



Community Centres SA
Strengthening Local Communities

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN 2022



WHO WE ARE. OUR MISSION.

WE ARE A NOT-FOR-PROFIT LEADER AND MEMBER BASED ORGANISATION IN LOCAL, PLACE BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

It is our mission to find the strength, uniqueness and possibilities in our communities. To speak of them, magnify them and bat for them by nurturing the local community spaces and people that support community connectedness.

Meaningful community connectedness helps to solve tough problems like loneliness, anxiety, racism, unemployment, illiteracy, and family breakdown. And building meaningful community connections and community capacity at a local level will always lead to impactful outcomes.

We support and walk alongside our 170+ member Community Centres and Neighbourhood Houses and other community organisations.

These are organisations who share our ethos and who have the skills and deep local community insights to support the most hard-to-reach people.

“
WE FIND THE STRENGTH
UNIQUENESS AND POSSIBILITIES
IN OUR COMMUNITIES.
”

Advocacy
Research
Capacity Building
Community Education
Community Development



OUR FAST FACTS

 Operating for
38 Years

 **103**
Community Centres



170 Members
Sharing Our Ethos

WHAT WE CARE ABOUT



Inclusivity
Empowerment
Social Justice
Community Participation
Diversity
Collaboration
Integrity
Reconciliation



THE VALUE OF OUR OFFER

For every
\$1
our sector returns
\$2.78
to the economy**



OUR SECTOR

20,000+  **1.5 Staff**
Volunteering **40+ Volunteers**
Hours Each Week per Community Centre

 **2.15**
Million
Contacts
Annually

300%  **increase**
of weekly community participation
at Community Centres*

 **35,000**
Visitors
each week

The data on this page is an average from the data collected via our Annual Survey

*This data is based on our Annual Survey, where quarter of respondents experienced this increase

**Deloitte Access Economics

PRIORITY 1. COMMUNITY CENTRE SUSTAINABILITY

IT'S TIME TO RECOGNIZE AND SUPPORT THE TRUE VALUE OF SA'S COMMUNITY CENTRES
– 40 YEARS WAIT IS LONG ENOUGH!

ISSUE

Community Centres' value is self evident with a conservative economic return of between \$2.78 and \$3.50 for every dollar invested (Deloitte Access Economics). The value of our volunteers annually is \$43 million.

They are unique as place based, non stigmatised and safe, nurturing community spaces that are flexible, agile, mobilise and can expand or readjust in response to local needs, emerging issues or opportunities. They have a particular focus on early intervention and prevention, and improving outcomes for children and families and those experiencing persistent disadvantage. Their contribution to South Australia's social capital and social inclusion is particularly pertinent as SA prepares to move into its next COVID management phase.

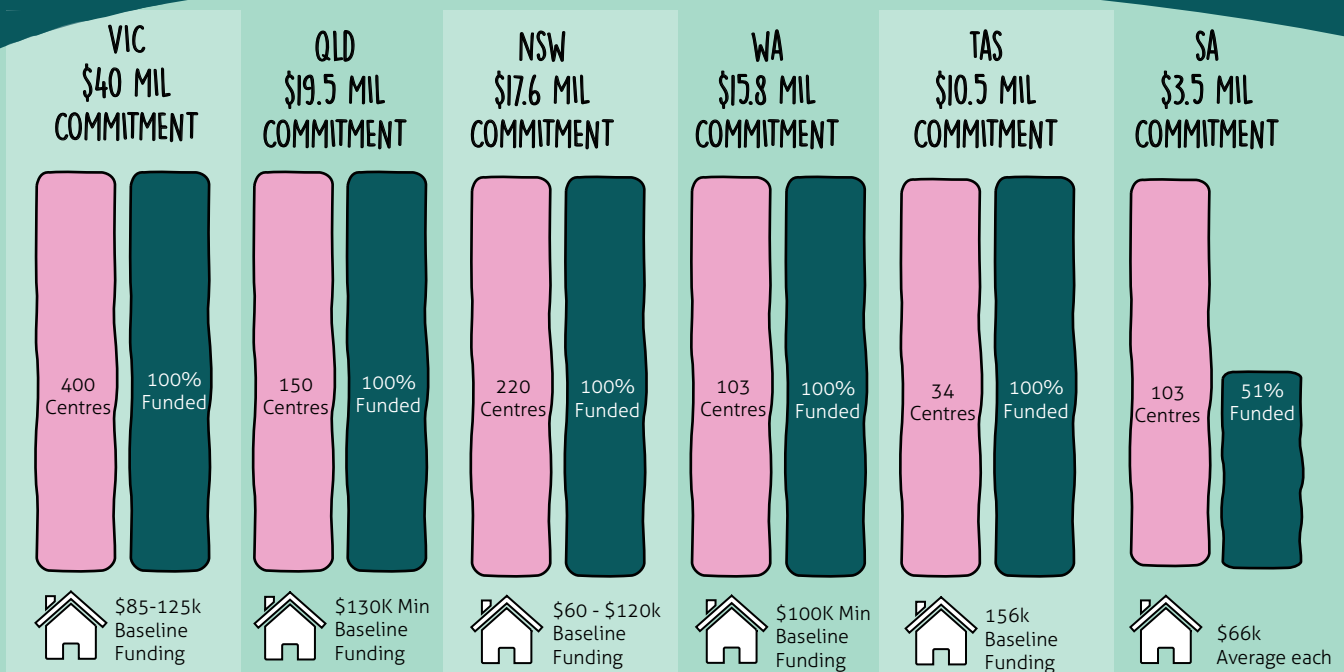
"Time and time again, Community Centres deliver on State Strategic goals around wellbeing, health, employment, education, and early intervention. It's simply not good enough that that in comparison with other States, they are so poorly funded and have to rely on goodwill of volunteers to deliver on SA's goals."

In 2021, a quarter of 103 Community Centres reported an increase by 300% in the number of people presenting with mental health challenges. Despite increasing community need and participation in their programs and activities, nearly 50% of the SA's Community Centres are not provided any core State Government funding. Only approximately 1/3 are funded by Local Government.

Comparisons

Other States provide useful benchmarks. 100% of every other states' Community Centres, except South Australia receive baseline funding. In Victoria, all 400 Centres receive between \$85k - \$120k. Victoria's State Government annual funding commitment is aprox. \$40 million (excluding funding to the peak). In Tasmania, the State funds all 34 Centres approximately \$156,000 per Centre, with a commitment of increase of \$5.7 million – bringing State funding to approximately \$10.5 million.

In SA, only 50% receive baseline funding. Of those that do receive some core funding, there is great diversity in how much funding is received, from just a few thousand annually to into the hundreds of thousands. This approach would seem to be inequitable, untransparent, and divisive.



These figures are approximate for the point of generalised comparison purposes only to demonstrate the commitment across each state to supporting a minimum baseline level of funding of community centres.

PRIORITY I. COMMUNITY CENTRE SUSTAINABILITY

IT'S TIME TO RECOGNIZE AND SUPPORT THE TRUE VALUE OF SA'S COMMUNITY CENTRES – 40 YEARS WAIT IS LONG ENOUGH!

Regardless of the diversity in their location, size, demonstrable community need and strengths, governance, and nature of funding, there are several key constants that all centres experiences. These constants should influence funding considerations.

1. CONSTANT = ECONOMIC EFFICIENCIES

All Centres provide the State with enormous economic efficiencies. All Community Centres, regardless of location or community need, are incredibly cost effective in part because they leverage through the substantial amount of time, effort and knowledge that volunteers contribute.

2. CONSTANT = COMMUNITY CONNECTION

All Centres provide much needed support for their local community regardless of its community's demographic profile. Again regardless of level of quantifiable persistent disadvantage, many persistent issues such as DV, gambling, loneliness, suicide, anxiety and depression are prevalent across every neighbourhood. These pervasive challenges in peoples lives transcend demographic factors such as socio economic status and where suburbs sit on the SEIFA index.

3. CONSTANT = INFRASTRUCTURE & STAFF COSTS

All Centres have baseline infrastructure and resourcing costs. Regardless of location or community need, all centres have costs associated with the site and building, insurance, electricity, printing, and so on. They all need at least one skilled community development practitioner to oversee the operations and strategic directions. Relying on volunteers alone for such critical community infrastructure is simply not appropriate.

Without consistent funding for ALL community centres that contributes to these ongoing operational costs, and with increasing demand for the offerings of community centres across ALL areas, the ability for these long standing, local community jewels to continue is severely compromised.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Fund:** That the State Government adopts a more equitable and fair approach to funding community centres. A main resourcing challenge for every centre is funding the salary of the essential position of a community development worker. This challenge is everpresent regardless of location of the centre or the needs of the community. We recommend the State Government provide fundings to **every** community and neighbourhood centres in South Australia who are members of CCSA, to support ongoing sustainability of each and every community centre regardless of location.

Cost : \$6.5 million (additional funding). Based on 98k per centre (cost of employing 1 FT Community Centre Manager @ SCHCADS Award Level 5 + oncosts) x 103 CCSA member community centres.

- 2. Fund:** In recognition in increase demand by 300% on many of our member Community Centres and corresponding growing demands on the peak body for significantly increased support and capacity building across our members, we recommend an increase in State Governments core funding to CCSA's operational costs by 50%.

Cost: \$97,000 (additional funding).



PRIORITY 2. ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION

BRING BACK THE 'COMMUNITY' INTO ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN SA

ISSUE

For over 20 years, Community Centres have done some of the heaviest lifting as Adult and Community Education (ACE) providers. Their model has been recognised as the “jewel” in ACE across Australia for many years – supporting people with vulnerabilities and barriers in their life to build confidence, self esteem, community connections, pathways to employment, further training and overall wellbeing. Sometimes ACE participants already have employment or tertiary qualifications but lack confidence and foundation skills required to prosper. Many ACE participants are not comfortable going to a University, TAFE or formal RTO.

“They come to community centres for community education and the associated “wrap around” nurturing services and support because they are non stigmatised, local, inclusive and culturally and psychologically safe.”

But the sector is no longer seen as the national “jewel” in ACE. ACE funding experienced a \$3million budget cut in 2019, impacting on our most vulnerable. Two years ago, approximately 6,000 people with barriers and vulnerabilities participated in ACE. But now, with ACE funding primarily targeted at employment and further training outcomes, Centres consistently report having to turn away many people who seek ACE for confidence, life skilling, self esteem and community connectedness. This remains a major gap in adult community education provision and has left many vulnerable adults without a community based, person centred learning environment.

CCSA's Community Learning Programme, new in 2021, is achieving great outcomes skilling those who are work ready. With employers consistently noting the skill gap amongst employees in Foundation Numeracy, Literacy and Basic Workskills, CCSA's Community Learning has great potential to also skill apprenticeships and traineeships in a contextualised, supportive community learning environment.



OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A plan is developed by DHS to address the identified gap in adult community education provision for people who are not “work ready” and experiencing multiple barriers in life. The development of this plan is a co design approach education, health, wellbeing, human services, and innovation and skills portfolios. This community issue requires strategic, multidimensional and intergovernmental departmental thinking.
2. In recognition of our sectors' great outcome in Foundation Skilling in 2021 through our Community Learning Programme, fund the scaling of our Community Learning Courses to build apprenticeship and traineeship skills in numeracy, literacy and employability skills.

Cost: \$320k (new funding). Over 4 years (\$90k annually).

Outcome: 320 apprentices/trainees receive Foundation Skilling in numeracy, literacy and employability.

PRIORITY 3. LONELINESS. THE QUIET PANDEMIC

LONELINESS IS INSIDIOUS. MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS IS PART OF THE ANSWER.

ISSUE

Loneliness is reaching epidemic proportions globally, and in SA, loneliness would seem to be significantly higher than global trends. Community Centres SA recognises that part of the cure to loneliness and social isolation lies in the power of meaningful connections. Addressing loneliness is in our DNA. In Australia:

21.4%

rarely or never feel close to people

22.1%

rarely or never have someone to talk to

21.4%

rarely or never feel they have people they can turn to

51%

South Australians experienced loneliness "often" or "sometimes" in April 2021

(Uniting Communities, 2021)

Loneliness is linked to increased risk of multiple chronic health conditions. It presents a higher risk to premature mortality than smoking, alcohol consumption, obesity, flu vaccination, physical inactivity and poor air quality. Being more socially connected leads to a 50% reduction in risk of early mortality for people of all ages (Holt-Lunstad, 2018).

It affects people of all ages, education levels, gender or cultural background. Evidence highlights the need for social scaffolding to raise awareness of the health and wellbeing benefits of groups, help identify potential connections for social growth, provide training to develop skills to connect with valued groups, and provide follow-up support to address any potential barriers to continual group membership.

Community Centres SA successfully runs three flagship programmes:

Loneliness Cure Awards which each year attract over 70 nominations from community service organisations which promote conversation and solutions to loneliness;

Loneliness Toolkit Research in collaboration with SWIRL, Flinders University to identify key elements of any successful Loneliness Project; and

Loneliness Warriors Project is an innovative, evidence based vision that is based on the "Grandma Benches" in Zimbabwe. A vision that sees trained "Loneliness Warriors" volunteers trained to support those feeling disconnected from their world in public realms around South Australia.

"Imagine a future where anyone lonely can find a connector. In any public space. That listens. That doesn't judge. It should be just as easy to find a Loneliness Warrior as it is to find a St Johns Volunteer at an event when you need sunscreen; or find a lifeguard on an Aussie beach when you are worried about tidal rips. What a difference this could make in our world!" Loneliness Warrior volunteer.

Marion Shopping Centre/Centrelink/Cultural Hub/Bunnings Precinct currently sees Volunteer Warriors with their tell tale "Talk with Me" T shirts and active listening skills achieving wonderful outcomes 5 days a week, every week. A truly innovative programme seeing results. Immediately scaleable, attracting widespread public and business interest, because it is real, tangible, solutions focused and speaks directly to the deficit of connections being experienced during COVID19. The potential to scale this and achieve population wide impact is eminently possible.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

Fund: The population scaling of Loneliness Warriors across metro and regional South Australia for 2 years.

Cost: \$1million (new funding). For 4 FTE's for two years to run the programme and associated operational costs.



PRIORITY 4. I DRIVE TO THRIVE

EMPLOYMENT. SELF ESTEEM. ACCESS TO EDUCATION & TRAINING. PATH TO WELLBEING. MOBILITY HELPS TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF DISADVANTAGE
“ WHEN I COULD DRIVE, MY WORLD OPENED UP.”

ISSUE

A driver's license impacts on access to education, employment, support services, and independence. A person without a license is likely to feel far more socially isolated, find it harder to get a job, to shop, to access education. Their civic connection and sense of belonging to a community can be seriously undermined. Fewer than 50 % of eligible Aboriginal population holds a driver license. For refugees, driving lessons aren't part of the humanitarian settlement support package provided to them upon arrival, women refugees are often left isolated and without means to contribute to our economy.

This is why CCSA's fully piloted and proven *iDrive* learn to drive program has seen outstanding community outcomes and has highlighted a massive unmet need.

“The iDrive program is a vital service for our participants in Transition to Work. We are working with approximately 300 young people who have been identified as at risk of long term unemployment, most of whom do not have driving licenses,”
Coordinator Transition to Work, AnglicareSA.

In 3 months iDrive achieved 60+ learner driver applications, requests from 16 major community service organisations to take part and connect their clients to iDrive, and learner drivers drove a combined distance of 3,100km – from Adelaide to Darwin. The programme is like no other. Partnering with SAPOL, SA Community Centres and the Get Home Safe Foundation, it applies a social model to building capacity and skills in our drivers. It matches a person needing to get their license but without any means to do so, with a volunteer driver mentor. But more than a 'matching service,' it provides comprehensive training to all volunteers around mentoring, active listening and warm referral skills. This saw the learner drivers achieving connection to other broader social support structures. As well of course getting closer to their required 75 driver hours.



OUR RECOMMENDATION

Fund: The fully designed, piloted and evaluated iDrive programme for 3 years to be rolled out across South Australian communities experiencing mobility challenges and persistent disadvantage.

Cost \$1.8 million (new funding). \$320k per year x 4 years based on 2 full time project officers (SCHCADS Award Level 5); 2 iDrive cars and running costs, learner drivers licence fees.



SOUTH AUSTRALIA POLICE
SAFER COMMUNITIES

Support in kind from