank.

On Saturday 31 August and/or Sunday 1 September, all participants in the project will come together for one or both artist led workshops to produce work for exhibition from 12 September.

If you've lived in Brimbank only a short time or know others like that, we'd love to have you join this fun project.

Intergenerational Maps Exhibition dates: 14 September- 12 October.

There are lots of different sessions running during Seniors Week 2019.

WYNDHAM

Spring into Learning at the fourth Wyndham Learning Festival

With the theme of “Spring into Learning” the 2019 lifelong and life-wide Wyndham Learning Festival encouraged learning for all ages, interests and abilities with over 160 free learning events at a range of venues across the City of Wyndham from 1st to 8th September. The Wyndham Learning Festival is one of the first and biggest learning festivals in Australia. From its inception in 2016 this annual event continues to grow and evolve each year, building on its successes and developing partnerships with event holders and financial supporters.

By showcasing the learning opportunities that are happening all over Wyndham, the Festival highlights that learning does not stop when we leave school; rather we continue to learn and grow throughout our lives acquiring new skills and knowledge. Festival participants are encouraged to open themselves up to new opportunities, adventures, and to be curious about our world.

The Wyndham Learning Festival aims to:

- Celebrate learning
- Motivate all people to try something new
- Discover learning opportunities in Wyndham
- Promote a lifelong learning culture
- Encourage social inclusion through learning

This year Festival events included pyrography, craft, hip hop, bowls, gardening, painting, cooking, lego, African drumming, creative writing, knitting, Spanish, ceramics, drawing, gaming, music therapy, dancing and Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM). Festival participants listened to author talks, competed in the Young Scientist of Wyndham competition, enjoyed music from a local High School Chamber group, improved their CVs and interview skills, achieved better sleep, practiced their English, joined in the Wyndham Park Party in the Precinct and Pop Up School, talked to the animals at Rhyme Time at the Zoo, heard inspirational stories of refugee survival, learnt about local Aboriginal culture...the possibilities were (almost) endless. Our stand-out signature event was Craig Reucassell bringing his War on Waste to Wyndham – over 500 people were inspired and entertained with recycling, upcycling and sustainability ideas in this timely and enjoyable event.

Festival evaluation surveys are still being collated; however feedback has been overwhelmingly positive so far.

For more information see www.wynlearnfestival.org.au/events

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Collaborating with regional communities:

Guidelines and tools for regional arts and cultural engagement

19 JUL 2019

[Regional Arts Australia](#)

[Regional Arts Australia](#)

DESCRIPTION

These guidelines and tools are to assist those working in regional communities achieve a more rewarding level of involvement in cultural activities. They show how to strengthen decisions, build productive partnerships and develop positive outcomes for both local hosts and visitors to rural, regional and remote Australia. Good practice enables strong participation in arts activities, saves time and money and achieves positive results regardless of the nature of the collaboration, the scale of the project, or the artform.

Whether you are a visitor engaging in collaborative cultural projects or practices, or a host to partners in a collaboration, this document is designed to help you. It describes how to initiate, negotiate and conduct successful collaborative partnerships. It is designed for artists, arts organisations, community groups, venues, local government bodies, touring arts organisations, and other individuals or organisations whose work includes collaborating with others on arts or cultural projects in rural, regional and remote Australia.

Case studies from around the country have been prepared to showcase good practice in cultural collaboration in regional Australia. They are referenced throughout the document.

Existing guidelines and protocols are already available for related areas, including protocols for working with First Nations artists and volunteers. References and links to relevant resources can be found at the end of this document. This document is not intended to replicate or reinvent this information, nor does it aim to act as an exhaustive list. Rather, these guidelines and tools are provided to draw together the most important principles of good regional engagement and identify examples of them working successfully in practice.

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Don't forget the footpath:

Its vital public space

May 6, 2019 6.11am AEST

In an urban setting like central Footscray, where only 1% of the area is public space, the value of the humble footpath needs to be recognised. *Yvonne Meng, Author provided*

- When we think about public spaces, we often imagine large open areas such as squares and parks. The humble footpath is overlooked, although it is an equally if not more important public space for urban social life. Every day, most people will at some point use a footpath. Their ubiquity makes them a fundamental part of cities.

Due to their narrow form and seemingly undesigned nature, it is easy to neglect footpaths. Urban design research tends to favour the bigger picture of streets and streetscapes or focus on architectural elements such as building forms and frontages. And planning policies tend to treat footpaths as road and transport assets, rather than as public space.

Read more: [New minister for public spaces is welcome – now here are ten priorities for action](#)

However, footpaths in urban areas support complex social systems and a wide variety of uses. They are a vital public space and deserve more attention in the planning and design of our cities.

The case for footpaths

In rapidly densifying suburbs such as Footscray in Melbourne's inner west, footpaths can become a valuable asset to accommodate daily life. Of the 23 hectares that make up Footscray's commercial core, only 1% is public open space. This is well below the [9.9% average](#) in the wider City of Maribyrnong area.

Despite the lack of public open space in Footscray, activity on the streets is lively due to a [diverse social and cultural mix](#) and changing tempo of street activity.

Read more: [When a suburb's turn for gentrification comes ...](#)

Gentrification, population growth and multi-storey apartment developments are rapidly changing the physical and demographic landscape. Over the next 20 years [Footscray's population is forecast to grow by 153.19%](#). This means more people will need access to limited public space.

There are efforts to create more open space in Footscray. For example, in 2016 the City of Maribyrnong [redeveloped an open-lot car park at Byron Street](#) as a multilevel car park with an adjacent plaza. However, solutions of this sort have limitations because publicly owned and underdeveloped land is not readily available.

If we rethink definitions of public space to include footpaths, we can start to establish these as spaces for social interaction rather than merely paths for getting from A to B.

[Read more: People love parklets, and businesses can help make them happen](#)

More than walking

Modern footpaths are relatively recent urban space. In Western cities, records of footpaths date back to the third century BC, but only in the [mid-18th century did they become prevalent in Europe](#). Before this there was [no real physical separation between pedestrians and the carriageway](#).



Paisley Street shops in Footscray, where part of the footpath becomes an internalised space
.Yvonne Meng, Author provided

In Melbourne, footpaths were scarce at the time the [Hoddle Grid](#) was laid in 1837. Not until the 1880s were the city's footpaths [properly paved](#).

In their most pragmatic form, footpaths provide a safe zone for people to walk, away from moving traffic. However, they can also be an extension of the abutting buildings. Retail goods spill out in front of shops and on kerbs, creating internalised regions. Cafes set up chairs and tables for patrons to sit outside, extending trade into the public realm.

In addition, people use footpaths to congregate or socialise. There are buskers, beggars, authorities, people waiting for transport, or simply those taking a moment to stop.

[Read more: Contested spaces: living off the edge in a city mall where design fuels conflict](#)

As a result, footpaths are an ever-changing hybrid of social, commercial and recreational use. Although there can be friction between different activities, the value of urban footpaths is that they are many things to many people.

By offering a seat for passers-by, a window bench improves the footpath's amenity as public space.
Yvonne Meng, Author provided

Yet, despite being such a heavily used space, footpaths in Melbourne are often categorised in planning strategies and policies as road and transport assets. This approach is problematic as it treats them as infrastructure to be managed rather than spaces for human use.

Some cities such as New York do consider footpaths as people-oriented places. The city planning department provides [design guidelines](#) to help architects and designers. Footpaths are conceptualised as a “room” with four surfaces: the horizontal pavement, the wall of the building facing the street, the roadside, and the canopy.

This type of thinking acknowledges that footpaths are immersive spaces and the experience of walking them is integral to the success of a street.

Learning from footpath users



Appropriating a doorway space with fake grass and plastic stools.

Yvonne Meng, Author provided

People devise many creative and adaptive ways of using them, and architects and planners can learn from these uses. For example, nooks and indents in buildings abutting footpaths enable people to socialise outside in opportunistic ways. However, when unplanned and unmanaged, footpaths can become a jumble of electrical boxes, signposts, café tables, and other disconnected objects.

Footpaths are also the site of temporary events such as markets, which help activate the streets. With local council support, these events not only unlock the potential role of footpaths in community-building, but also help strengthen existing cultural identities.

The weekly [Mini Green Market](#) on the corner of Hopkins and Leeds streets was born out of a longstanding tradition of informal street vending in Footscray. Despite some [conflict and uncertainty in 2018](#), vendors can use a wide portion of the footpath to sell their wares in a regular organised event.



The Footscray Mini Green Market occupies the footpath on the corner of Hopkins and Leeds streets.

Yvonne Meng, Author provided

The conundrum facing footpaths is that, despite being a site for many diverse activities, they are not often considered an important public space in their own right. What makes a space “public” is its capability to enable a wide range of uses and allow for interaction between people. Footpaths do exactly that.

To make the most of our footpaths, Melbourne and other Australian cities need a change in mindset in how we view these public spaces. If footpaths were more carefully considered in city design and planning, they could contribute even more to the quality of the urban realm.

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Do employment focused social enterprises provide a pathway out of disadvantage?

An evidence review

5 AUG 2019

[Joanne Qian](#), [Emma Riseley](#), [Jo Barraket](#)

[Centre for Social Impact Swinburne](#)

DESCRIPTION

This evidence reviews, drawing on secondary analysis of existing evidence from academic and grey literature, addresses whether and how employment redresses disadvantage; the current costs and future implications of unemployment and underemployment; and the potential and impacts of employment-focused social enterprises on employment creation and reducing disadvantage. A secondary goal of the review is to identify where there are significant gaps in evidence that may be limiting policy, practice and effective philanthropy.

The document is organised as follows: first, we consider the available evidence on whether and how employment acts as a pathway out of disadvantage for individuals and communities in Section 2; then Section 3 presents and discusses current macro-economic and labour market conditions and their implications for access to employment for people who experience disadvantage; following this, the evidence available on the employment outcomes of employment-focused social, their effectiveness, challenges and opportunities is reviewed in Section 4; after discussing the implications for effective philanthropy in Section 5, the review concludes with a consideration of impact measurement and employment outcome indicators for employment-focused social enterprises.

Highlights:

1. Employment has been found to benefit individuals, specifically via access to income and social capital; increased participation and inclusion in society; and promotion of mental and physical health and wellbeing.
2. Australian government approaches to employment services are characterised by a work first approach within a residual welfare regime. In line with this, basic employment services are offered to Australian jobseekers, but they are insufficient both in practice and outcome, particularly for Australians experiencing severe and/or multiple barriers to employment.
3. The Australian labour market has experienced recent rising labour force participation paired with a falling unemployment rate, but underutilisation

remains persistently high, which indicates unmet demand for employment. In other words, Australia is not making the most of its productivity potential and the burden of exclusion over-proportionally falls to certain groups (women, young people, people with disability, Indigenous Australians and people seeking asylum) because of system failures.

4. As an alternative to mainstream employment supports, employment-focused social enterprises are a form of social enterprise with the social mission to create employment or employment pathways for people with barriers to mainstream employment. Evidence reviewed suggests that employment-focused social enterprises are able to create significant employment outcomes at the individual and community levels, though comprehensive research is needed to better understand community outcomes.
5. Empirical studies suggest that employment-focused social enterprises are relatively high upfront cost interventions with high return/value. However, there is a lack of comparative research that considers the social value and financial efficiencies of social enterprises relative to other approaches and the available research focuses on small sample studies, which limits the reliability and ability to generalise outcomes to all employment-focused social enterprises.
6. Research exploring the long-term effectiveness of employment-focused social enterprises and the specific mechanisms that produce their outcomes is also limited.
7. Employment-focused social enterprises face various challenges both internally and in response to the operating environment and supports in the form of financial and non-financial capacity building could help grow and scale the social impacts of employment-focused social enterprises.
8. Philanthropy has been an important source of 'risk capital' to generate and trial new responses to social problems, and philanthropic support for social enterprise in Australia has been increasing, but rural and regional social enterprises report low access to philanthropic support. There is considerable scope to share learning and shape collaborative philanthropic practice in the Australian context.
9. Impact measurement has been a challenge for many social enterprises, with approximately one in three social enterprises not measuring their social impacts. For those who have measurements in place, their frameworks are typically enterprise/program-specific, and employment-related impact measures are not standardised across the sector.

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Funding opportunities for community groups

21 JUN 2019

[Matthew Dobson](#)

[Parliamentary Research Service \(NSW\)](#)

DESCRIPTION

Members of Parliament regularly receive enquiries about funding opportunities for community groups, either directly or through their electorate offices. This *Issues Backgrounder* is designed to assist Members and their electorate office staff to respond to these enquiries. This guide provides links to selected funding opportunities for community groups and is organised under the following sections:

1. Government gateways to community grants;
2. Non-government gateways to community grants;
3. Grants in selected subject areas;
4. Selected Private Sector Funding Sources;
5. Selected NGO Funding Sources; and
6. Selected Local Government funding sources.

In response to the current NSW drought, the 2019 edition includes a new sub-section dedicated to drought assistance.

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Generation Gap:

Ensuring a fair go for younger Australians

18 AUG 2019

[Danielle Wood](#), [Kate Griffiths](#), [Owain Emslie](#)
[Grattan Institute](#)

DESCRIPTION

Australians aspire to leave the world a better place for future generations. And previous generations have largely succeeded in doing so. Australia's population is healthier, wealthier and better housed than 100 or even 20 years ago. Generation-on-generation economic progress has been the norm for the past century.

But continuing progress is not guaranteed. Older Australians today have substantially greater wealth, income and expenditure than older Australians three decades ago, but living standards have improved far less for younger Australians.

The wealth of households under 35 has barely moved since 2004. Poorer young Australians have less wealth than their predecessors and are far less likely to own a home. In contrast, older households' wealth has grown by more than 50 per cent over the same period because of the housing boom and growth in superannuation assets.

There is no evidence that young people's spending habits are to blame for their stagnating wealth – this is not a problem caused by avocado brunches or too many lattes. In fact, younger people are spending less on non-essential items such as alcohol, clothing and personal care, and more on necessities such as housing, than three decades ago.

Economic pressures on the young have been exacerbated by recent wage stagnation and rising under-employment. Older households are better cushioned from low wage growth because they are more likely to have other sources of income. If low wage growth and fewer working hours is the 'new normal', then we could have a generation emerge from young adulthood with lower incomes than the one before it. This has already happened in the US and UK.

Young Australians will also bear the brunt of growing pressures on government budgets. The ageing of the population means higher government spending on health, aged care and pensions. But there will be fewer working-age people for every person over 65 to pay for it.

Governments have supercharged these demographic pressures by introducing generous tax concessions for older people. The share of households over 65 paying tax has halved over the past two decades. And average income tax paid has barely changed for people over 65 despite strong growth in their incomes and wealth. Working-age Australians are

underwriting the living standards of older Australians to a much greater extent than the Baby Boomers did for their forebears, straining the 'generational bargain' to breaking point.

Inheritances will not fix the problem. Instead, they exacerbate inequality, because the biggest inheritances tend to go to people who are already wealthy.

Policy change is required. Boosting economic growth and improving the structural budget position are wins for all, but especially for the young. Changes to planning rules to encourage higher-density living in established city suburbs would make housing more affordable. And a fair go for younger people means reducing or eliminating age-based tax breaks that are pushing a growing tax burden on to working Australians.

This report examines the stalled progress and what governments can do to help. It reviews indicators of financial wellbeing – wealth, income, employment, expenditure, and government taxes and spending – for people of different ages and how they have changed over time.

The report identifies policy settings that have contributed to differences in outcomes across generations. And it looks ahead to what an ageing population might mean for the economic future of today's young.

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How public libraries can help prepare us for the future

For generations, [libraries have helped people explore knowledge, information and culture](#). The invention of the public library meant more and more people got to use these collections and services.

In the digital age, a public library can connect even the most remote community to networks of knowledge and information. Today's public libraries work to engage marginalised communities as users; pioneering projects like [Townsville's Murri Book Club](#) explore ways to make the library meaningful to Indigenous people.

Despite all this, there is one area in which public libraries are underused. Libraries can also help us plan for the future.

Long-term planning is always challenging. It's simply impossible to gather data from events that haven't happened yet.

Sometimes we may detect trends, but these can fall apart under what some foresight experts call "[TUNA conditions](#)", when we face Turbulence, Uncertainty, Novelty or Ambiguity.

Think of someone trying to predict that experiments with debt on Wall Street would lead to the global financial crisis and the political ripples that have followed. Think of trying, today, to foretell all the long-term consequences of climate change.

Enter scenario planning

That means we've had to find new ways to look at the unpredictable future. Big business has used scenario planning since the 1960s, when [Pierre Wack pioneered the approach for Shell](#).

In scenario planning, people come together to imagine future settings that challenge how we currently think. You don't judge a scenario's value by whether it's likely to happen: [its value lies in helping us to rethink our assumptions about the future](#).

Shell's scenarios became famous in the 1970s when [the company successfully anticipated the oil crisis](#) that followed the Yom Kippur War. Shell hadn't predicted the conflict but had imagined scenarios where Middle Eastern oil producers worked as a cartel to control global supply. When those countries did start an oil embargo, scenario planning meant Shell had already thought through this possibility ahead of its competitors.

Today, experts thinking about the future acknowledge the need for engagement from the bottom up as well as top down. For example, the European Union's new [proposal for "mission-oriented innovation"](#) aims to get all of us focused on solving society's problems. In turbulent times, it's important that at every level of society we strengthen our ability to imagine the future that awaits us – and our own future choices.

What is libraries' role in this?

This chimes with the finding of [research at the University of Southern Queensland](#), in support of [a new vision for public libraries](#), that public libraries are a grassroots connector of people, ideas and resources:

Public library services are built on relationships, not just transactions; they are entwined with the specific and deeply local context of everyday life in the communities they serve.

[Read more: Technology hasn't killed public libraries – it's inspired them to transform and stay relevant](#)

Locally held scenario planning sessions, convened by communities at their public library, would make use of the library's existing capacity to connect people – but this time with the goal of helping us reimagine the future.

Librarians would work with their local council to identify issues that call for a long-term perspective. Should we invest in “smart” tech for our small country towns? How much should we rely on recycled water or desalination in the big coastal cities?

Librarians would provide background research and host community workshops to develop local scenarios. People would start to have deeper, richer discussions about the future: there's a reason scenarios have been called “[the art of strategic conversation](#)”.

The scenario process depends on bringing together a group of individuals in a trusted space, with enough information to give the scenarios detail and flavour. In a local community, the public library is that place of trust and information.

Much as public librarians use their skills to help with job seeking or support people's health and well-being, as scenario planners they would apply their talents to a new domain.

[Read more: Friday essay: why libraries can and must change](#)

Conversations that could transform politics

[Playful events we have run in collaboration with Ann Arbor Public Library in Michigan](#), to capture the attention of children as well as adults, have begun to engage local people with the notion of the long-term future. The next step is to develop a more rigorous and substantive conversation.

If public libraries were supported to deliver strategic foresight to their communities, politics could transform. The electorate would be better informed, thinking deeper and further ahead about political issues. Councils could take decisions with confidence that the community had been consulted about the long-term consequences.

Scenarios would offer a playbook of potential futures, already imagined and rehearsed. Every Australian could have access to the kind of foresight tools that have been informing the decisions of government and big business for the past half century.

Imagine the conversations we, as a country, would be having about our future if we democratised those tools via the local library.

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Regional population growth.

Are we ready?

The economics of alternative Australian settlement patterns

7 AUG 2019

[Jack Archer](#), [Kim Houghton](#), [Ben Vonthethoff](#)

[Regional Australia Institute](#)

DESCRIPTION

Regional Australia is changing, and with this transformation comes boundless opportunities to rethink what regional Australia will look like in the future and how we want to shape our country as a whole.

This report addresses key issues fundamental to our future settlement patterns that challenge decision-makers to prioritise regional Australia and divert future growth to connected regional cities. Policies which seek to encourage population movement to regional centres would be instrumental in the transformation of regional Australia.

Australia is on track for substantial population growth in the coming decades, with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) forecasting growth of up to 19 million additional people by 2056 – a 75 per cent increase.

If we continue with current geographic patterns of settlement, most of our future population will reside in our major capital cities, while regional areas will experience only modest levels of growth. These patterns reflect global trends towards increasing urbanisation and employment growth in city-based service industries. As a result, Sydney and Melbourne will approach global megacity status, with populations of 9.3 million and 10.2 million, respectively. Brisbane and Perth are projected to grow to the scale of Sydney and Melbourne today.

While we celebrate the wealth and success of our globally connected inner cities, current urban planning will see most future population growth in the outer suburbs. In Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, the outer suburban population is projected to more than double. In Brisbane, the outer suburban population is projected to nearly triple.

Rapid urban population growth creates challenges that are already clear to residents in the outer suburbs of our major cities. High house prices paid by average wages and rising congestion have already emerged as key points of debate as we consider the population growth to come.

Australia's megacity future will emerge if we follow this business as usual scenario, but in reality, our future settlement patterns and population growth are far from fixed. Australia has alternatives. However, public debate and planning have paid limited

attention to the role regional Australia can play. The Regional Australia Institute's (RAI's) National Population Plan for Regional Australia was developed to highlight the role of regional Australia.

This report looks at the economic consequences of alternative future population scenarios to better inform the conversation about our future growth. The research, conducted in conjunction with the University of South Australia, included investigating a set of regionally distributed population growth scenarios for Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth, along with analysis of the scale of agglomeration economies available to Australian cities. The scenarios test the effectiveness of alternative settlement patterns for relieving commuting and house price pressures, and whether this relief would come at a big cost to future incomes and employment opportunities.

RELATED INFORMATION

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Services for migrants and refugees

18 JUN 2019

[Australian Library and Information Association](#)

[Australian Library and Information Association](#)

DESCRIPTION

In 2017-2018, more than half a million people arrived to live in Australia. While two thirds were temporary visa holders, others were looking for a longer term home, contributing to the 7.3 million people living in Australia but born elsewhere.

When people arrive in Australia, whether through choice or for reasons of hardship, as migrants, international students, refugees or humanitarian entrants, they seek to make a place for themselves and their families in their new communities. They have to set up home, find employment, become familiar with cultural norms that are second nature to Australians but alien to new arrivals, and often their first language is not English.

For library users, coming from a country where there is a good public library network, the local library is an obvious place to find essential information, sign up for English language conversation classes, use the public computers, engage with other children and families at story time. Joining the library is part of the settling in process. For others, coming from countries where there may not be a library network, libraries are an unknown quantity and it can be hard to build up the courage to step over the threshold.

Australian libraries recognise the needs and the barriers for migrants and refugees and are working to fulfil the first and break down the latter. This report shares just a few examples of the library projects to be found in different states and territories.

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Social enterprise:

A people-centred approach to employment services

31 JUL 2019

[Jo Barraket](#), [Joanne Qian](#), [Emma Riseley](#)
[Centre for Social Impact Swinburne](#)

DESCRIPTION

This report outlines why employment-focused social enterprises offer an alternative people-centred approach to mainstream employment solutions. Far more than just being a different way to do business, employment-focused social enterprises can build capacity and create positive impacts for the people they aim to help, as well as society as a whole.

The unemployment rate for the general population has declined in recent years. However, there is a growing number of Australians struggling to find and maintain meaningful employment. They experience complex barriers to participation, requiring more tailored and personalised employment support services. Research suggests that employment-focused social enterprises are an alternative solution. They have been found to produce higher and better employment outcomes than mainstream employment services for people experiencing significant disadvantage.

Key findings:

Research shows that employment-focused social enterprises provide many benefits:

To the individual:

- Improving people's lives and livelihoods, while directly reducing the costs of welfare, health, and housing services.
- Addressing some of the gaps in our current employment and employment services systems, by providing people-centred work settings, tailored solutions and sustainable service delivery models.
- Producing better employment outcomes than mainstream employment services for people experiencing significant disadvantage.
- According to some evidence, producing intergenerational benefits by improving quality of life for households.

To the broader community and the Australian economy:

- Employment-focused social enterprises can be as efficient and more productive than their commercial counterparts.
- Improving workforce participation reduces disadvantage, increases our national potential for innovation, and creates billions in improved productivity for Australia.
- Employment-focused social enterprise can be a sustainable business model, providing employment pathways that reduce reliance on government and philanthropic funding.

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Libraries, pools and playgroups:

Sites of surveillance

Sydney Morning Herald reporter Jacqueline Maley evoked the spectre of the Orwellian surveillance state recently when discussing how library staff had been implicated in the ParentsNext program. She reported that the private providers contracted to run the program phoned libraries or local pools to check on parents' attendance.

The program aims to get parents "work-ready" after child-rearing. Single parents receiving the ParentsNext benefit are required to report their attendance at particular activities with their children to providers. Activities are based on an approved list, which includes story time at a local library, swimming lessons, or a playgroup. Payments can be stopped for "[not taking part in set activities](#)".

Read more: [More than unpopular. How ParentsNext intrudes on single parents' human rights](#)

Surveillance and policing parents

[As critics have asserted](#), this kind of heavy-handed monitoring is problematic for many reasons. It is an example of the stigmatisation of single parents and policing of their parenting practices, despite the stated aim of the program being to help parents re-enter the workforce.

The policing of the program raises issues of privacy and devalues unpaid care work. It also shows a lack of any real understanding of the challenges of single parenting and of the additional barrier's single mothers encounter (95% of those receiving the benefit are single mothers).

ParentsNext has been the subject of a Senate inquiry. It reported [significant flaws in the program](#).

What is also deeply troubling is the enrolment of community workers and public spaces in the monitoring of parents. The Sydney Morning Herald's headline, "[The government parenting program turning librarians into snitches](#)", rightly captures this sense of outrage.

The CEO of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) [said](#): "If staff uphold library values of 'free access' and refuse to be complicit in the ParentsNext process, single parents can be denied essential payments. If we sign story time attendance forms, we are supporting a system which penalises families already on the poverty line."

In a nice twist of surveillance tactics, ALIA promises to report to the minister the names of ParentsNext providers who use story time attendance – without prior consultation with the parents – to monitor families' eligibility for welfare payments. While not explicitly challenging the practice of monitoring parents, it at least highlights the need for better consultation with parents. A worrying aspect of ParentsNext is the expectation that staff working in community spaces will help monitor parents' attendance. [Tyler Olson/Shutterstock](#)

Protecting community spaces

Sociologist Eric Klinenberg, in [Palaces for the People: how social infrastructure can help fight inequality, polarisation and the decline of civic life](#), argues that public libraries, schools and other community facilities are critical social infrastructure. They enhance community solidarity and protect against social isolation, particularly for new arrivals, young families and the elderly. They create resilient urban communities.

[Ray Oldenburg](#) described such spaces as “third places”: inclusive, egalitarian places outside of work and home, where people can socialise, converse and debate. Examples include churches, cafes, clubs and public libraries. Oldenburg argued that these places are important for civic engagement and democracy.

Community spaces like public libraries or playgroups are also important places of “[everyday multiculturalism](#)” where social differences are accommodated and diverse groups of people can interact. They can help shift prejudice and encourage tolerance and inclusion.

Crucially, third places are sites of voluntary attendance. The very fact that people are free to participate in these places makes them such valued sites of social support and leisure.



Third places are inclusive, egalitarian spaces where people can seek support and leisure. [Rawpixel.com/Shutterstock](#)

Read more: [Many people feel lonely in the city, but perhaps 'third places' can help with that](#)

Public libraries are spaces for social connection and support

In her short-story collection, [Public Library and Other Stories \(2015\)](#), Ali Smith argues that public libraries are often treasured spaces to which people feel a strong emotional connection. Libraries are places of discovery where people can “become on their own terms”. Local librarians work hard to create an atmosphere of non-judgment and inclusion.

At the same time, public libraries have always been a site for government agencies to interface with the community. Libraries promote an informed citizenry who can actively participate in democratic life. As with all public institutions, there is a fine line between informing and empowering citizens and coercing them to conform to ideas about being a “good citizen”.

In this case, the line has been well and truly crossed. Activities that could be empowering and enjoyable become mandated, additional burdens, based on arbitrary criteria that appear to have little to do with work-readiness. Community spaces of social connection and support become sites of surveillance.

It is imperative to ask what this might mean for our city’s third places. Would this kind of monitoring lead vulnerable people to disengage from the very services they need most?

In the context of shrinking public spaces in the city and the withdrawal of social services, such third places are a bastion. We need to continue to advocate for the right of citizens to use these and other community spaces freely and according to their own needs, not those of a surveillance state.

[Read more: Technology hasn't killed public libraries – it's inspired them to transform and stay relevant](#)

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