



May 2009

Building Communities: a leadership journey

A partnership between VLGA, Dattner Grant, Local Governments and others

Strengths

- ✓ Invites multi sector, multi layered partnerships involving communities, Local Governments, different sectors of State Government, private enterprises (Dattner Grant and potentially other) and the VLGA.
- ✓ Designed to respond to community concerns about the environment, complex sustainability issues and is achieves behaviour change.
- ✓ Builds the capacity of “ordinary” people in the community for enlightened leadership which fits the demands of the 21st century for sustainable, emotionally intelligent leadership which allows community vision to emerge.
- ✓ An idea already tested and independently evaluated which has the potential to create 500 high calibre community leaders across the State by 2012
- ✓ At a total cost of \$5100 per participant (including contributions of all partners) over an intensive 12 months, is an innovative and sound investment in community capacity building.

Project Summary

Key messages

1. Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability is ultimately about people. It is about changing our behaviour so we that we can: “meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). This can only be achieved alongside economic, cultural and social sustainability – together, the 4 pillars of sustainability.

2. Community leadership

70% of what happens in the community is a reflection of what leaders are focusing on. Community change is about changing leadership behavior, not only among formally elected or nominated leaders, but among ordinary people in the community who undertake leadership roles in their families, workplaces and communities every day.

3. The relationship between the two

The BCL Journey project rests on the idea that what we need is community leadership based on values of cooperation, community building and engagement, participation and emotional intelligence. We need leaders who increase community

capability rather than personally solve problems themselves, or mobilise according to their own personal passions.

Ultimately we believe that the leadership to achieve lasting sustainability for our planet is built on ordinary people who can, with the right support and learning, practice great leadership. Great leadership is necessarily concerned about the relationship between what we do now and what happens to future generations.

The challenge in this unique project is not to create new kits, resources, skills or events but to come to environmental sustainability from another angle. This involves developing community leaders who understand that sustainability for future generations requires engaging shared purpose and co-operation in community, and these leaders know how to do this.

Between 2006-2008, the idea that it is possible to

- actively identify potential community leaders,
- provide them with leadership education derived from best practice in the organisational leadership field; and
- help them practice their learning while developing community projects based on sustainable environmental practices

was tested in 4 municipalities (Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Hepburn and Macedon Ranges). A copy of the independent evaluation is available from VLGA.

Project Design

The program can involve up to 120 participants across four locations covering six municipalities. This iteration would see 54 participants in one location, across 2-3 municipalities.

There are three key design components:

- 11 full days of formal learning
- Peer learning in groups called 'Triads' – all participants working in teams of three or four of different backgrounds and experiences to enhance application of personal course learning. It is recommended that the triads meet outside formal program time approximately every fortnight for between 2-4 hours.
- The triads select community projects as part of the program. These projects while having a theme (such as reducing greenhouse emissions, improving recycling or community building) have ***a specific focus on the impact of improved leadership capability and the learning required to achieve this.*** This involves attention to ensuring alignment with community vision and engagement, rather than projects with worthy intentions and good ideas imposed on community. END

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Description	Amounts requested (rounded)	Outcomes/benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One program across 2-3 municipalities • Interface, regional and rural • 54 community participants • 12 month intensive program: 11 full contact days, peer learning triads; 14-18 community projects • Project set up, operation and closure over 18 months 	<p style="color: red; font-weight: bold;">Amount requested \$290,000</p> <p style="color: blue; font-weight: bold;">Contributions of 2 Local Government partners \$21,000 plus in kind</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">In kind contributions from Dattner Grant and VLGA – not costed in this proposal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a critical mass of self aware, emotionally competent community leaders who know how to find and let community vision emerge. • up to 18 community sustainability projects as a result of the leadership learning journey. • More in community able to practice the kind of leadership which measurably contribute to community behaviour change towards environmental sustainability and community development. • In addition, the model can be adapted to train the trainer modules once a core group have graduated (estimated cost \$70,000).
	<p>Total cost: \$310,000 (not including in-kind)</p>	

Total cost per participant = \$5700