



NCOSS 2018

Annual Report

Tony Davies

President's Message



We **listen** to our members to advocate for a **fairer** NSW for all.

Over the last year our members, stakeholders, communities and staff have worked to build a communicative, collaborative and connected sector that continues to thrive.

This year has been particularly impactful having connected with more than 950 individuals at over 55 events across the state at conferences, workshops and forums to build and create relationships that will positively impact the wider community.

We have worked with our communities to provide a platform for them to connect with each other, their government and with NCOSS to create viable solutions to decreasing disadvantage in our state. NCOSS has worked to evolve with the new NCOSS Connections and a renewed focus on advocacy.

I would like to acknowledge and thank our departed CEO Tracy McLeod Howe for her amazing contribution during four years at NCOSS as well as the staff for their incredible hard work and many achievements over the last year.

Joanna Quilty

CEO's Message



Thriving communities are the basis of a **stronger** NSW.

As the new CEO of NCOSS I am particularly aware of the importance of a strong and connected NCOSS that is able to represent the interests of the sector, provide it with information and support and ensure that it is well placed to thrive into the future and make a difference for those experiencing disadvantage and inequality in NSW.

With an ever evolving landscape and significant changes to the social and community services system, organisations are facing many challenges and much uncertainty.

In such an environment, collaboration among the sector is vital, as is demonstrating to Government our desire for genuine partnership and opportunity to provide expert input to reform processes. We also need to make sure that, in amongst all the change, people experiencing disadvantage are heard and their advice about what would make a difference is acted on.

We look forward to continuing to facilitate these partnerships and relationships, and supporting and growing our membership, as we advocate for a NSW that is socially inclusive and provides opportunities for all.



Our vision

Strong and
Connected

A Platform
for Possibility

An Influential
Voice

One purpose, one message, one goal,
thousands of voices

An Influential Voice

Prepared a 2018/19 Pre-Budget Submission which recommended priority areas for additional or new investment to improve lives for those experiencing disadvantage, and the services that support them.

Developed and distributed the NCOSS Advocacy Kit through the NCOSS regional network, the 550 attendees of NCOSS Investing in Communities Conferences, held across NSW between July 2017 and August 2017, via the website, where it was downloaded by over 700 members.

Prepared and published **Way forward to an inclusive service system: Challenges for people with disability with closure of ADHC – major report on the gaps experienced across NSW Government services with the closure of the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care.**

NCOSS chaired three sector roundtables to inform this work.

Partnered with regional representatives in 19 locations to undertake 17 consultations in May-June. Feedback and stories from Hunter New England, Central Coast, Illawarra/Shoalhaven, Mid North and North Coast, Western NSW, Western Sydney, Southern NSW, and Murrumbidgee, where we heard from 210 attendees that the below were the most pressing issues facing communities:

1

Housing: Specifically housing affordability and stock with transitional housing also being noted as an issue

2

Disability: Support for people who fall between the gaps of the NDIS scheme or are not eligible for individual NDIS plans

3

Children: Increased affordable child support facilities

4

Mental Health: increased access to affordable or free mental health resources, including access to drug and alcohol detox and rehabilitation facilities

5

Transport: Affordable and functional public transport was noted as a barrier to accessing services across the state.

Women, Equal Pay and the Future of Work

On 11 September 2017, NCOSS facilitated an event to explore issues around pay equity in NSW. The event included an address by The Hon. Tanya Davies MP (Member of the Legislative Assembly, Member for Mulgoa, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women and Minister for Aging, Member of the Liberal Party), and a panel discussion with representatives from academia, business and the sector about options to address this issue.

Convened bi-monthly **Transport Policy Advisory Group (TPAG)** to respond to the Transport for NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan and the review of Incentives and Subsidies. Key issues discussed the challenges to community transport in an individualised funding environment and the need for improvements to the Transport Access Program.

Undertook analysis of the 2018/19 NSW State Budget to assess its impact for people experiencing disadvantage and inequality, and held a post budget briefing for NCOSS members and other stakeholders.

Advocated with the Disability Network Forum and supported the Stand By Me campaign which resulted in disability advocacy groups receiving funding from the NSW Government until 2020 to continue their advocacy efforts as the NDIS is bedded down.



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Co-chaired 4 meetings of the Social Innovation Council (SIC) with the Hon. Victor Dominello MP, Minister for Finance, Services and Property.

The SIC brings together sector and government decision-makers to develop innovative ways to improve human services, with a particular focus on data and technology. Priorities for 2017/18 included work on the Human Services Outcomes Framework, the standard Human Services Agreement or the NGO Capacity Building Tool.

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Surveyed over 400 people receiving income support and living below the poverty line in NSW to inform the 2018 Cost of Living Report on the topic of access to healthy food.

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There were 21 Policy Submissions made across the financial year, including to the inquiry into Support for New Parents and Babies in NSW, the review of National Financial Literacy Strategy and the inquiry into Electricity Supply, Demand and Prices in NSW.

●

Project managed Skilled to Thrive, a program of sector development and capacity building workshops and supports targeted at advocacy and information organisations in the disability sector, to facilitate the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) operating environment.

●

New Perspectives Forum – Practical implementation of justice reinvestment projects in Aboriginal communities

On 5 December 2017, NCOSS partnered with Just Reinvest NSW and Juvenile Justice to host a new perspectives forum on the practical implementation of justice reinvestment projects in Aboriginal communities. Opened by the Hon. Mark Speakman MP (Member of the Legislative Assembly, Member for Cronulla, Attorney General and Member of the Liberal Party), the forum outlined the evidence supporting justice reinvestment, and showcased successful examples of it working in practice.

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Facilitated the Children, Young People and Families Alliance on a quarterly basis. The Alliance brings together service providers and representative and peak organisations with an interest in the well-being of children, young people and families in NSW in order to:

- Develop and drive campaigns
- Develop shared policy positions
- Facilitate coordinated advocacy and campaigning

● Provide a forum for discussion and analysis of issues affecting vulnerable children and young people in NSW including:

- emerging trends
- gaps in service delivery
- policy initiatives and changes
- research, resources and data.

Strong and Connected

Hosted six regional Investing in Communities Conferences in Parramatta, Kiama, Coffs Harbour, Newcastle, Orange and Wagga Wagga with a total of 671 attendees, partnering with government stakeholders including the Office of Social Impact Investment, the Department of Finance, Services & Innovation, the Department of Industry, the Law Reform Commission and iCare, as well as peak and sector partners HESTA and FAMS.

Delivered a comprehensive Sector Development Program to facilitate the professional development of the sector workforce - through a combination of custom training opportunities and a network of partnerships. Topics covered included Data Collection for Outcomes Measurement, Working with other Organisations: MOUs to mergers, Governance, Volunteer Law, HR and your People Strategies, and Leadership. 18 face to face workshops were delivered in locations across NSW with over 250 attendees.

**Grew Facebook following
from 1,829 Likes to 2,127
(42%)**

Appeared in print, digital, TV and radio media almost 80 times in 12 months including regular profiling on ABC TV's The Drum.

Convened FONGA (Forum of Non-Government Agencies) bi-monthly, a leadership group which provides a collective voice to the NSW Government and other key stakeholders to promote reform, development and innovation within the community sector.

Partnered with the Office of Social Impact Investment (Department of Premier & Cabinet and NSW Treasury) to deliver the 2017 Investing for Good (I4G) conference. Attended by over 300 delegates representing government, investors and the social sector, the conference delivered a program to improve understanding across the sector of the impact investing marketplace and to develop partnerships between sector and non-traditional, alternative investors. 76% of delegates surveyed reported an increased understanding of social impact investment and 63% felt more networked in the impact investment ecosystem.

Kept members informed with distributing 26 NCOSS eNews on a fortnightly basis. Increased eNews subscribers by almost 20% to 3,731 subscribers.

Advertised to 2,249 individuals searching for social policy/ community sector employment opportunities on the NCOSS Jobs Board helping community organisations connect with those looking for work in the sector.



A Platform for Possibility

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Delivered on The Collective – a program of 3 projects guided by the principles of collaboration that aim to transform the way we work; to support the most vulnerable and break the cycle of disadvantage, by bringing tools that empower local communities working together in genuinely collaborative ways, taking action to solve their own problems, and reducing dependence on government. Focus was on projects in Western Sydney in conjunction with WS Collective, Northern Rivers and Wilcannia in Far West NSW. In partnership with UTS Designing out Crime, NCOSS assisted the development of The Men's Group and Hub in Wilcannia. 'It takes a Town' Murwillimbah has focused on community connectedness. NCOSS partnered with UTS School of Communications Social & Political Science to conduct a narrative evaluation of the project to date. The WS Collective project is on hold.

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Presented the I4G Pitch in conjunction with the Investing for Good Conference, designed to showcase and support 6 outstanding social service organisations from across NSW where there is scope to develop potential to attract social investment and scale impact.

Two of the 6 shortlisted organisations were selected by a panel of judges, and awarded with grant funding of \$50,000 from the icare Foundation I4G Pitch Fund. The two selected organisations were South Coast Women's Health and Welfare – Waminda and Holdsworth Community.

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NCOSS attended the 62nd Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women with the support of our sponsors, National Association of Community Legal Centres, HESTA and Settlement Services International. The delegation included seven women from the community sector. The 62nd Commission on the Status of Women agreed on the need to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination to improve the lives of women.

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In the lead-up to Expressions of Interest for Phase 2 of the Social and Affordable Housing Fund in January/February 2018, NCOSS held a 'speed networking' event in December 2017 to bring together 50 stakeholders from the finance and investment sector, landowners and community housing providers to develop connections, explore potential partnerships and provide opportunity to access support for brokering arrangements. Following the event, NCOSS partnered with the Miller Group to offer independently facilitated bespoke workshops for consortia to test and strengthen collaborative approaches and models.

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Co-hosted three hackathons in partnership with VibeWire (a co-working space for young change makers) & Disruptors Handbook to find innovative solutions to social issues, focusing on homelessness, domestic violence and mental health respectively.



