Youth in Philanthropy

The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation's *Youth in Philanthropy* program was established in 2002. The program aims to help secondary school students learn about philanthropy, social issues and community leadership. and has grown to include 18 schools. These include government, religious, and independent schools. Generally, students from year 10 are targeted, but years 11 and 12 students are also welcome to take part. To learn more, visit: http://www.lmcf.org.au/

Youth in Philanthropy student panel at the Foundation's Inspiring Philanthropy event held in October 2012

Governance

Established in 1923, the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation (the Foundation) is the largest community foundation in Australia. It has a board comprising 15 directors, of which there is a Chair and Deputy Chair. The Lord Mayor of Melbourne is the Foundation's President. Together, the board is responsible for setting the strategic direction and monitoring financial and organisational performance. The board meets six times per year.

The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation is a leading philanthropic organisation and the largest community foundation in Australia. The Foundation's special impact areas include Homelessness, Youth, Ageing, Environment, Health (community and preventative), and Arts and Heritage. In 2012 the Foundation provided grants of $9.2 million to over 500 charities including very small local charities working at the frontline providing health, accommodation and food services to people in need, to larger charitable organisations working towards positive social change.

Six committees operate around key functions for the Foundation: Executive committee; fundraising and marketing; social needs; audit and risk; governance sub-committee and investment sub-committee. Each committee meets 4 - 11 times per year.

At an operational level, six grant advisory panels, in conjunction with the CEO and the Foundation's grants and research teams, make the initial assessment on all applications received. In addition, this may involve phone calls and site visits to better understand the applicant's context and need. From this process, recommendations are put forward to the relevant sub-committee of the Board and then the full Board.

The board signs-off on all grants offered by the Foundation. Following the strategic review in 2012, a board member now chairs each Grants Advisory Panel. This was done to facilitate stronger connections between the board and the groups that the Foundation supports.

To be eligible to apply for a grant through the annual grants round, an organisation must currently be endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) as covered by Item 1 of the table in section 30-15 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 and be endorsed as a Tax Concession Charity (TCC).

Innovation

Underpinning the *Youth in Philanthropy* program, is the intent to inspire young people to begin a life-long commitment to giving through activities that have a positive impact on the communities they live and will, one day, work in.

The Foundation appoints experienced Mentors who guide Youth Grantmakers Committees comprising six to ten students through the grant making process (from research and analysis of the organisations and funding applications, assessment of the funding applications from three charities, to interviewing the grant

We now have a Catholic school, an Islamic school, a Jewish school, public and private schools participating in the program. So for me, one of the great things is that it [the program] gives all students the opportunity to learn about philanthropy. (Catherine Brown, CEO, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation)

recipients during site visits and making funding recommendations). The three charities allocated to each Committee are pre-selected by the Foundation and signed-off by the board. The students have an opportunity to indicate their areas of interest and local charities.

Students also attend a Youth Grantmakers Forum where they hear from experienced sector professionals and young social change makers, and participate in an intensive granting and philanthropy workshop.

A teacher acts as the Program's coordinator within the school. Students are selected via a range of internal school processes. The members of each Youth Grantmakers Committee undergo an awareness and education program covering community leadership development, general education about philanthropy and the charitable sector, the grant making process, and the work the Foundation does to address social disadvantage in the community. The students also undertake site visits to the three charities. Each Youth Grantmakers Committee is allocated $15,000 to distribute between the three charities. The maximum grant a charity can receive is $14,000 and the minimum $500.

The students get to meet a very diverse range of people and get an in-depth look at organisations they wouldn't normally have contact with. They work with many organisations across the charitable sector - from the Arts, environment, youth, disability, homelessness, health. (Anita Hopkins, Director, Grants and Youth Initiative, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation)

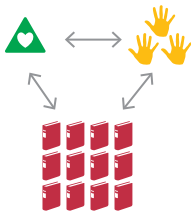This program fits within the Foundation's granting structure. The students directly connect with the Board when they present their grant recommendations in the Council Chambers at the Melbourne Town Hall. The recommendations are then submitted to the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation Board for final approval. Students are invited to present the grant cheques to the charities at a school assembly or some other school event. This increases the whole-of-school concept of philanthropy.

Model

While elements within the *Youth in Philanthropy* program have changed over time, the core model has remained the same. The eligibility requirements of the Foundation require that the grant be made directly to an eligible charity. Through the Program, however, the school students make the recommendations as to who receives the grants and how much they receive.

Factors for effective engagement
(see all 10 factors on p. 22)

A relationship built on trust is the most important factor for effective engagement of the Program within the school. For this to develop, the commitment of the school coordinator and the clarity they have around their role in the Program, the fit between the Foundation-appointed Mentor and the school, and the support and facilitation provided by Foundation staff is critical. If a school does this program simply to 'tick a box' and is not fully invested in the Program it affects the students' experience. Additionally, if there is a change in school coordinator, without strong relationships and a broad understanding within the school community of why they are participating in the program, another teacher might "throw their hands up and say, 'it's not for me'". So in order to maintain a strong relationship between the school, the Foundation and the Mentor,

Model	Guiding principles and practices The Foundation uses to engage effectively with charities and schools …
(Charities are invited by The Foundation to be part of the program. The Foundation selects the charities, based on student and school interests and facilitates the connection between the charities and the schools.)	*Focus on the issue, not the grant amount:* The most successful relationships between a not-for-profit charity and a school are those that invest in sharing with the students the value of the issue. These not-for-profit charities are not driven to be part of the program because of the dollars. They see the grant as a vehicle for bringing on a new generation of future leaders and citizens.

the Foundation provides opportunities for the Mentors to meet as a group, for the school coordinators to meet with Foundation staff and Mentors, and for all groups involved to provide feedback directly to Foundation staff and through online surveys which are conducted at the beginning and end of the program.

The most challenging aspect for effective engagement is the issue of capacity. At a school level, creating the space within the timetable for students and staff to participate is a challenge. For the not-for-profit, it is the time and effort needed for them to present to the students, when this type of activity is not directly related to their day-to-day service. For the Foundation, it is building the capacity of the whole school to engage with the program. In each school, the program reaches up to 10 students in one year level each year. The students presenting the grant cheque to the charity at a whole school assembly helps to a certain extent address this issue.

Impact

What are the main outcomes?

Reflecting on the role of philanthropy, Catherine Brown, CEO, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation writes;

> *Philanthropy is different from government and business. Philanthropy can apply a long-term view to risk and outcomes. It does not operate within short-term political cycles or under the business constraints of maximise profits for shareholders. It can think about the needs of the community as a whole and about a social return.*

One way the Foundation seeks to reflect this vision for philanthropy is through *Youth in Philanthropy*. Specifically, the program seeks to:

- inspire young people to begin life-long commitment to giving;
- develop a young person's leadership skills;
- facilitate school and student involvement with the Foundation;
- improve students' understanding of current community issues; and in doing so,
- improve and sustain school-community relationships.

The Foundation undertook a review of the Youth in Philanthropy Program in 2012, the program's 10th Anniversary. The growing number of schools participating in the program suggests there is an increasing appetite for this form of learning and community connection. The flexibility of the model also has appeal for schools. Some schools focus on the leadership aspect of the program and/or include it as a voluntary activity within the International Baccalaureate. Other schools use the program within their curriculum as a vehicle to explore the issues of values and community. For others, the model exposes students to careers they may not have known about or considered prior to the program. Feedback from the teachers to the Foundation notes that the Program is a valuable tool to help increase the research and analysis, critical thinking and persuasive writing skills of students. The Foundation Mentors have also observed the development of these skills, as well as increased levels of confidence in the students as they progress through the program.

> *Students take the grant making process very seriously. They look in-depth at the application. After a charity presents, they will ask very direct questions around the viability of the project, how the organisation will secure additional funding, and the long term sustainability of the organisation itself. (Kim Sullivan, Grants Program Manager, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation)*

> *Last year, four new schools joined the program. Of these, two schools have students who have continued to connect with the charities as volunteers post program and a few have stayed involved in the program as student mentors to this year's Youth Grantmakers. We have also had two past participants join the Foundation's Youth Grants Advisory Panel in 2013. (Kim Sullivan, Grants Program Manager, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation)*

> *By being involved in the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation for a few years now, there has been a ground swell of support for charitable work within the school. Students have gone out of their way to see 'how people are travelling' in their local community. (Philip Hood, Teacher/Coordinator Werribee Secondary College)*

How is information gathered?

Feedback about how the program is working is gathered iteratively and informally by the Foundation from students at program events, such as the Youth Forum and grant making workshop, and via communications with the school coordinators and mentors.

At the end of the site visits, that's when the students really get engaged. Their thinking moves to the next level of sophistication. They start to question and grasp the enormity of the need and responsibility, often as they travel on the bus from the last charity back to their school at the end of day. They start to realise 'how difficult it is to give money out because everyone deserves it'. (Anita Hopkins, Director Grants and the Youth Initiative)

It really opened my eyes to see that philanthropy isn't just sitting behind a desk, with a board of people in suits deciding, this much to this charity and this much to that charity. It's more about really reaching people on a personal level and seeing what they are going to do. (Alex, Youth in Philanthropy student, Mac Robertson Girls' High)

How do you share the information gathered and with whom?

To date, the Foundation has shared information about the program on their website, at milestone events through the program with those participating schools and partners and via a short video at their 10th year celebration of the program.