



24 June 2008

The Secretary
Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local
Government
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT

Inquiry Response - Regional Development Australia Melbourne's East

Executive Summary

Melbourne East Area Consultative Committee (MEACC) (RDA Melbourne's East) is pleased to put forward a submission in response to this inquiry.

In this response we will discuss the key strengths of Regional Partnerships and how they contributed towards the success of many applications across Australia. We will also discuss some of the weaknesses of the abovementioned funding program including:

- Lack of communication with key stakeholders
- Disadvantages of Centralising Assessments and Decision Making
- Ambiguous Guidelines and their Consequences
- Inconsistency in Decision Making
- Inconsistent Feedback Processes to Applicants

Recommendations on how improvements could make the funding process more accountable and transparent include:

- Simpler application processes
- Independent steering committees
- Assessment streamlining
- Notional allocations
- Funding Rounds
- Open and transparent communication
- Continued Local Relationships with Local Communities

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Included in this response are some case studies of successful projects funded in Melbourne's eastern region under the Regional Partnerships program (between 2003-2007). This is just a snap shot of a few of the many successful outcomes that have been achieved due to Federal funding programs. Also enclosed are testimonials from some applicants as well as some statistics on how much funding has been leveraged from Regional Partnerships and put into the region since 2003 .

Introduction

MEACC has been operating in this region for 15 years. During that time MEACC has assisted respective Government Departments in rolling out a range of diverse programs. The relationships built across the years have extended to a broad range of stakeholders including Local Government Agencies, community organisations, volunteers, State Departments, schools, neighbourhood houses, businesses and industry groups to name a few.

MEACC has played a critical brokerage role between Local, State, Federal Governments and local communities throughout this time. As an independent, apolitical association with extensive local knowledge, MEACC has consistently brought these groups together to leverage funding for projects that have provided long term benefits to the various local communities. Partnership funding has been successful due to the ACC's working as a broker between differing funding partners.

MEACC's board members offer a wide range of experience and skills including experience in State Government funding programs, education, community strengthening, utilities and business. The following are some key issues that have been noted by the board who believe that a funding program similar to the regional partnerships program is critical for hundreds of stakeholders in the region. They do acknowledge that some changes are necessary to ensure a just and fair funding administration system is in place.

Key Strengths of the Regional Partnerships Program

Partnerships Model

The partnership model of funding was beneficial for all parties concerned. It allowed all three levels of Government to leverage funding for projects which is the most efficient method of managing funds. It also ensured greater commitment from applicants who worked hard to secure those partnerships.



Flexibility of the Program

This program was ideal for a wide range of projects that did not fit in easily with other government funding guidelines. Many other funding programs were so specific they excluded projects that were needed in the region.

Eligibility

This program was open to a range of stakeholders from Councils through to Not For Profit organisations. Frequently these groups had made significant economic contributions towards the project through fund raising, volunteering and other contributions and once the projects were completed economic benefits continued to flow into the community either directly or indirectly. This process of allowing applicants to apply directly, rather than through councils, ensured everyone in the community had equal access to the funds. This ensured that projects that would benefit the community, but were not necessarily a priority of the council funds, could still apply for funding directly.

Area Consultative Committees at a local level

ACC's being a local presence has had a significant impact on the regions covered. As the statistics and testimonials later in this report will testify ACC's offer applicants a range of skills and support. Some of these included:

- Local knowledge built over 15 years with regions, communities and stakeholders;
- The brokerage role played by ACC's in their communities acting as a bridge between Local, State, Federal Governments and the community;
- The ability to interpret the Government's requirements;
- Providing assistance, support, research to enable strong application development;
- ACC Board Members reviewed projects early to ensure that only projects that are viable, sustainable and strategic were submitted;
- Facilitated introductions to other key stakeholders in the region;
- Information provided on other funding sources from State, Federal, Philanthropic, Business and other;
- Acting as an independent body to work between stakeholders and the Government;
- ACC's custodians of the funds by targeting funding towards projects that are strategic and eliminating where possible duplication projects

**In response to**

Provide advice on future funding of regional programs in order to invest in genuine and accountable community infrastructure; and

Examine ways to minimise administrative costs and duplication for taxpayers.

Simpler Application Processes

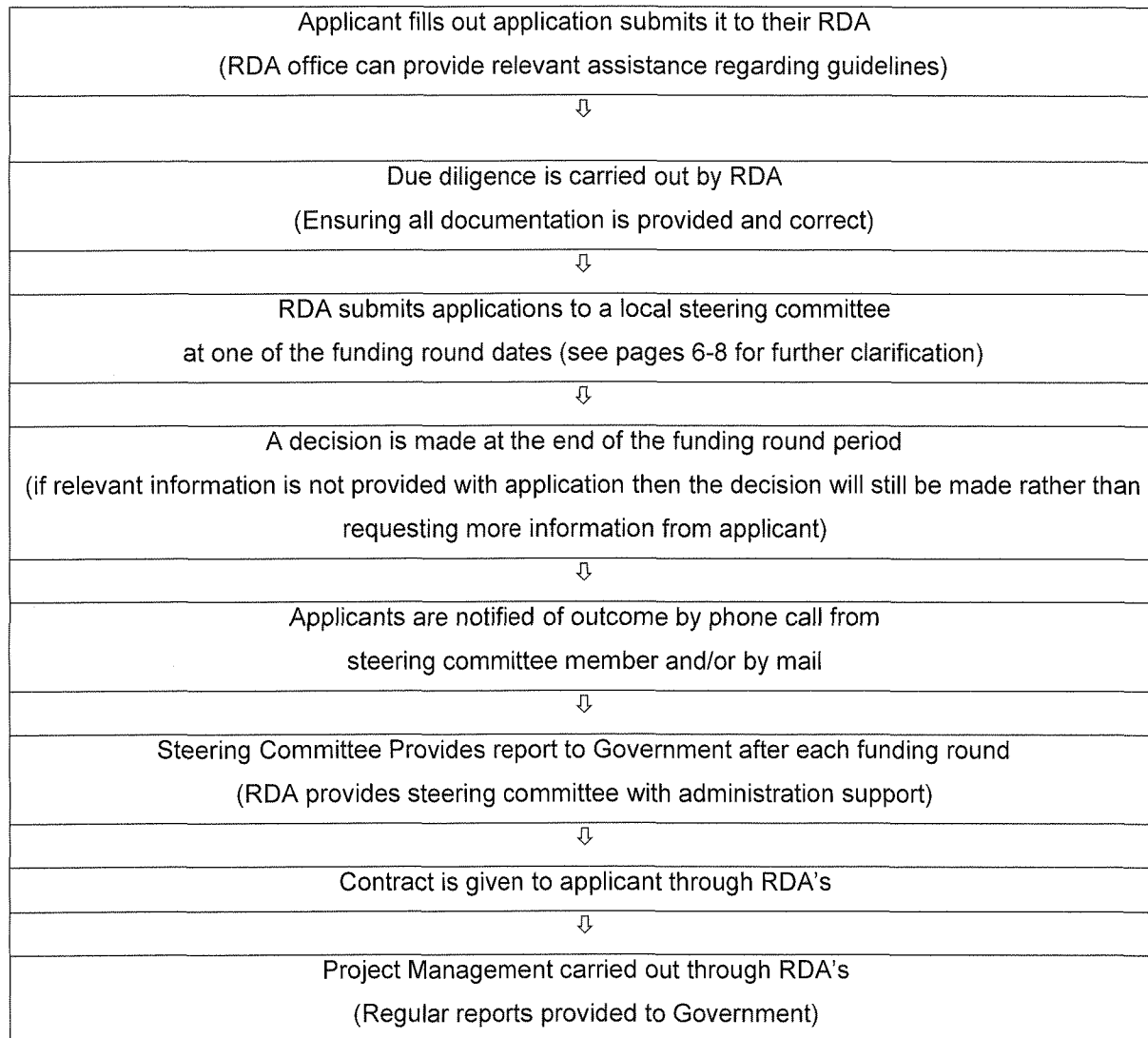
From the applicant's perspective, the Regional Partnerships Application form and online processes was comprehensive, repetitive, difficult to complete and meant that few applicants were prepared to undertake applying for funds without assistance from their local ACC. Any of the applications that by-passed their ACC (applicants could apply directly if they chose) were often of poor quality, did not provide relevant information and had a high failure rate. The application process and documentation could be simplified to ensure that they are simple to read and understand, easy to complete and are aligned, where possible, with other similar matching funds from State Government.

Applicants were confused about where their application went once it had been submitted electronically and why they were contacted, often multiple times, by different assessors asking the same questions they had been asked before. The process could be simplified and provide a simpler process for applicants.



The following is a proposed model to streamline and simplify the decision making of applications

Proposed Process for New Regional Development Funding Program



Advantages to Government

- Efficient use of a national resource
- Time saved due to simplification of processes
- Satisfied applicants as they know when decisions are made, receive clear communications
- Government gains credibility in the eyes of the public



- Easy for applicants to know when they will receive a decision and they can plan accordingly
- Easy for applicant to know where their application is
- An independent decision making process ensuring decisions made are fair and apolitical

Independent Steering Committees

Large infrastructure projects and community projects are two very distinct areas. Therefore two separate funding streams could be established. The one for local community projects could have a notional allocation per RDA or possibly per Region. This funding program could have an independent steering committee established (as seen in the table below) receiving projects for decisions at a local level. The steering committee would report to Government on the outcomes.

The other funding stream, for large infrastructure projects, would have a separate funding stream. Project development and part of the assessments could be done by RDA's with the final decisions made at head office in Canberra. RDA's could assist in assessing the demand and need for these projects and provide Canberra with this information.

Independent Steering Committees would be established at a local level to assess applications. Eg. Victoria could have the following:

Rural Steering Committee	Interface Council Steering Committee	Metropolitan Steering Committee
Committee to be made of Government, local business people, industries groups and local community groups	Committee to be made of Government, local business people, industries groups and local community groups	Committee to be made of Government, local business people, industries groups and local community groups
Rural issues in some instances are similar to those faced in cities but may require different solutions eg rural area may not have a dentist in town whereas the metro there may simply not be an affordable dentist available for low income earners	Interface councils face quite unique problems for funding as often both State and Federal funds miss them out entirely believing they belong to the other side	Metropolitan areas are increasingly facing difficulties on a range of issues due to increased population, hidden issues and greater divides between the wealthy and the low income



The reasoning behind this proposed model is that decisions that are made purely based on statistical data do not take into consideration the context from which that data has come from. By ensuring the steering committees have some regional knowledge the Government ensures that decisions are being made that are appropriate, relevant and necessary for that particular region.

RDA's would develop projects with applicants across their region. The RDA boards would assess the projects and carry out assessments based on transparent criteria. This is a competitive process that would be more straight forward than the current discretionary process. Applications would be submitted to the relevant steering committee through it's RDA.

It is proposed the Steering Committees would sit periodically throughout the year. This ensures decisions would be based on merit and assessed throughout the year in a non political way . This will eliminate many of the issues outlined in the ANAO report and will also eliminate delays and duplications that occurred in the Regional Partnerships Guidelines.

Advantages to Government

- The Government will have a transparent application process reducing complaints and ensure audits are uncomplicated
- This model will eliminate much of the politicisation that surrounded Regional Partnerships.
- It will ensure relevant decisions are made for each region.
- It will save the Government time and finances by having to staff positions in Canberra to process applications, project manage etc. Contracts could be done either in Canberra or by local RDA's.

Assessments Streamlining

Prior to Regional Partnerships Program ACC's/RDA's were active in project management. The skills carried over from this included a capacity to assess projects at a local level. The local knowledge held by each ACC/RDA both on a micro level with the stakeholders and on a strategic level with the main stakeholders across their respective regions means that ACC's/RDA's are in unique position to be able to identify the strategic need and significance of each project for their particular region.



ACC's/RDA's could become facilitators and internal assessors and make recommendations to the committee based on their local knowledge and strategic regional plans. The screening and filtering of applications would be carried out to clearly defined parameters .

Advantages to Government

- Reduce costs for the Government
- Reduced workload
- Reduced resources and time required

Notional Allocations

The Government could offer notional allocations to each RDA or to each region annually. The establishment of notional allocations across each RDA or across Regions would enable applications to be weighed up against the amount of funds available for that round. This would assist in ensuring the process is more transparent.

Advantages

- Government knows exactly how much funds will be expended each year
- Applicants can know exactly how much funds are available and are more likely to understand that not all projects may be successful based on funding limitations
- Enables Government to plan it's cash flow and resources more efficiently

Funding Rounds

The establishment of possibly 3 to 4 funding rounds per annum, depending on strategic plans, could offer numerous benefits to Government. If these dates are set at the beginning of the financial year then RDAs can work with applicants towards those dates. This process is used successfully by a range of other Victorian Agencies eg Vic Health.

Advantages

- Easy assessment of workloads based on application dates
- Knowledge of when decisions are being made by applicants and Government alike

Open and Transparent Feedback Processes

Ensure constructive feedback is provided to applicants who are not successful with their applications. If the reason they are unsuccessful is simply due to there being no funding left in that round then the applicant could be told this so they could choose to resubmit at a later



round. If their application needed more work, then they could reassess their application based on the feedback and possibly resubmit at the later date.

Advantages

- Positive public relations for the funding program and the Government
- The development of strong applications that are sustainable and relevant to the region
- Greater trust given to the decision making process by the public

Local Relationships with Local Communities

Community groups are increasingly providing a large range of services within their communities. The economic benefits that volunteers contribute in their communities each year saves the Government significant costs. Often many of the community projects that request funding are modest in size but have a significant impact on their community. When weighted against the cost of having these organisations cease providing their services and shifting the cost of this on to Government the benefit is even larger. These groups need access to funds for projects that enable them to continue to expand their services to meet changing local needs.

Community engagement takes time, energy, effort, persistence, consistency and a presence in the community. The Government can not offer this due to resources, travel costs and perspective. ACC's/RDA's have been in their communities throughout many changes. Always present, always ready to listen and offer advice, encouragement, information on the latest programs available to them and assistance. This has enabled ACC's/RDA's to develop relationships based on trust within their communities built on long term commitment to their needs.

Advantages

- Strengthen social inclusion for many people within communities
- Ensure strong networks grow in communities rather than decline

In response to

Examine the former Government's practices and grants outlined in the Australian National Audit Office report on Regional Partnerships with the aim of providing advice on future funding of regional programs; and

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Examine the former government's practices and grants in the Regional Partnerships Program after the audit period of 2003 – 2006 with the aim of providing advice on future funding of regional program

Lack of communication with stakeholders

Initially, when assessments were done primarily at Regional Offices, there was some degree of communication between stakeholders and Regional Offices who often had some local knowledge. However, once the assessment process moved to Canberra communications became erratic and confusing. The process was not consistent, assessors contacting the same applicant asking the same questions, or assessors contacting the applicant who had clearly not read the supporting documentation or application properly. MEACC received some complaints from applicants who simply did not understand what the assessment team in Canberra was asking of them. In these situations the ACC would have to interpret between the two parties. Frequently assessments took between 6 to 12 months. Much longer than the 3 months applicants were initially told the process would take. ACCs, and the Regional Offices, were often the last to find out any information about applications and therefore could offer little information to the applicants. Applicants should be required to go through their ACC/RDA to ensure their applications are sustainable. A clear, open process of communication should be established outlining who will be communicating with the applicant and ensuring information is available at any given time.

Costs to Government

- Delays due to political processes led to funding partners for some applicants dropping out
- Excessive delays in political processes led to frustration and cynicism from applicants towards the Government
- Excessive delays led to increased costs in the projects
- Excessive delays led to loss of morale by community groups

Disadvantages of Centralisation

Once the assessment process moved to Canberra it became clear that the lack of regional knowledge and trained assessors was problematic. Despite the National Office's best efforts they were hampered by a lack of regional knowledge, training this was compounded by a high staff turnover. In handling metropolitan regions the data used by the National Office



was often the averages from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. However, this data did not provide the total picture of the communities in these areas. There are frequently 'pockets' of disadvantage and scattered issues across the region that present some major issues in the community.

The Federal Government should be the funder – providing funds to strengthen communities and enable them to grow economically and socially. RDA's are an ideal agency for the Government to communicate directly with the whole of Australia on a local level. Applications should be assessed by experts and peers to ensure the process is apolitical and to enable clearer more consistent communications to take place.

Assessing applications nationally does not provide sufficient context to allow the decision maker to understand the key drivers that have pushed this application through the process.

Issues that Melbourne's East faced in the past included:

- Lack of understanding of some of the serious disadvantages faced by some communities in metropolitan regions
- Unrealistic expectations of small community groups and their capacity to raise additional funding for community projects
- A lack of understanding on the impact that delays in decision making had on applicants, their funding partners, their morale and the increasing costs incurred as time delays continued
- Inability to cross reference statistical data from the ABS along with local data demonstrating that there were discrepancies in the findings

Costs to Government

- Lack of understanding between communities and Federal Government
- Increased frustration and sense of isolation by groups that were already feeling socially isolated
- Lack of motivation by community groups to engage with the Federal Government

Ambiguous Guidelines

Metropolitan cities have had some major challenges with Regional Partnerships in relation to what defines a region. Increasingly applicants were asked to demonstrate how their project would impact their region. However without clear guidance from the National Office as to



what a region actually was in a metropolitan area we could not assist applicants in addressing this issue clearly. Confusion increased as communications would break down between different levels in the administration of Regional Partnerships. Stakeholders expressed frustration and lack of confidence in the process and the fairness of the process.

Cost to Government

- Frustrated applicants as they tried to meet the Governments criteria without understanding exactly how to demonstrate what was being asked

Inconsistency in Decision Making

In some instances projects were approved in one area and a similar project was rejected in another area. The reason provided for this inconsistency was often that the project was located in a rural area and that there was more need for the project than if the same project was being proposed in a metropolitan area. For Councils and Not For Profit Groups in metropolitan regions who had the data to demonstrate that their project was necessary this was a frustrating response. They knew that the local facility was no longer able to meet demand due to increased usage and that they needed funding to improve their community. .

Cost to Government

- Delays in assisting in asset renewal for many community facilities that are 30 years and over mean that some facilities do not meet basic OH&S standards and yet the facilities are highly utilised and needed in their communities
- Decaying facilities discourages younger people to join where facilities are depressing and uninspiring
- Social inclusion is far harder to maintain in areas where the infrastructure and community facilities are of a poor standard

Inconsistent Feedback Process

Feedback to applicants varied throughout the process. At one stage applicants simply received a rejection letter with no explanation. At other times applicants received explanations that their projects were rejected and were given justifications that clearly demonstrated a complete lack of understanding of the local issues. The local politician was always notified first if the applicant was successful. ACC's and Regional Offices were notified on the success of applications they had been working on, often for months, on an ad



hoc basis. This process further increased the politicisation of the process, leading to some of the issues in the ANAO report.

Cost to Government

- Frustrated applicants not knowing why their application was rejected
- Applicants not prepared to resubmit their projects as they did not know how to address the issues that were presented
- Cynicism of Government
- Government lost some credibility with the program in the eyes of the public



Summary

To avoid many of the issues that Regional Partnerships faced MEACC/RDA Melbourne's East recommends that the new Regional and Local Infrastructure Program should be developed with the following considerations:

- Based on independent facilitators and assessment steering committees located around Australia (ensuring the process is as non political as possible)
- Involve a simple application process that is easy to read, understand, complete and submit with clear guidelines/conditions of grant/criteria/contracts etc
- Based on funding rounds that are set at the beginning of each financial year ensuring Key Stakeholders and Government alike are clear on dates and resource allocation
- Consider notional allocations per ACC/RDA or per Region
- Key Performance Indicators per RDA
- Utilising RDA's to their fullest capacity enabling Government to have a strong finger on the local pulse of communities across Australia

We believe the changes suggested above will ensure that in the view of the community the credibility of Government is increased. By developing a process that is transparent, simple and developed with the stakeholder in mind the program will work more effectively for everyone. The proposed process allows for continuous improvement and is focussed and dynamic in nature.

Across our region we see two very different types of projects. The community based projects and asset renewal projects that are the 'glue' that holds the community together. These are often run by volunteers and not for profit organisations. Issues that increasingly need support are those initiatives that enable social inclusion to be integrated into communities.

The other projects are larger infrastructure projects. These require much larger financial commitments and strategic planning from all levels of Government to ensure that infrastructure is replaced before it becomes unusable or irreparable. There is a growing need and urgency to fund both types of projects across our region.

Larger projects such as public transport issues, resources issues ie water, energy, roads etc require different facilitation skills, networks and local knowledge. They are much longer term



in nature and for their outcomes to be achieved extensive analysis is necessary to determine where “bigger bang for buck” can occur. Hence our proposal for two funding streams.

Smaller NGO Grants	Larger Infrastructure Grants
Applicants likely to be community groups, Councils, Not For Profit Organisations	Applicants likely to be Councils, groups of Councils and possibly businesses
Different partnerships criteria each fund	
Different risk profiles for each fund	



**SUMMARY OF REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS PROJECTS
MELBOURNE EAST ACC / RDA REGION**

Project	RP Funding	Total Value
Swinburne Re-engineering	\$27,500	\$75,000
Manson Reserve Community Garden	\$9,500	\$30,251
Indigenous Healing Garden	\$8,800	\$23,000
Kitchen Update	\$5,000	\$13,000
1812 Theatre Art Precinct	\$165,000	\$581,000
ANHLC Quality Houses Self Assessment	\$20,020	\$39,280
Healesville Information Centre Automated Booking Service	\$27,000	\$71,000
Olinda Produce Market	\$17,150	\$39,700
Warrandyte Soundscapes	\$20,000	\$40,000
Education and Public Program Heide	\$120,000	\$512,000
Healesville Lilydale Rail Corridor Feasibility Study	\$20,000	\$60,000
Warburton Mechanics Institute	\$200,000	\$760,000
Lead On Mount Evelyn	\$24,740	\$105,740
Olinda Community Web Site	\$23,000	\$46,800
Bonsai Social Firm	\$250,000	\$718,913
Monbulk Living and Learning Centre	\$2,000,000	\$5,834,227
Upwey-Belgrave RSL Redevelopment	\$237,000	\$358,000
St Alfred's Building Project	\$500,000	\$3,339,000
Grow, Safely, Together	\$375,000	\$1,037,000
International Product Development	\$67,000	\$225,500
Yarra Valley Regional Museum	\$800,000	\$4,998,224
Batterham Park Improvements	\$110,000	\$611,000
Upwey-Tecoma Bowls Club	\$40,000	\$126,700
Kew Court House	\$300,000	\$3,505,142
Multipurpose Community Centre Manningham	\$600,000	\$4,185,000
Burrinja Cultural Arts Centre	\$2,000,000	\$9,899,000
Eley Park Community Centre	\$250,000	\$1,665,000
Total	\$8,216,710	\$38,962,477



Over \$38,000,000 worth of funding has been leveraged through the Government investing just over \$8,000,000 into the region since 2003. This is a very positive return on the Government's investment.



TESTIMONIALS FROM FORMER APPLICANTS

The support the Regional Partnerships Group provided us (the Belgrave Football Club) was sensational, however the whole process was exhausting. It is almost like the process was designed to put people off in the early stages and cut down the number of applications! Streamline the process, make it more user friendly. There are a number of people who give of their free time as it is. The process as it was required them to devote even more time, resources and emotion for very little (nothing) in return. Keep it simple.

Belgrave Football Club

We would like to see some assurances that disadvantaged communities do not receive a double disadvantage by being considered a low priority for funding because they sit within an advantaged local government area. An example of this would be the communities living in the Ministry of Housing high rise flat in Prahran.

Stonnington City Council

A sense of community is missing (or has significantly diminished) from the Australian society today and it is imperative that this is restored before we can really address the issues surrounding work/life balance. If you add to that the inevitable issue that as the population ages, communities will have an abundance of older people with large amounts of time on their hands in and around each community. These two things need to be worked together to develop plans and projects that build communities and help address many of the social issues of today.

1812 Theatre

The support from the ACC was professional and extremely helpful. Staff made themselves available to us throughout the process, and guided us towards a successful application. However, the process was very lengthy and demanded a huge time contribution from the team involved.

St Alfred's Church

Staff at MEACC have been very helpful and professional in giving clear guidance to Council officers and community representatives in the scoping and development of funding applications. It has been very useful for local communities to have access to someone who can come and meet on site where the project is proposed, to assess and advise on the issues that MEACC will need to consider in the preliminary assessment of the funding



applications. This has assisted in creating a better partnership between local and federal agencies, a closer working relationship and closer matching of the objectives of the project with the funding program. Having submitted a number of applications I found the process logical and rigorous in the initial scoping and submission to MEACC and then following advise and discussion with the MEACC regional board and staff submitting the on line application. The on line application process was not easy to follow the steps and advice from MEACC officers was helpful in completing this process. I would suggest that in reviewing the on line application process that the federal and state government agencies should work together to develop the process to avoid duplication and develop a more user friendly online application process.

Shire of Yarra Ranges

The support from the ACC was professional and extremely helpful. The staff made themselves available to us throughout the process, and guided us towards a successful application.

St Alfred's Church

As a newly established organisation in 2006, we accessed MEACC for advice as to how we should go about applying for various government grants. In particular we needed assistance to understand the barriers we faced as a regional body in an interface council area. I have been particularly grateful for MEACC's advice and direction in the face of this.

In addition, we have been impressed by MEACC's direction, comments and assistance, the information we have been able to access and the encouragement and advice on what to do next in grant application processes, which government department to approach, and in keeping us abreast of what sort of government programs we may be eligible for.

*Jennifer Hutchison, Chief executive Officer
Yarra Valley and the Dandenongs Marketing*

This Scheme's application process was extremely complex & non user-friendly. Initially, the application and supporting documentation was daunting, unclear and very difficult to understand. Access to the application & completion on the Website was also extremely confusing, unclear and complex. Without the availability of the invaluable support we received at a local level, more specifically from MEACC, both initially and throughout the application process, our Organisation would definately not have managed to resolve this



application through to completion. This application involved many hours of hard work & also a cost of approximately \$2,500 for plans for the submission, a cost which is not inconsequential to a small Society such as ours, & now that our application has been unsuccessful this cost cannot be recovered & the plans not used. The application requirements of any future funding scheme therefore should also be considered in light of this.

Sherbrooke Gallery



References

- Appendix A Project Fact Sheet 1 – Grow Safely, Together
- Appendix B Project Fact Sheet 2 – Swinburne Re-engineering Hub
- Appendix C Project Fact Sheet 3 – Manson Reserve Community Garden

Project Name: Grow, Safely, Together
Proponent: Knoxbrooke Inc, Yarra View Nursery

Total Value: \$1,037,000

RP Value: \$375,000



For the last forty years Knoxbrooke Inc has been providing quality services for adults with intellectual and other disabilities in the outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Knoxbrooke also operates two Supported Employment Services providing employment to 112 employees. One of them is Yarra View Nursery whose application for RP funding was approved in 2007.

The list of other project partners included:

- Department of Family, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- Shire of Yarra Ranges
- Department for Victorian Communities
- Australian Government Community Water Fund
- Cabrini Health
- Melbourne Water
- Regional Council of ACFE
- Private enterprise
- Individual donor

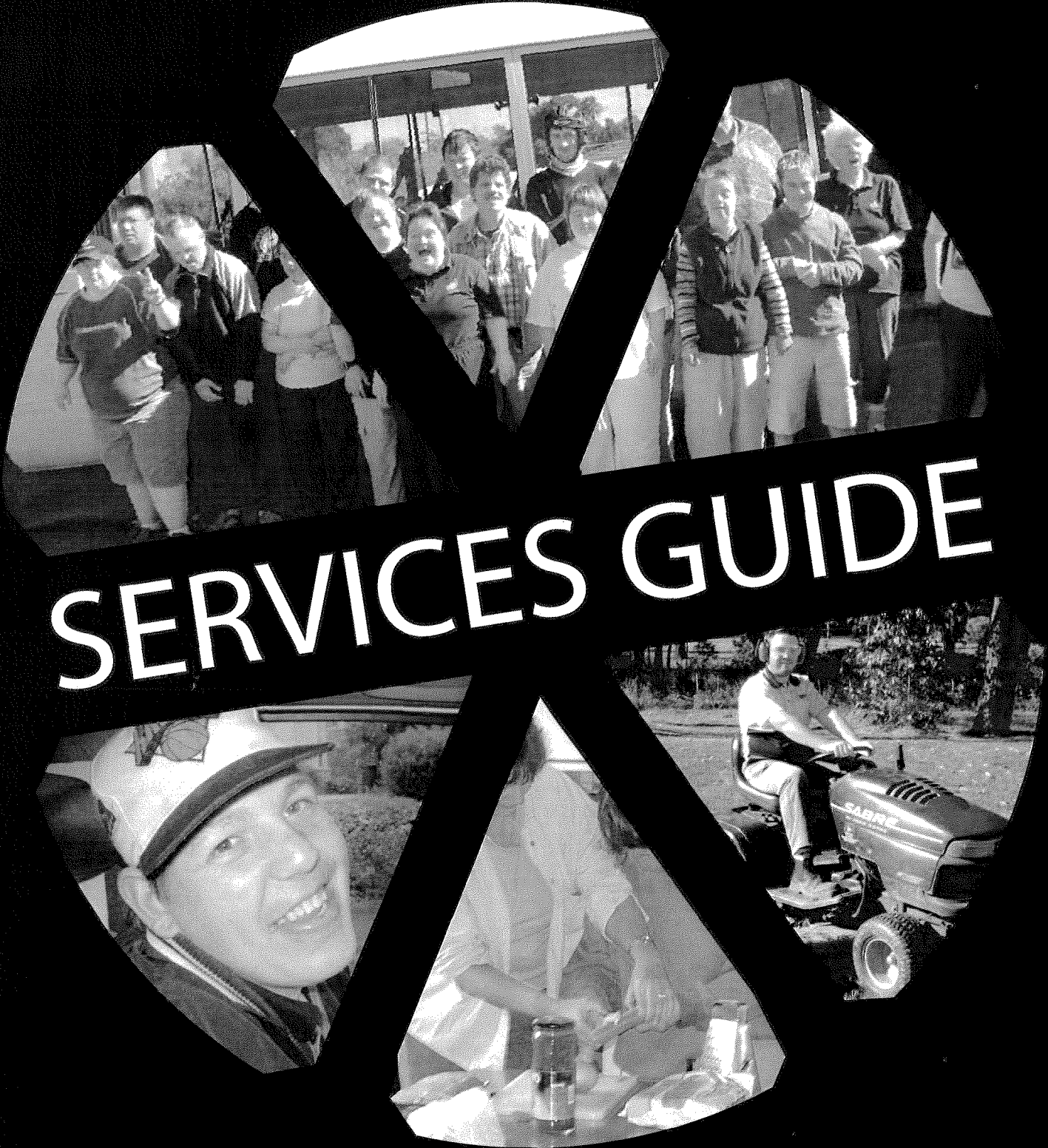
Outcomes achieved:

- construction of a 2.5 megalitre dam, drainage and irrigation system, which based on average rainfall year should supply 80% of nursery water requirements
- the site was less than 50% utilised and the project increased the growing areas by doubling both the igloos on site and the outdoor growing area
- office and administration area redeveloped
- training facilities extended and training places doubled
- wholesale production increased
- retail area upgraded and retail sales increased
- propagation facility upgraded and in tube production increased by 40%

See Attachment A



Knoxbrooke Incorporated



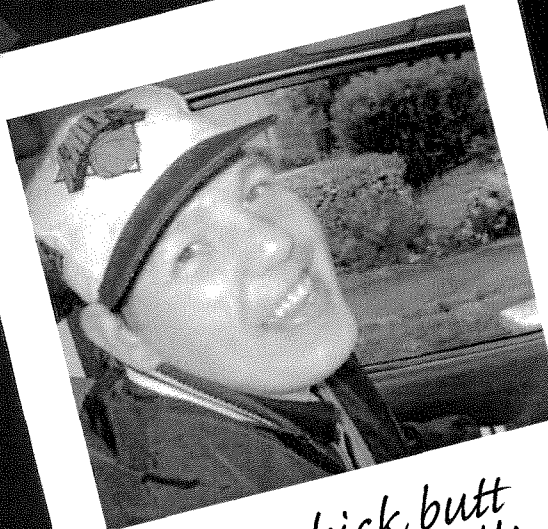
SERVICES GUIDE

Providing education & employment
for adults with a disAbility

Quality System



EDUCATION



*Off to kick butt
at basketball!*



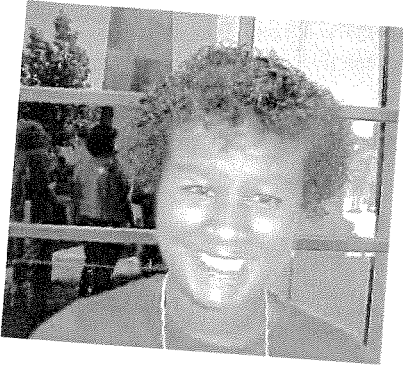
*The group all
together!*

We are an Adult Training Support Service providing programs for people aged 18 years of age through to mature age. A wide variety of 'centre based' programs as well as 'community based' and leisure option programs are on offer. We provide a combination of programs covering education, life skills and training opportunities to accommodate people of all abilities.

All applicants are assessed to ensure we provide the programs that best suit their needs. Our excellent facilities cater for all disabilities and our indoor hydrotherapy pool allows access for people in wheelchairs.

Our instructors have unique individual qualifications ensuring quality care and program expertise. We embrace the State Plan and are continuing to offer wonderful community inclusion opportunities for all that access the service.

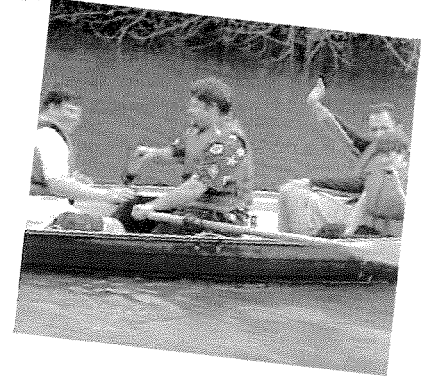




Loving Life!

Art

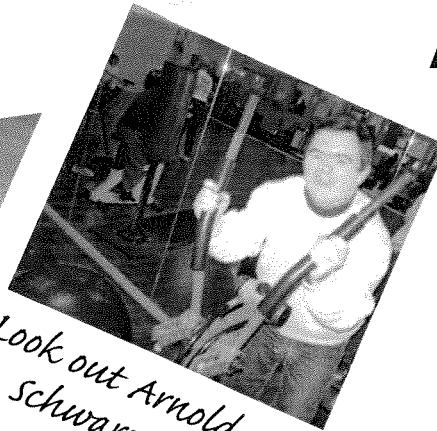
- Drawing
- Jewellery Making
- Pottery
- Sensory Art
- Art Projects
- Artist in Residence
- 'Art Box'
- 'Fingerworks'
- Fine Art



Who has the map?

Therapy

- Aromatherapy
- Music Therapy
- Relaxation
- Sensory Room



Look out Arnold Schwarzenegger!

Recreation

- Aromatherapy
- Basketball
- Bike Riding
- Bush Walking
- Cafe Club
- Gymnasium
- Hydrotherapy
- Self Defence
- Swimming
- Ten Pin Bowling
- Water Aerobics

Music

- Drama
- Singing
- Dance
- Games
- Choir
- Relaxation
- Expression



Pumping Iron

Mature-

Age

- Craft
- Horticulture
- Social Activities
- Carpet Bowls
- Music



Life Skills

- Cooking
- Shopping
- Grooming
- Anger Management
- Personal Development
- Exercise (With guidance from a Physio)
- Banking & Money Management
- Travel Training
- Cooking for Fun
- Client Council
- Client Meetings
- Self Advocacy
- Camps



What a healthy choice!

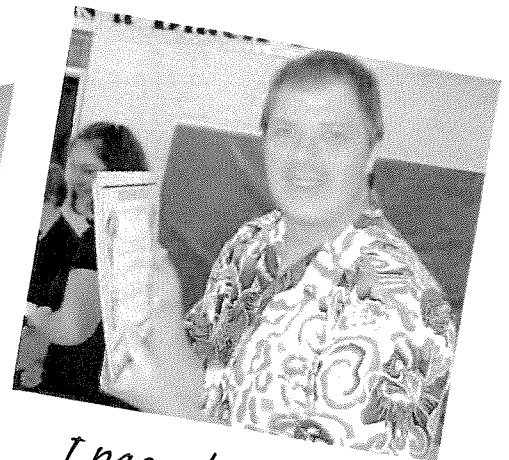
Workplace

- Cleaning
- Woodwork
- Workplace Communication
- Nursery Work
- Office Skills
- Work Assessments
- Supported Employment
- Pre Work Education Certificate
- Volunteering
- TAFE
- Contract



Skills

- Social Skills
- Communication
- Computers/Internet
- General Education (Cert 1)
- Horticulture (Cert 1 2 3)
- Literacy/Numeracy
- Food Handling/Preparation
- Human Relations
- Radio



*I passed my first
Karate grading!*

EMPLOYMENT

Nursery

Yarra View Nurseries (Mt Evelyn), Knoxbrooke Nursery (The Patch) and also, Home of Garden Lovers (Mt Evelyn) provide employment opportunities for more than 70 people. These nurseries help an employee develop skill in many aspects of the horticulture industry from propagation to sale. An employee can progress to tasks requiring additional effort and more responsibility as potential is realised.

Plants are sold throughout Australia, as well as at our own retail nursery, Home of Garden Lovers in Mt Evelyn. All income is used to continue providing services for people with a disAbility.



**TRAINING
PROPAGATION
POTTING
WEEDING
PLANT MAINTENANCE
PRODUCTION
RETAIL**

Packaging & Material Handling

Develop real workplace skills, co-operation and ethics in a productive environment all under supervision by trained staff. Gain confidence, pride and the sense of achievement that comes from being part of a team.

Situated adjacent to Ferntree Gully train station, Knoxbrooke Industries is easily accessed by public transport. The work is contracted from local business and broken down into small sequenced steps to cater for varying skill levels. An employee can progress to tasks requiring additional effort and more responsibility as potential is realised.



TRAINING
PACKAGING
LIGHT ASSEMBLY
MATERIAL HANDLING
TIME MANAGEMENT
TEAM BUILDING
WORK EXPERIENCE



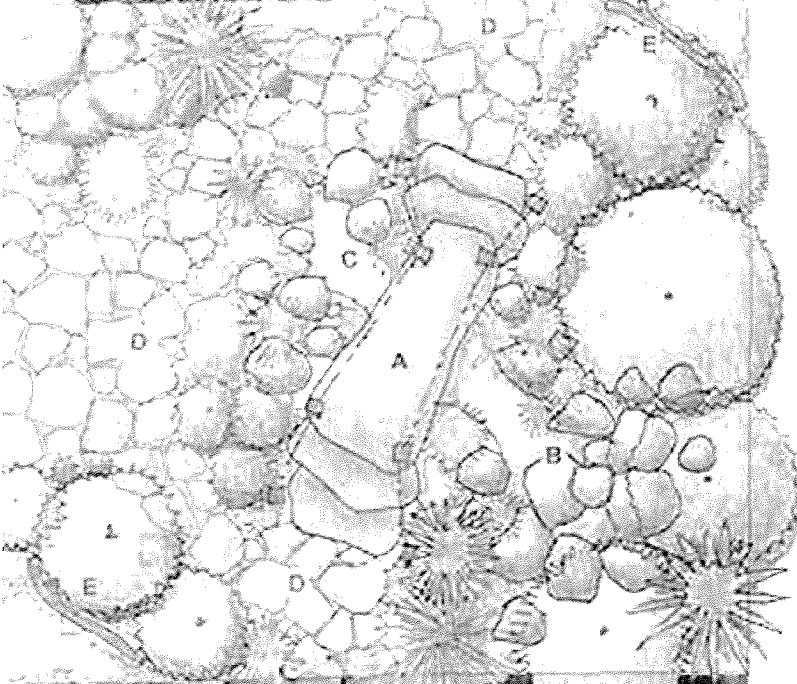
Landscaping

At Home of Landscaping and Garden Design (Mt Evelyn), employees learn skills that are both interesting and practical. Assisted by trained staff, all employees achieve a certificate of competency in Horticulture and are trained to correctly use and handle required equipment, and safety measures are taught and continually reinforced.

An employee can progress to tasks requiring additional effort and more responsibility as potential is realised.



**TRAINING
DOMESTIC AND
COMMERCIAL
GARDEN DESIGN
PLANTING SCHEDULES
GARDEN MAINTENANCE
LAWN MAINTENANCE
EXHIBITION WORK
PAVING**



CONTACT INFO

Education enquiries:

Adult Training & Support Services
977 Burwood Hwy
Ferntree Gully, Victoria 3156

Phone (03) 9758 3666
Fax (03) 9752 3589
Email: info@knoxbrooke.com.au
Web: www.knoxbrooke.com.au

Employment enquiries:

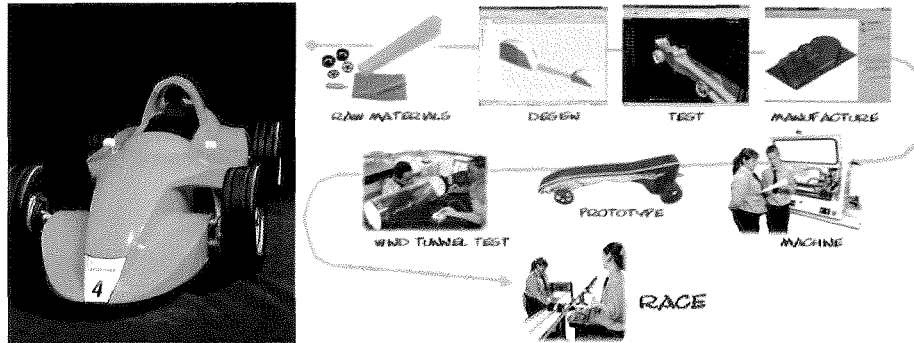
Yarra View Nursery
136 York Rd
Mt Evelyn, Victoria 3796

Phone (03) 9737 0400
Fax (03) 9737 0500
Email: yvn@knoxbrooke.com.au
Web: www.yvn.com.au

Project Name: Swinburne Re-Engineering Hub
Proponent: Swinburne University of Technology

Total Value: \$75,000

RP Value: \$27,500



This project established a pilot Hub at Swinburne's Centre for New Manufacturing (CNM) workshop on the Hawthorn campus, which replicated true manufacturing processes from computer design (CAD), computer manufacturer (CAM), computer engineering analysis (CAE), through to performance testing. The CNM engaged a network of secondary schools that were equipped with CATIA software (at no cost). Each school had a task of producing a Formula One racing vehicle about 30cm long using the latest world's best 3D design software (CATIA). The vehicles were then manufactured, analysed and tested using mini CNC machines and virtual reality simulation. The students had an opportunity to test and race their cars at national and international competitions and one of Swinburne project teams won 2006 International finals in England and five students received three year scholarships to study automotive engineering at the top university in London; the combined prize was valued at \$1,5M.

The list of other project partners included:

- Swinburne School of Engineering
- The Centre for New Manufacturing Swinburne Uni of Tech TAFE
- The Re-Engineering Aust. REA Forum
- Secondary schools

Outcomes achieved:

- Development of partnerships between educational institutions and local industry
- Increased number of students choosing engineering or manufacturing for their future career
- Promotion of social interaction between local industry, the community including schools and the VET sector
- Raised level of importance and awareness of technology and innovation amongst students and teachers and the local community
- Promotion of economic development in the eastern region

See Attachment B

RE-ENGINEERING AUSTRALIA FORUM

NEWS: News Features

Print Page

January 16, 2006

**AUSTRALIA ARE THE NEW WORLD CHAMPIONS!
YOUNGEST TEAM EVER WINS 2006 F-1 INTERNATIONAL FINALS
IN ENGLAND... PRIZE INCLUDES \$1.5M WORTH OF UNIVERSITY
SCHOLARSHIPS!**



The Stingers on the winner's podium with their 1st prize trophy.

It's official! "The Stingers" from Trinity Grammar School, Kew, with students as young as 13 years of age, are the number one team in the world of scale F1-style racing after competing at the International F1 In Schools Finals in England on Sunday.

The Stingers were one of two teams representing Australia at the event which attracts students from every continent. They won the right to compete after being named National Champions of the "Schools Innovation Design Challenge" program created by not-for-profit organisation Re-Engineering Australia Forum – which is focused on exciting young minds about careers in innovation, engineering, manufacturing and the sciences.

The Challenge involves thousands of students across Australia from year seven upwards who design, test, manufacture and race their own 30cm F1-style racers which reach speeds of over 100 km/h and cover a distance of 20-metres in under two seconds.

REA Forum equips schools with world-class engineering technology (three-dimensional CATIA CAD/CAM software valued at millions of dollars and donated by Dassault Systemes – the same software used by most Formula 1 teams, 23 of the world's top automotive manufacturers and all major aerospace companies...virtual wind tunnel software...a mini smoke tunnel...mini wind tunnel...desktop CNC router...computerised 20-metre race track) and collaboration technology from Telstra-Webex-IBM for students to access the equipment and communicate between each other over distances.

AGE IS NO BARRIER

The Stingers are only 13 and 14 years of age and were by far the youngest team. They had impressed in the "Schools Innovation Design Challenge" national final at the end of 2005 by winning the Junior category and beating every Senior team. They repeated the feat in England.

The Stingers were critiqued by a panel of judges and scored highly across eight categories including car design, innovation, technical portfolio, verbal and multi-media presentation, static display, team marketing and car speed. Their bumble bee coloured racer was voted "Best Designed Car In The World." They received this prize from the President of one of the world's largest software companies.

The other team came from Cheltenham Girls High School, Sydney, and they won "Most Innovative Design In The World". The year 11 students who call themselves "Brisk In Pink" were the inaugural national champions of the "Schools Innovation Design Challenge" in 2004. Their car featured a radical wing on the nose which was rapid prototyped by the CONCENTRIC Advanced Manufacturing Facility.

It was the second year in a row that this award had gone to Australia.



The winning team of (left to right) Lachlan Nunn, Alexander Nunn, Gareth Maddock, Douglas Lucas, and Matthew Nirenberg with F1 Challenge founder, Andrew Denford.

\$1,500,000 SCHOLARSHIP PRIZE

As an indication of the magnitude of this competition, "The Stingers" have each received three year scholarships to study automotive engineering at the top university in London. The combined prize is valued at 100,000 pounds Sterling per child (est. \$AU1.5M).

The scholarship was especially meaningful for Alexander and Lachlan Nunn whose great-grandfather won the prestigious Whitworth Scholarship in 1910 for the best engineering student in England, and he went on to study at an English university. "The Stingers" also won a huge (heavy!) trophy which they are bringing back to Australia on the plane, automatic entry to defend their world title at the next International Finals, and a workstation for their school.

STUDENTS TO MEET "GODFATHER OF FORMULA ONE"

Becoming world champions is going to be one of many highpoints of this two week trip. Plans are underway for the Australian teams to get the opportunity of a lifetime to meet the most influential man in Formula One motor sport, Bernie Ecclestone. Then it's on to Paris to take part in the 25th anniversary celebrations of leading software developer, Dassault Systemes. The youngest CATIA software designers in the world will be on centre stage in a star-studded function which is being broadcast live on national French television.

From there the pace will change with technology site visits (including aerospace engineering corporation, GKN), EuroDisney and sightseeing before returning to Australia on January 26th.

"THEY SAID IT WAS VERY PROFESSIONAL"

Year 8 student Matthew Nirenberg, team manager of "The Stingers", says "We are shocked and happy. The competition was so close, so well matched. We were hoping to get fastest car but we scored well on our car design, display, portfolio, verbal presentation and uniform."
"I have always wanted an engineering career with CATIA and this scholarship will open up all kinds of career paths for me."

Senior car designer and year 7 student Alexander Nunn says, "It was a really tough competition. What was really exciting was the lead up to it. We were really busy over the Christmas holidays fine tuning things and getting ourselves ready. Then it was just doing our best on the day."

His cousin and fellow year 7 student Lachlan Nunn added, "The level of presentation was very high but we were better. We heard we got high marks in the verbal presentation. They said it was very professional."

Year 7 students Doug Lucas and Gareth Maddock are already looking ahead to the scholarship.

"It will be an automatic door opener to whatever I want to do", says Doug, "It's what I've dreamed of doing, getting into the automotive industry." Gareth echoes the sentiment, "This competition has opened up opportunities for me when I leave school. I like designing cars mostly. I'd like to be a Formula One designer and be on a Formula One team."



Brisk in Pink & The Stingers with their teachers; Paul Wilson, Barb Duncan, Peter Clinton & Steve Sandford.

TEACHERS HAVE THEIR SAY...

Trinity Grammar teacher Peter Clinton was there to witness the historic win,
 "It's great! Amazing! We were expecting good track times with the car, but didn't. We heard them announce fastest car, third, second, and we felt a bit down. Then they announced us as world champions...it was euphoric!"

"The boys' passion shone through. They scored well in a lot of areas. All the extra research throughout the year really paid off. And it showed that age was no barrier. I think we really raised the standard. In future I think the other teams will have to do well in all areas not focus on a few."

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Barbara Duncan, a teacher from Bentleigh Secondary College in Melbourne who has been instrumental in the growth of the REA program in Victoria, agrees,

"The atmosphere was awesome. The International Finals were part of a major technology show. We were in a venue about four times bigger than the MCG. The kids were amazing. The standards were higher than ever before. The two teams really bonded and were so supportive of each other. It was an amazing day."

"The Schools Innovation Design Challenge from REA is the best thing that has ever happened in schools. We have the kids pushing the teachers. They have such a thirst for knowledge. The desire to compete, to keep improving, the technology, working together as a team..they are such great preparation for going into the workforce. It doesn't get any better than this. "

NEW WORLD SPEED RECORD

At the SIDC National Finals "The Stingers" broke the world record and established a new unofficial time of 1.133 seconds, however they were unable to better that in England. Eventually the Malaysians set a sizzling 1.004 seconds which is now the time to beat in 2006.

INDUSTRY SUPPORT

The opportunity to send both the 2004 and 2005 SIDC National Champion teams plus teachers to the International Finals in the U.K. was made possible via special funding from REA Forum partners.

Intel (CATIA/other software used by the students for car design and virtual testing, as well as long-distance collaboration technology, operate on computer hardware with Intel's world renowned computing platforms) and Dassault Systemes made considerable contributions. Joining them were Boeing, GKN Aerospace, Toyota, Victoria University and the Local Government Engineers Association.

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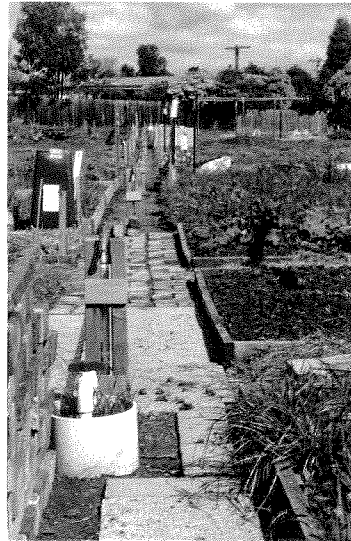
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Project Name: Manson reserve Community Garden
Proponent: Ringwood Community Garden Inc.

Total Value: \$30,251

RP Value: \$9,500



Regional Partnership funding assisted proponent with the relocation of Ringwood Community Garden. The majority of the members are retirees and use the garden not only for vegetable cultivation but for social interaction and regular exercise.

The list of other project partners included:

- South East Water
- Maroondah City Council

Outcomes achieved:

- better physical and mental well being for the members through physical exercise and regular social interaction
- a safe secure work site for members,
- an enhancement to the local communities of a well developed community garden,
- increased and re-invigorated membership, an asset
- a venue for disabled people to communicate with other interested and helpful gardeners



Appendix C