

SVA Consulting

Snapshots of our Work

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- Who are they** The Wayside Chapel has provided unconditional love, care and support for people on and around the streets of Kings Cross since 1964. Each year, thousands of people visit Wayside for assistance in gaining equitable access to essential health, welfare and related services. Thousands more visits are made by people just stopping by for a chat, a coffee or a quiet place where they can find company and acceptance.
- What we did** SVA Consulting worked with the Wayside Chapel for eighteen months conducting workshops, facilitating staff offsites and developing Wayside's strategic plan. A consultant spent two days a week onsite with Wayside supporting the development of program logic and structuring planning at the program level.
- What changed** As a result of the work with SVA Consulting Wayside now recognises itself as a pre-welfare service; a clear a refocused understanding of its mission and role. Its programs are operating to strategic and operational plans, programs have been restructured to provide focused and professional services to target populations, and cultural change means that the whole team speaks the same language, and is actively contributing its operations.
- What they say** *'The SVA team brought expertise and time. They asked hard questions, built up a real picture of what was going on, and formed trusting relationships. From the initial injection of capacity and tools, cultural change, thinking and conversations, we are finding that the templates and processes are now cascading through the organisation. The impact of the work done by SVA has been tremendous - and we are not reliant on SVA going forward – we are doing it ourselves.'*

David Carter, Business Manager

- Who are they** JewishCare is the major provider of non-residential services to the Jewish community. It serves approximately 4,000 people by providing Aged Services, Disability Services, and Children Family and Community Services.
- What we did** SVA Consulting helped JewishCare’s management and board to develop and agree on a set of clear four-year goals for the organisation and to define actions for achieving those goals. It analysed each of JewishCare’s services in detail, developing a framework that allowed the management and board to discuss each service, and facilitating discussions between the management and board on how they should serve the Jewish community.
- What changed** As a result of working with SVA Consulting, JewishCare’s management and board were able to come to a unified decision about what JewishCare should focus on in the next four years. It decided to work towards becoming a ‘gateway’ for people in the Jewish community to access the services they need and to focus on engaging the wider Jewish community. At the same time, it will maintain a portfolio of services and work on maintaining a diverse and sustainable funding base.
- What they say** *‘SVA Consulting helped our management and board understand how each of our services fits within our portfolio. As a result, we are more able to explain how the services we provide work together to serve the Jewish community. This makes us a more compelling case for funders. The clarity that SVA Consulting helped us achieve allows us to set and act on our priorities, even as the financial climate becomes more difficult.’ Claire Vernon, Chief Executive*

- Who are they** Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) is an indigenous non-profit organisation providing mentoring for Indigenous students during their high school years. AIME's goals are to improve Year 10 and Year 12 completion rates and increase University admission rates for all participating Indigenous Australian students.
- What we did** SVA Consulting helped AIME to articulate the size and scope of the social problem they are seeking to tackle and to create a prioritisation matrix which can guide AIME in its growth strategy. The team helped AIME to articulate their vision, goals and strategy for growth in a way that was concise and compelling.
- What changed** AIME now have a clearly articulated strategy for growth that includes the resources and funding needed to execute the strategy. Their strategy is backed up by results and a commitment to collecting and measuring data to increase their evidence base. The AIME staff and Board are using this to pitch to funders and partners, confident of their capacity to deliver on their strategy.
- What they say** *'SVA Consulting allowed us to bring to life our dreams and ambitions for the next five years. We always knew we had a compelling story to tell, SVA helped us put that story to paper and make it live so we had a clear, concise direction to make a significant impact for Indigenous students across the Nation. SVA's commitment to accountability is paramount in the not for profit sector and it means we can now show our kids, parents, participants and partners that we are making change.'*
Jack Manning Bancroft, Chief Executive

- Who are they** Hands on Learning provides an alternative learning framework for disengaged students to reconnect with school and community. Students are engaged one day per week working on ‘real’ creative projects in their schools and local communities. The students remain involved in their normal school program the other four days. The program currently exists in 13 schools
- What we did** SVA Consulting worked alongside the Hands On Learning management team to develop a three-year strategic plan, helping them understand the financial and human resources it takes to run their program and providing guidance on growth, fundraising and marketing.
- What changed** Hands On Learning’s management and board now have a clear plan for growth, supported by clearer marketing materials. Since starting to work with SVA Consulting they have more than doubled the number of schools in which they are present. They have increased their financial sustainability by reducing subsidies offered to schools to run the program, and have increased their fundraising activities, most recently being profiled by Goldmansachs JB Were at a breakfast for clients.
- What they say** *‘Through the engagement of SVA Consulting we are now much clearer about how much and where we want to grow, and more focused on obtaining the necessary support. The support of SVA Consulting has helped me understand where I should be spending my time – on building the relationships that give me access to schools and funders.’ Russell Kerr, Chief Executive*

- Who are they** SVA's Venture Development provide multi-year funding and tailored support to a limited and carefully selected portfolio of non-profit venture partners led by outstanding social entrepreneurs. This tailored support includes assistance with strategic planning, financial sustainability, measurement and performance evaluation. SVA also leverages its significant networks to help supported ventures meet their varied growth, organisational or communication challenges.
- What we did** SVA Consulting has become the internal advisor to Venture Development, guiding past and current due diligence on social investments. In 2008 SVA Consulting facilitated the development of strategic plans for 5 ventures, helping to direct \$765,000 for 2009. For each venture partner plans were developed which provided clear recommendations as to how to best support the venture, including specific funding and expertise requirements.
- What changed** Venture Development now have a clear and robust investment process in place which links assessments, strategic direction-setting, resource-support and impact reporting. The team has tightened its operations, reducing administration and increasing its direct assistance to venture partners.
- What they say** *'The processes and intelligence which underpin the approach to social investment at SVA are second to none. This quality of decision-making is crucial to SVA, both in terms of our brand promise to philanthropists, and our commitment to venture partners. The calibre of the team at SVA Consulting has enabled our team to achieve this level of thoughtful, effective investment strategy.'* Chris Boys, Director, Venture Development

- Who are they** The GPT Group is one of Australia's largest diversified listed property groups, with a portfolio that includes retail, office and industrial and business park assets. GPT also owns seniors housing assets located in the New England region of the United States, and Australian hotel and tourism assets.
- What we did** SVA Consulting assisted GPT's Head of Corporate Responsibility to define specific goals and outcomes for the company's corporate responsibility platforms. As part of that, SVA Consulting ran a conference introducing the key business unit managers in GPT to a range of innovative approaches to the social issues of interest to the company.
- What changed** The company decided to create social enterprises within GPT and to use the Social Return on Investment (SROI) methodology to demonstrate the effectiveness of GPT's social investments. They engaged SVA in follow-on work to support them in developing the business plans for their social enterprises.
- What they say** *'We came to SVA Consulting because they seemed to have a blend of business and non-profit skills and intelligence. What we experienced was excellent – input which has led to strategic goals for GPT that are logical, applicable to our organisation, and tangible.'*
- Dr Caroline Noller, Head of Corporate Responsibility*

Who are they

The College provides primary and secondary schooling to Indigenous students from remote and disadvantaged communities in northern Queensland.

What we did

As part of a broader report on Indigenous Education for the AMP Foundation, SVA Consulting wrote up a Case Study on Djarragun College as a model of effective Indigenous education. As part of that work, SVAC conducted a mapping exercise of the school's educational model, as well as summarising its key educational outcomes.

What changed

The Case Study has been instrumental in attracting additional funds from philanthropists because they can see quite clearly what their money will be supporting. It provided the College with a written document that can be given to interested parties that explains exactly what the school does. For example, it is currently used as an induction document to provide background information on the College to new employees. It has also provided great feedback for current staff in that they can see how their area fits with the rest of the school.

What they say

'The Case Study has been invaluable across a whole range of areas for us. It explains exactly what we do and why we are enjoying success in an area that is lacking in success stories across Australia.'

Jean Illingworth, Principal

- Who are they** Fair Business buys and grows existing businesses, creating new jobs for the long term unemployed. They aim to tackle the serious problem of long-term unemployment in Australia through the creation of real jobs for real pay in real businesses, using their commercial expertise.
- What we did** SVA Consulting conducted a Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis during Fair Business' start-up to determine the probable return on their investment. The analysis was based on their business model and current portfolio of organisations and used the business prospectus, interviews with Fair Business management and a preliminary budget to calculate the return.
- What changed** Fair Business now have a prediction of the SROI of their portfolio of organisations and of Fair Business itself. They are able to clearly articulate the social value to be generated by each of their businesses and can build a compelling case for investors. They use this analysis as a baseline to track their performance and to structure their data collection so that they can demonstrate impact.
- What they say** *'The work by SVA Consulting will be of great help to us. It means we can make a strong case to investors, and have a sound planning & evaluation tool going forward. I think it will be really important for us to follow this up again in a couple of years. It is one of our core tools for measuring and sustaining success.'* Alex Shead, Chief Executive

- Who are they** Vision Australia is the leading provider of blindness and low vision services in Australia and work in positive partnership with Australians who are blind or have low vision to help achieve the possibilities they choose in life.
- What we did** SVA Consulting conducted a Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis across four service areas. Working closely with the management team and through extensive stakeholder engagement, the analysis involved clearly articulating the theory of change, calculating the total investment required, and using appropriate financial proxies to value the outcomes identified.
- What changed** The SROI analysis demonstrated the value of applying an organisation wide evaluation methodology. The insights from the analysis have been used as an input into strategic and operational plans, and it has created a baseline for future SROI analysis. In addition, a Vision Australia employee was dedicated to the project and is now leading the scoping of future SROI analyses across the organisation. Vision Australia has also engaged SVA Consulting in follow-on work to assist with embedding the SROI methodology in the organisation and scope new projects.
- What they say** *“The SVA team brought expertise on the SROI methodology and established this SROI as a core tool for us to measure our impact. They asked hard questions about the real outcomes for each stakeholder group and formed trusted relationships with Vision Australia staff and executive.” David Speyer, GM Corporate Services*

- Who are they** The Telstra Foundation runs a number of philanthropic activities, including the Social Innovation Grants Program.
- What we did** SVA Consulting worked with the Telstra Foundation to design and deliver a 12 month community leadership program for the six non-profit recipients of its grants program. Telstra executives were partnered with the non-profit CEOs as mentors, and were provided with a series of targeted group learning experiences. Sessions covered topics such as reporting and impact measurement. Parallel sessions were run for non-profit program managers.
- What changed** Non-profit participants reported a range of benefits including improved organisational and leadership skills, and wider and stronger networks. Telstra executives commented that they had gained a deeper understanding of the non-profit context and this had positively impacted their leadership capability. The program built stronger ties between the Foundation and the senior leadership team, and profiled the Foundation favourably with them and the community sector.
- What they say** *'It's been a fantastic opportunity and really wonderful to get an insight into a not-for-profit organisation. It opens your eyes up to an entirely different world - the similar and different challenges. I've really appreciated the opportunity to work with a nonprofit, adding some value through co-coaching.'*
Kate Christie, Director Risk and Compliance, Telstra

- Who are they** The aim of the Higher Expectations Program (HEP) is to develop the capability of future leaders from Cape York. The program identifies and supports academically talented Indigenous students from throughout the Cape, Palm Island and Yarrabah communities so that they can complete secondary education and progress to university studies.
- What we did** SVA Consulting undertook a comprehensive review of HEP operational systems and processes via stakeholder interviews and data analysis. Recommendations were made, and the consultant was invited back to implement the solutions proposed.
- What changed** As a result of SVA Consulting's engagement, the HEP Program Manager has been freed up to focus on what he does best – building and managing student relationships and strengthening cultural identity. The myriad of administrative components to his role have been streamlined, systemitised and made user-friendly. And a strong case for additional administration personnel was made which won the support of a major funder. The program is now positioned to deliver more to its students, and better reporting to its funders.
- What they say** *“My entire interaction with SVA Consulting was useful, necessary and enjoyable. It has helped me to improve the program so much more than I could have done alone. I really believe every non-profit program would benefit from this kind of investment.”*