

Case 7: Solving the Jigsaw

(Philanthropic grant to a not-for-profit for a program with schools)



Priority areas: student wellbeing; community education

About Solving the Jigsaw

'Solving the Jigsaw' helps young people learn to manage the threats of bullying at school and violence at home and in the community. The program was developed in 1997 by the Centre for Non-Violence (formerly EASE), a domestic violence support service based in Bendigo. Today it operates throughout Victoria and includes more than 80 schools. 27,000 children and 1,300 teachers have taken part in comprehensive training programs. (See the website below for program goals).

The R E Ross Trust made its first grant to EASE for 'Solving the Jigsaw' in 2001. Between June 2001 and June 2005, the Trust provided over \$395,000 towards the program's continued expansion in schools, quality improvement and the development of a comprehensive training program, the grant was renewed in 2006 and again in 2009 for another three years. Since 2001, the Ross Trust has paid a total of \$994,149 towards 'Solving the Jigsaw'.

To learn more, visit: <http://www.solvingthejigsaw.org.au>

About The R E ROSS TRUST

The R E Ross Trust is a perpetual charitable trust established in 1970 for charitable purposes in Victoria. The Trust makes grants in response to unsolicited requests and also by invitation to selected organisations to support Collaborations and Programs.

The Trust directs resources towards projects and other activities that: address disadvantage and inequity; encourage and promote social inclusiveness, community connectedness and health and wellbeing; and protect and preserve Australian flora and fauna.

To learn more, visit: <http://www.rosstrust.org.au/>

What we discovered

Knowledge –

- ▶ ... *about yourself and your own limitations*: be prepared for the consequences of engaging with the media in terms of the extra burden on resources; have 'all your ducks in a row' to respond with clarity about who you are and what you are doing.
- ▶ ... *about the sector*: schools are a 'completely different beast' to other organisations and their operating environment needs to be understood and appreciated.

Role clarity –

- ▶ *the right balance*: there is a fine line between being involved in a program and becoming a burden to the not-for-profit organisation.
- ▶ *beyond funding*: The R E Ross Trust role as a partner and facilitator has helped in their ability to share key lessons with others from a number of programs.

Impact – sustained impact and cultural change: ensure that any school-based program is curriculum-aligned and takes a whole school approach.

Knowledge

The R E Ross Trust represents one of a number of philanthropic trusts or foundations that have supported, and continue to support, the Solving the Jigsaw Program. Supporters have included (among others): The Portland House Foundation; The F. J. Foundation; The Tim Fairfax Family Foundation; The Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation; The Colonial Foundation; The Helen Macpherson Smith Trust; The Ian Potter Foundation; The Myer Foundation and Sidney Myer Fund, and The William Buckland Foundation.

The R E Ross Trust initially became aware of the Solving the Jigsaw Program through the Emergency Accommodation and Support Enterprise's (EASE) application to the Trust (as an open grant) in 2001. The first grant made was for \$100,000 over two years to develop training and develop materials to market Solving the Jigsaw to schools in Bendigo and other regional areas. This was followed by a grant in 2002 with the Trust providing direction and support for the organisation to develop its training model for facilitators. In August 2003, the Trust approved \$184,869 towards core program funding costs to continue to deliver the program in schools and further develop the facilitator program.

It was at this time the R E Ross Trust began its commitment to providing multi-year core funding to successful

organisations and programs and move away from funding only one-off new projects. As a consequence, Solving the Jigsaw became known as a Ross Trust Major Project, to reflect the Trust's ongoing commitment and the value of the program. In 2005, the Ross Trust undertook a review of its granting strategy, where the Trustees identified violence prevention and working to improve the lives and potential of children as priority areas. As a result the Trustees approved a grant to EASE with a grant of \$262,250, continuing Solving the Jigsaw as a Major Project.

In December 2006, the Ross Trust adopted new granting guidelines and redefined its 'Major' and 'Special' Projects as 'Collaborations' and 'Programs'. Consequently the Trust's granting relationship with the Solving the Jigsaw, became known formally as a Collaboration and no longer as a Major Project.

In 2008, EASE received a one-off grant from Helen Macpherson Smith Trust to develop a communications strategy. The grant was used to employ a communications specialist who led a number of media response planning meetings, which Ross Trust staff and a Trustee participated in and hosted on one occasion. This advisory committee provided input into the development of a media release, background materials for media and briefing notes for spokespeople about the program. This kind of participation in the program's activities meant



the Trust had an intimate knowledge of the challenges and experiences of EASE at this time and were able to provide strategic advice where needed.

A grant maker's direct involvement in a program can build their knowledge and may allow them to provide advice based on previous experience.

The Solving the Jigsaw concept, as outlined in EASE's original application, grew from an idea relating to the impact on the wellbeing of children who were living with their mothers in a women's

refuge. EASE's goal of developing the Solving the Jigsaw program was to tackle the problem of family violence not only through crisis support services, but also from an early intervention prevention perspective. This dual approach appealed to the Trust's guiding framework of balancing its grant making between meeting the immediate and basic community needs alongside longer term investments in prevention and early intervention.

A major objective of 'Collaboration' funding for Solving the Jigsaw was to build their capacity to source funding from others. This would ensure the program's sustainability beyond the life of the Ross Trust's support. Improving EASE's communications with potential investors was seen as a way to do that.

A simple 'prospectus' can help clarify your program's objectives and explain to others, including potential grant makers, what your goals and values are.

"To this end", explains, R E Ross Trust Program Manager, Lara Hook, "the Trust recognised that organisations need to be able to 'sell themselves' to potential funders". The development of an investment prospectus,

similar to what a company would prepare prior to going public, was seen as a potential tool for community organisations to promote themselves. Acknowledging the significance of this process in helping an organisation 'hone in' on their core aims, the Trust gathered together a group of organisations, including EASE, to be 'guinea pigs' for testing a prospectus framework that the Trust's then CEO, Sylvia Geddes had developed. Lara elaborates, "We realised that the 'prospectus' really helped organisations to know who they are and what they wanted to do – it could be presented in a coherent way rather than be an idea that was in an individual's head. The framework template is now on the website and freely accessible to all. Ross also provides communications and marketing peer support roundtables for a number of not-for-profits."

In February 2008, the Trust launched a Prospectus Development Small Grants Program to assist organisations to use the Framework. EASE has received a small grant as part of this program to pull together a 'prospectus', which helped clarify and articulate their objectives, as well as lay out key financial, organisational structure, and governance information. As part of this process, EASE undertook a 12-month review of its communication and marketing in 2011, which resulted in a name change from EASE (with a specific emphasis on emergency accommodation) to the Centre for Non-Violence (more reflective of the broader intent of the organisation and its initiatives).

As indicated, the Ross Trust designed the Prospectus Small Grants Program partly to help organisations focus on what they are and what they hoped to achieve. Lara recounts one incident where being clear about their core focus was vital for EASE. In 2008, a television documentary - *Kids' Business* – was released on the ABC. While the documentary represented a terrific account of work culminating over a five-year period, over 430,000 people tuned into the documentary. According to their annual report, EASE was "inundated by calls and emails from teachers, schools and welfare professionals across the country seeking assistance and resources" (EASE Annual Report, 2008-9, p. 34). This tested the organisation's ability to respond both with alacrity and, more specifically, with clarity about their intentions.

An integral part of participating in the Prospectus Small Grants Program are the quarterly roundtables hosted by the Trust, where marketing managers and CEOs of

Grant makers can help facilitate peer support and shared learning between community groups.

participant organisations meet around communications and marketing support. As Lara explains, "because none of the members share the same client group, the conversation can centre on important strategic and sectoral issues as opposed to operational and service delivery matters. This has proved valuable for attendees". These meetings run for approximately two and a half hours and sometimes include a guest speaker (e.g. engaging with business). As further evidence of its commitment to capacity building, the Ross Trust hosts these meetings as a means not just of knowledge sharing but of peer support. As such, The Ross Trust's role in these forums is strictly focussed on facilitation and operational support.

Role clarity

As explained, the Solving the Jigsaw Program is being supported by Ross Trust as a 'Collaboration'. Lara notes that these types of grants were developed with the view that "funding organisations in a more intensive and supported way over the medium to longer term would assist organisations have a greater impact".

Funding over the medium to long-term can have a greater impact

Such collaborations are viewed as 'partnerships' between the Trust and the specific program. From the Trust perspective,

an important role in the partnership is to support the organisation's capacity to source funds to keep the program sustainable. The Trust is cognisant that it is unable to support programs indefinitely and that not-for-profit organisations need to raise funds through a diverse range of sources – government, philanthropy and business.

Although the Ross Trust are now relatively 'hands-off' in terms of their direct involvement with the Solving the Jigsaw Program (their financial support for the Program will conclude in June 2012), Lara explains that the Trust and EASE staff worked together to develop funding proposals, key funding objectives and directions. Over the course of the relationship, Trust and EASE staff have met regularly and the Trust's support to the program has both been financial and strategic. In particular, the Trust provided advice to EASE to develop a training focus to ensure the programs sustainability. In effect, says Lara, "The Trust acts as a sounding board".

Grant makers can often offer more than financial support. Their experience, knowledge, networks and strategic advice can be invaluable.

Members of the Trust (both program staff and Trustees) have also participated in classroom activities. This was a wonderful opportunity for the Trust to really understand the program

from the participant's (children's) perspective. It also allows for opportunities to talk about the program with the facilitators, parents and teachers, all of whom are able to share a unique perspective on the challenges and benefits of such a program first-hand - much more powerful than reading about it in a report.

Where appropriate, Trustees have facilitated connections and 'opened doors' to assist EASE in meeting their program goals. As an example, EASE hoped to form a partnership with a university to integrate Solving the Jigsaw training materials into pre-service teacher training. To assist EASE

with this goal, the Trust provided introductions to university education faculties with which they had existing relationships. As a result the Solving the Jigsaw Professional Development Program was aligned to the University of Melbourne Masters of Education program. The Trust has also facilitated a number of introductions to potential funders.

Impact

Schools have always been the key audience for the Solving the Jigsaw Program, particularly young people who have been exposed to family violence. But the program has become much broader, moving into anti-bullying initiatives and transitioning to a broader sense of community wellbeing. Lara explains, "While setting up a program in one classroom in one school might be worthwhile, the broader impact would be minimal. The Trust and EASE wanted to see changes embedded in schools, a real cultural change – hence the focus on teacher training and development. You can't just rely on one teacher or one principal, you need to make the change for sustained impact."

Throughout their relationship with the Trust, EASE members have reported every six months, as part of their grantee responsibilities. These reports are built on responses to set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and criteria, which were established jointly between EASE and the Trust, a characteristic of Ross Trust Collaborations versus Open Grants.

KPIs relate to the number of programs that have been established within schools and how much training has been provided by EASE directly and how much by others (who have been trained by EASE). However, a key component of these KPIs relates to accessing other funds, again relating to sustainability of the program and capacity building of program staff. KPIs are also designed to assess aspects of embedding cultural change through a review of the amount of teacher training and peer-to-peer training that has occurred.

The Solving the Jigsaw Program was documented in the Victorian Government *Plan to Prevent Violence against Women, 2010-2020* as a case study for what prevention looks like in the education and training setting. In November 2009, the program was designated by the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) as one of the best practice examples and included in their *Respectful Relationships Education* report. It has also been documented and evaluated as a best practice model through the Australian Government *Partnerships Against Domestic Violence*.