



## GIVEWELL GOOD GIVING GUIDE CHARITY AWARDS

The winners of the 2008 Givewell Good Giving Guide Charity Awards were announced on 30 April in Melbourne, in conjunction with the launch of a new publication by Penguin, *The Good Giving Guide*.

Story by MARGARET HARLOW AND MICHAEL WALSH

A Fred Hollows operation - Brian Doolan (right)

Now in their fifth year, the Givewell Awards have previously been presented in association with *Ethical Investor's* Australian Sustainability Awards. This year they departed from the corporate awards to join forces with the *Good Giving Guide*. Written by Lyn Amy and Mary Pearce, with financial information provided by Givewell, it is packed with practical advice on the various ways we can give, from volunteering to corporate giving and setting up trusts. It explains

why giving is good for us, how it makes us feel happier, healthier and more engaged with the world.

*The Good Giving Guide* also includes information on 100 key Australian not-for-profits, drawn from Givewell's charity profiles. It also profiles previous Givewell Charity Award winners outlining the process and winners for 2008, which for the first time included a third award, Best Communications Program, in addition to the existing awards for Best Practice Not-for-Profit and Best Community Project. Nominations were invited for the first time and data from the Givewell charities database was also used to select candidates that exemplified best practice.



### THE AWARDS PROCESS

#### Best Practice Not-for-Profit Award

The selection process was developed from donors' expectations of what made a 'good' not-for-profit organisation and included good



Service of Australia (South Eastern Section); The Fred Hollows Foundation and The Smith Family.

Following Givewell's due diligence process involving the compilation of a detailed report on each candidate, based on standard research methodology and supplemented by interviews with CEOs from the short-listed charities and a peer review by fellow members of the Givewell team, a winner emerged from this process.

## Best Community Project

The project needed to be run by a credible, well-managed and transparent not-for-profit organisation. It needed to address an important issue with a thoughtful, innovative and practical solution that has measurable, attainable outcomes.

Again following Givewell's due diligence process a winner was chosen.

## Best Communications Program

Nominations were invited for an advertising or awareness-raising campaign in any medium be it an annual report, brochure or pamphlet, mass media campaign, staff-promoted campaign, seminars or conferences or a fundraising campaign.

The nomination submission needed to include: any relevant printed or recorded material; clearly stated reasons on why the campaign or item should be seen as successful; the response to the program and how that response rate was recorded and the cost/income ratio, where that is relevant.

This year's winners were: Best Practice Not-For-Profit: The Fred Hollows Foundation; Best Community Project: Welfare Rights Centre South Australia - *Housing Legal Clinic* and Best Communications Program: Lifeline Australia - *'Help a Mate' Suicide Prevention Campaign*

## BEST PRACTICE NOT-FOR-PROFIT AWARD

### The Fred Hollows Foundation

Fred Hollows (1929-1993) was an eye doctor, a skilled surgeon and a social justice activist who championed the right of all people to high quality and affordable eye care and to good health. The Fred Hollows Foundation was established in 1992 to continue Hollows' vision of "a world where no one is needlessly blind and where Indigenous Australians enjoy the same health and life expectancy as other Australians".

Of the 161 million people who are visually impaired worldwide, 37 million people are blind, with 75 per cent of this blindness being preventable or treatable. Through reducing

the cost of cataract operations to as little as \$25, the foundation has helped to restore the sight of more than 1,000,000 people worldwide.

Programs are run through genuine local partnerships in South Asia, East Asia, Africa and Australia and the Pacific Region, with chair, Nigel Milan, describing their aim as "ensuring high quality but low cost services that will endure".

## Doing more – extending and increasing program reach

Examination of the foundation's website immediately revealed best practice, being well structured and easy to navigate with a balance of text, images and key figures presenting the foundation's work in a simple and memorable way.

In 2007 the foundation launched *The Fred Hollows Foundation International*, to provide a global structure for the three foundation arms: Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Australian CEO, Brian Doolan, describes the sister foundations as all having the same ethic: "to build capacity, not service provision." Each arm has its own website, but is structured such that "brand protection has been achieved, whilst extending the reach of our programs and generating a greater fundraising capacity".

## Three-tiered approach to improving fundraising

In 2006 (latest figures available) fundraising revenue grew by 18 per cent (to \$11 million), comprising 81 per cent of gross revenue (\$13.5 million), with fundraising costs kept low at 23 per cent. Doolan describes the key to their success as being a "three-tiered approach to improving fundraising".

Doolan says that they have broken their own income records by improving marketing and relations with existing donors. Staff is better at feeding through individual case studies to personalise stories that have an impact on donors. And the foundation is better at publishing results and figures from its work (e.g. "Every 30 seconds another person is being assisted by The Fred Hollows Foundation").

He describes the first improvement as an approach of "burrowing into our existing supporter base to develop a stronger donor base, whilst also increasing new donors". Face-to-face donations have grown, with an initial 35 per cent drop-off rate now as low as 12 per cent, as the foundation continually improves its donor relations resulting in long-term commitments. The foundation also ensures it

governance; so the winning organisation had to be transparent, accountable and well run.

Candidates needed to exhibit an ability to deal with significant social problems in tangible ways, developing thoughtful programs, while demonstrating a creative approach in their fundraising techniques. These criteria were then combined with the necessity to be working across a range of social capital areas, including awareness-raising, network development, solution identification and support provision.

Nominated organisations were initially assessed on financial and organisational performance as reflected in their annual reports. The short-list of finalists comprised: Australian Wildlife Conservancy; Leukaemia Foundation of Australia; Royal Flying Doctor



Lifeline Aus - NRL Campaign

responds to all donations within 24 hours.

### Corporate support

Corporate support is also strong, as highlighted in 2005 when the foundation received the National Award for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships, in recognition of its successful partnership with **Woolworths (ASX: WOW)** and the Wugularri community for the Community Stores Program. Other corporate supporters have included **ANZ Bank (ASX: ANZ)**, **BHP Billiton (ASX: BHP)**, **Bendigo Bank (ASX: BEN)** and **Coca Cola Amatil (ASX: CCL)**.

Other sources of income include government (13 per cent) and investments (five per cent), with a growing investment portfolio comprised of a range of managed investments. With a broad source of fundraising income, the foundation has

developed a solid funding base providing the capacity to deliver to its constituency.

Such sound financial management has been overseen by a diverse and skilled board, with strong female representation (five out of 13 members), though such is the foundation's quest for best practice that Doolan mentions that he is "trying to address this gender imbalance". Full profiles of board members are published on the website, with details of remuneration and meetings etcetera, disclosed in the full financial report, which is available to download, along with all annual reports. Ambassadors and supporters are also promoted including Ernie Dingo, Jimmy Little, Susie O'Neill and more.

This strong support also flows through to staff, with an external assessment by Macquarie University, finding a strong level of job satisfaction - no wonder, given that staff

receive \$1,500 per annum for training and development and a chance in the Christmas party lucky dip to travel to another country office to witness the foundation's on-ground work first hand. As an organisation growing in professionalism, Milan is glad to say that the foundation "still embraces the risk-taking, the 'tell it like it is' and the 'give it a go' attitudes that Fred always demonstrated in his work", and it is obvious that this is done in a way that strives for, and achieves, best practice.

## BEST COMMUNITY PROJECT

### Welfare Rights Centre (SA) Inc. - Housing Legal Clinic (HLC)

For most of us the initial need for the homeless is food and shelter. But the ultimate aim is to assist them back into mainstream society.

One of the keys in this process, identified by the Welfare Rights Centre of South Australia, is to provide the homeless with legal advice and representation. - hence the formation of the Housing Legal Clinic.

Clinic co-ordinator, Bill Manallack, explains that for many homeless people summary legal offences often keep them under cover as they face court appearances for unpaid fines resulting from things like "dodgy deals with debt collectors".

He adds that many homeless cannot use a legal aid service because they have been convicted of a criminal offence and fees for the service can be up to \$1000.

The Housing Legal Clinic was established by the Welfare Rights Centre SA in July 2006 to reduce the marginalisation of people who

## AWARD WINNERS & FINALISTS

Award	Organisation	Project/Program Name
Best Practice Not-for-Profit	<b>WINNER - The Fred Hollows Foundation</b>	N/A
	Australian Wildlife Conservancy	
	Leukaemia Foundation of Australia	
	Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (South Eastern Section)	
	The Smith Family	
Best Community Project	<b>WINNER - Welfare Rights Centre (SA) Inc.</b>	Housing Legal Clinic (HLC)
	Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife	Golden Paw Award
	Najidah Association Inc.	Head High; Young People Living Beyond Suicide
	Sanctuary Refugee Foundation Inc.	Travel Loan Fund
	Unity of First people of Australia (UFPA) Ltd	Diabetes Management and Care Program
Best Communications Program	<b>WINNER - Lifeline Australia</b>	<b>'Help a Mate' Suicide Prevention Campaign</b>
	Accessible Arts	Accessible Cinema
	Australian Conservation Foundation	Climate Change Action Kit Campaign
	Mission Australia	TV Campaign
	RSPCA VIC	RSPCA Drought Animal Aid (DAAA) Emergency Appeal
Schizophrenia Research Institute	Australian Schizophrenia Research Bank (ASRB)	

are homeless or at risk of homelessness and reduce the number of public and private tenants at risk of eviction from becoming homeless, through the facilitation of their access to pro bono legal services.

It operates through the provision of pro bono legal services from five leading Adelaide law firms to clients of four homelessness services located in the City of Adelaide. Manallack emphasises that the clinic is a free service offered by court lawyers who are specialists in their field.

The last evaluation report for the service states: "There is a consensus that a majority of clients experience a considerable reduction in anxiety as a result of accessing the Housing Legal Clinic while self confidence and self esteem improve markedly."

A key impact of the Housing Legal Clinic appears to be that it opens the way for clients to get on top of seemingly insurmountable problems. Clients are better motivated to resolve problems and accept responsibility for moving on.

Up until the end of June 2007, approximately \$580,000 worth of pro bono services were created by the law firms. It is estimated that the Housing Legal Clinic will generate a minimum of \$770,000 worth of pro bono legal services in 2007/2008

It should also be remembered that unlike other states, South Australia does not have a law society-based pro bono legal advice system.

The clinic has also involved the lawyers in fundraising support through their organisation of a rock concert benefit in which lawyers were the performers.


The Welfare Rights Centre also has expansion plans to help its homeless clients. The Housing Legal Clinic currently operates in the inner city of Adelaide. Mannallack says that, with further funding and willing lawyers, it can be expanded into other areas.

The centre is also working on a financial counselling service suitable for the homeless and has plans to establish a free dental clinic – both based on the model of using pro bono professional services.

## BEST COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM

### Lifeline Australia – 'Help a Mate' Suicide Prevention Campaign

Lifeline Australia is the national body representing Lifeline Centres throughout Australia, with the primary responsibility of managing Lifeline's 24-hour telephone counselling service (13 11 14). Between May and September 2007 Lifeline Australia, together with the National Rugby League (NRL) and Triple Eight Racing/ Team Vodafone conducted a suicide prevention and help-seeking awareness campaign called 'Help a Mate'. The campaign was an integrated marketing communications campaign with a focus on promoting Lifeline and a set of key messages about suicide prevention and help seeking, aimed at men.

The campaign was developed with supporting imagery that would specifically appeal to an audience of rugby league and motor racing fans, who were predominantly Australian males. Elements of the campaign included print media (80,000 co-branded postcards), launch of a new Lifeline national website, production and distribution of a new Lifeline suicide prevention community service announcement, a public relations strategy (media interviews, NRL grass signage and on-screen messages during telecasts) and a community engagement strategy through a web-based NRL competition and driver autograph sessions at V8 races. 

## A word from Givewell's executive director, Michael Walsh

Ten years ago this month we launched our website [www.givewell.com.au](http://www.givewell.com.au), containing profiles of about 1,000 charities similar to those now published in the *Good Giving Guide*. (Givewell is also part of the Lifecraft Group, publisher of *Ethical Investor*).

At the time, our focus group research told us that only a minority of individual donors were interested in *analysing* charities and finding our more specific information before they decided which cause and organisation they were to support. Also, Australia was suffering from a reputation for having a lower rate of giving compared with other Western economies.

Since then Givewell's research indicates Australian giving levels have steadily increased by about three times the inflation rate in the last 10 years. Donors are also more interested in scrutinising charities, reflected by the fact that our website attracted more than a quarter of a million visits each year, on average.

So, when the authors of the *Good Giving Guide*, Lyn Amy and Mary Pearce, approached us with a popular book concept backed by Penguin that *assumed* Australians wanted to be more engaged when they give we were delighted to be involved.

Five years ago now we also started giving awards to charities for best practice - an even more challenging idea when there are just so many good causes that deserve support.

So rather than these awards being seen as a *best of the best* affair, the Givewell Good Giving Guide Charity Awards single out three charities that show they recognise that community needs are not addressed overnight. This means we look at their approach to management, engagement and accountability with stakeholders, advocacy, communication, community and

business partnerships – as well as care and professionalism in service delivery. The awards review process touches on all these issues in some way.

To all the awards finalists, we say well done, be proud to be recognised - and to the winners, congratulations. We hope you all use this recognition to further your good works. 