Futures Project

Evaluation Report:

Good Governance: Building Your Board for the Future (Part A)

Forum Three: *Good Governance: Building Your Board for the Future (Part A)*

The forum took place on 24 February 2015 at the Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre over a four hour session. Thirty three participants attended and 28 responded to the evaluation questionnaire. The program and list of participants' organisations are attached in the appendices.

A post-forum evaluation was administered to assess participants' ratings of the relevance of the forum topic to their organisation and clarity of information presented. Five open-ended questions were also included to collect participants' responses on what they considered the most useful information and skills for their organisation, strategies to apply to their strategic plan, networking opportunities, how the session could be improved, and other topics that would be useful. Tables 2 -6 show the participants' verbatim comments in response to each question.

The attendees were asked to circle if they were from an established or new and emerging organisation. Nine organisations identified as being from an established organisation, six identified being from a new and emerging organisation, and the remaining 13 did not identify either.

Conclusion

Overall the participant response to the forum *Good Governance: Building Your Board for the Future* was very positive. The participants engaged with the information presented throughout the forum and agreed that it was relevant to their organisation. The information most useful to the participants was in relation to developing and executing strategy, strategic planning, organisational vision and mission, and the role and operation of the board. Participant feedback about covering the information in more depth suggests a willingness to further explore the topics which is a positive result. The forum was successful in providing networking opportunities for the participants. Moreover, some participants identified further opportunities for partnerships and collaborations which is a very positive outcome.

Results

Table 1
Self-Assessment Post-Training Survey
N: 27 (question 1 & question 2)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The forum topic was useful and relevant to my organization.	17 (63%)	10 (37%)		
The information was presented in a way that was clear and easy to understand	17 (63%)	9 (33%)	1 (4%)	

Table 1 shows the results from the post-training evaluation survey that assessed the degree to which the program was useful and relevant to the organisation and how clear and easy the information was to understand. The first item shows that all of the participants (100%) either strongly agreed or agreed that the topic was useful and relevant to their organisation. The majority of participants (96%) also strongly agreed or agreed that the information was presented in a clear and easy to understand format. These results show a very positive response to the forum and how the information was relevant and well presented.

Table 2

Self-report questionnaire
N: 27

Survey Question	Participants' Comments
What information and skills did you find most useful and could most likely be applied by your organization?	**Established Organisations** *Too many to list.* *The definition of the role and operation of the Board.* *Guest speakers.* *1st presentation useful as intro. Last presentation had too much jargon and flew over.* *Mission statement that's short, clear and memorable. We need to continue our strategic planning.* *Responses to questions were most useful, but suggested the speakers didn't really address the 3 points advertising the workshop: how to make leadership decisions, how to manage change? How can your organisation move forward?* *Developing and executing strategy.* *Defining Board roles vs. management. Skill requirements of board members – training.* *Succession planning considerations.* **New and Emerging Organisations** *Clarify about the role of the board.* *Information surrounding governance and the roles boards play. 3/5 pillars – purpose, performance and influence.* *Importance of a vision and mission of the organisations.* *Strategic plan.* *Matrixes, effectiveness strategies, efficiencies.* *All the information was useful but the time was too long for me.* **Organisation not identified** *Case study discussion.* *Organisational vision, mission and strategic plan.* *Vision, mission, strategies.* *Setting vision and mission.* *Everything was very useful! Thank you.* *Information that Richard presented. However there was not enough details when was pressed vision and mission statement.* *Effective boards; board member expectations and professionalism; vision, mission and strategy; effective decision making; accurate business intelligence.* *Experiences and how some issues have been addressed.*

	Vision and mission, internal and external information, signs of a good/struggling board.
	Governance.
	All information extremely helpful. Found case studies useful. Discussion of external context and how impacts of board.
	Developing and executing strategy.

Table two identifies three key areas of information that participants gained from the forum. These key areas included advice about strategy (8 responses), vision and mission (7 responses), and the board (6 responses). The participants' responses included aspects such as developing and executing strategy and strategic planning, organisational vision and mission, and the role and operation of the board.

Table 3
Self-report Questionnaire
N: 24

Survey Question	*Participants' Comments*
What strategies were provided to you as an ethno-specific or multicultural organization that you would implement in your strategic plan?	**Established Organisations**
	Succession planning and board turnover.
	A review of our vision and mission statement.
	Revisit the committee of management orientation manual.
	Not many that are useful to my org. at this time.
	Performance reviews. Recruiting of members.
	I found the information provided wasn't specific just to multicultural organisations, but to all.
	The coordination of the organisation's affairs.
	Recruitment, though more detail and resources required please.
	New and Emerging Organisations
	To define clearly the vision and mission statement.
	1.Strategic plan. 2. Succession plan.
	Involvement of the board members to be aware of the issues within the organisation and to take action about it.
	Knowledge and tips about robust governance.
	Getways, needs analysis, succession planning.
	The strategies were very useful to learn how to plan good strategies for our organisation.
	Organisation not identified
	Empowering community engagement.
	Providing service for members of our community. Creating partnership.
	Need analysis, succession planning.
	Planning.

	Recruitment, conflict resolution, meeting management.
	There was some good points presented by Louisa but was only touch on and there was no detailed info regarding step by step how to do it.
	Communication; strong relationships with CEO; clear vision and mission; accurate information; proper planning, execution and evaluation.
	Nil but was reassuring. Thank you, look forward to the next session.
	Board members having to attend governance forums/training sessions before joining the board, succession planning to reduce the risks.
	The 5 pillars of governance.

Table 3 identifies strategies participants could incorporate into their strategic plan. A key strategy identified involved succession planning (7 responses). Other key strategies mentioned in the responses included recruitment and having a clear vision and mission statement, which was also a key area of information identified by participants as something that they gained the most from the forum. Although two respondents mentioned that there were no strategies they would incorporate into their strategic plan at this time, one participant indicated that the session was still reassuring. The usefulness of the topics addressed in the forum was further demonstrated in a participant comment about how the information presented was relevant to all organisations, not just to multicultural organisations.

Table 4
Self-report Questionnaire
N: 25

Survey Question	Participants' Comments
Did you have the opportunity to network with other organisations and is there a possibility of formal collaborations to assist in each other's growth?	**Established Organisations** *Yes and no.* *We already have an ad hoc with other cultures through cultural dance.* *Yes.* *Network yes – collab not much.* *Yes, possibility of collaboration to be still explored.* *A little, in group work at table.* *By getting together and talked about each other's organisations.* *Yes – another organisation who may have clients who could benefit from our services.* *Yes, through sharing contacts and programs best practices.* **New and Emerging** *Opportunity – yes, though without any opportunity for formal collaborations at this stage.* *Yes I did have an opportunity to network – we can work together in partnership.* *Create a session to expand the networking with other*

	organisations and explore the possibility to engage closer with them.
	Yes please email us participants list.
	Yes few years ago we had community networking group for go worker meeting every month but now not anymore.
	Yes and no.
	Organisation not identified
	Minimal engagement.
	Yes, by to know the rules.
	Yes.
	Yes – by asking questions and discussion presentation.
	Yes, may connect in the near future. Serbian Orthodox Youth Association and Polish Communities Services of Victoria.
	Yes met some great contacts. Will follow up in coming weeks.
	Briefly during activities and afternoon tea break.
	Yes, discussing and suggesting to young org.
	Yes – will continue discussions re: enhancing status of women in leadership.
	Quick networking. There could be a formal collaboration in the future. Mentoring.

Table 4 shows the responses in regards to networking opportunities possibilities for formal collaborations. The majority of respondents (23 out of 25) indicated that they had the opportunity to network with other organisations at the forum, even if it was only for a brief amount of time. However, only nine participants alluded to the second part of the survey question about the possibility of formal collaborations. Seven participants responded positively about the possibility of formal collaborations or partnerships with other organisations at the forum, with several stating that they would follow up with their new contacts in the near future. The importance of the networking aspect of the forum was highlighted by one participant who suggested creating a session that focuses on networking and possibilities for closer engagement with other organisations.

Table 5
Self-report Questionnaire
N: 16

Survey Question	Participants' Comments
In what way could this information session be improved?	***Established Organisations*** *Having sessions like this more often.* *Maybe some engagement of potentially interested orgs. about what they'd like out of it.* *I think it was a well organised and interesting session. All aspects of it were excellent.* *Logistics were excellent, but did the presenters really address the "how to?" points?* *Excellent session, could have been either longer or compacted – so much was touched on and some more depth would be*

	appreciated.
	Simplified language/terminologies, considerations for English as second language.
	New and Emerging Organisations
	Time sustainability and handouts to the participants.
	More links to support the topic.
	More time to cover all board functions.
	Organisation not identified
	Relevance of material.
	Practical sessions.
	Location is good.
	Work book, videos of Boards in action (scenarios), chairing a meeting effectively.
	Models that could be applied – e.g. Carver model/policy model. Examples of how to seek and find new board members.
	Speakers have more time to go a bit more in depth about their information. Have a hard copy of the material presented.
	Presentation materials to be forwarded to participants.

Table 5 highlights participants' responses about ways in which the information session could be improved. The survey question was answered by 16 participants. A couple of participants responded that they would have liked the presenters to cover the topics in more depth and to have a hard copy of the material presented. These responses indicate a willingness by the participants to further engage with the topics addressed at the forum.

Table 6
Self-report Questionnaire
N: 11

Survey Question	Participants' Comments
What topics or information would be useful to your organisation?	**Established Organisations** *Committee and coordinators.*
	New and Emerging Organisations *1.Specific to youth organisations. 2. Various projects directed to youth.*
	Working in partnership with mainstream and local government. I really enjoyed the session – it was very informative – thank you.
	Funding resources/ funding engagement (philanthropy, sponsor) and collective impact / building strong partnerships.
	Policies and procedures and quality standards. Blue prints or templates.
	All information sessions is useful to learn more and more.

	Organisation not identified
	Responsibilities for administration. New projects.
	Govt. grants and inclusion of youth involvements.
	Succession planning. Roles and responsibilities of each board member.
	Leadership traits and personalities, leadership and cross cultural communication, leadership presentations and public speaking.
	Conflict resolution – expand.

The final survey question looked to gain insight into the key topics that participants would like in future training. A total of 11 participants responded to this question, with several participants suggesting topics such as youth, funding opportunities, and building partnerships.

A final question asked: How did you find out about this forum?
Most participants found out about the forum through invites from the ECCV, including emails or online, or by word of mouth from colleagues.

Appendix 1: Program

Appendix 1: Participating organisations

- African Australian Welfare Bureau
- Australasian Association of Language Companies (AALC)
- Australian African Foundation for Retention and Opportunity
- Australian Arabic Council
- Australian Islamic Mission (AIM)
- Casa Cultura
- CCF
- Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria
- Filipino Community Council of Victoria
- Fronditha Care
- Horn of Africa Senior Women's Program
- Jewish Care Victoria
- Leadership Victoria (Williamson Community Leadership Participant)
- Macedonian Community Welfare Association
- Migrant Resource Centre North West (MRCNW)
- Moira Shire Council
- Northern Federation of Ethnic Senior Citizens Clubs
- Polish Community Council of Victoria
- Scots of Victoria Coordinating Group (SVCG)
- Serbian Orthodox Youth Association
- Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre (SMRC)
- Spectrum MRC
- Temple Society Australia
- United
- Vietnamese Elderly Group Preston