

Organisation name

New Beginnings (ACNC registered as SAPH Vision Quest Association Inc.)

Email

[REDACTED]

1.1 What would a partnership between CSOs and the government that achieves outcomes for Australians being supported by the community sector look like?

We established New Beginnings 24 years ago. Our early age youth prevention programs are unique, and have received significant recognition both internationally and in Australia for innovation in youth prevention. Yet we have been forced to rely primarily on our own limited fundraising and one-off grants to keep these programs running over the past two decades. The only exception has been a 3-year Stronger Families Federal grant (2006-2009). Grant categories often do not fit the type of work we are engaged in, or the ages we target. Our programs have been proven to be a deterrent to youth anti-social behaviour (youth crime, bullying, vandalism, etc.). Significant longer term government funding would allow us to significantly expand the reach of these proven programs, both within Queensland and expand them nationally.

1.2 How can CSOs and government streamline the sharing of information, particularly through utilising technology to effectively engage, distribute, share, influence and inform in a timely and efficient manner?

Being a small charitable non-profit organisation, one of our main difficulties has been spreading of information as well as recognition of our programs and the turnarounds of young lives they have created. With greater recognition, we could also attract greater funding outside of grants. Greater distribution about the unique nature of our programs and sharing of information by government would assist greatly.

1.3 How can government ensure the community sector, including service users, and those not able to access services, have an opportunity to contribute to program design without imposing significant burdens?

We have already been working closely with community by our involvement in community groups. We have also established communication with schools, indigenous and migrant/refugee organisations who have been regularly referring vulnerable and at-risk children to our programs. Due to lack of funding, we are limited in how many programs we are able to run each year - demand exceeds available funding, especially in vices of the current youth crime crisis.

2.1 What would adequate and flexible funding look like?

In our case, we simply need longer term government funding (at least 3 years) in order to expand the reach of our programs and meet demand. Our organisation is highly cost-effective as our programs and administration is run by highly qualified volunteers. Thus we do not have the high overheads most youth organisations are burdened with.

2.2 What administrative and overhead costs are not being considered in current grant funding?

In our case, most administrative cost & overheads are covered.

2.3 How are rising operational costs impacting the delivery of community services?

Any increases in operational costs are highly detrimental as many of our programs are funded by one-off grants with a fixed budget. With turn-arounds from funding submission to grant announcement being 6-9 months, cost have often escalated significantly during this interim period. Grants should compensate for this.

2.4 What have been your experiences with and reflections on the supplementation and change to indexation?

None.

2.5 How can CSOs and the department work together to determine where funds are needed most to ensure equitable and responsive distribution of funds?

The department needs to work more closely, especially with innovative organisations like ours who are close to actual community needs. We were invited to a National Conference focussing on Families and

Youth Work in 2006. The additional exposure resulted in our organisation being awarded a 3-year Federal Stronger Families Grant. We have not been invited to any similar forums since then. It appears our organisation has dropped off the radar after that 3-year program was concluded, despite the success of the program.

2.6 How can government streamline reporting requirements, including across multiple grants, to reduce administrative burden on CSOs?

Organisations should not have to repeat information already reported in a previous reporting period. Credence should be given to organisations that have proven their integrity, shortening the reporting requirements in subsequent grants.

3.1 What length grants are CSOs seeking to provide certainty and stability for ongoing service delivery?

A minimum of 3 years, with possibility of further extension. It would take between 8-10 years to spread our youth prevention programs to all Australian States. It takes time to establish cooperations with suitable organisations in each state.

3.2 What timeframes should the government aim for, at a minimum, to provide final outcomes on grant variations/extensions before the current grant ceases?

3 months minimum after conclusion of the new project deadline.

3.3 What funding flexibility do CSOs require to enable service delivery and innovation?

In our experience, government does not usually want to pay for innovation. Funds to cover project costs do, and should not, allow for government to access Industrial Property Rights to programs developed by CSO's. Property rights must remain with the organisations unless government pays reasonable royalty fees.

3.4 What flexibility is required by CSOs in acquittal processes to support and encourage sector innovation?

Acquittal processes do not usually affect innovation in our case. As mentioned, IP rights must remain with the organisation unless royalty fees are paid. Product Development requires years of work and further innovation. If government wants to stimulate innovation they should provide funding for this. In the case of technology innovation, in various countries around the world, government usually provide R&D grants of between 4-7% of GDP.

3.5 How can government improve the variation process, with consideration that CSOs must demonstrate alignment with the grant agreement and provide evidence of value for money outcomes?

Again, close communication between the governments nom intend officer and the funded organisations would enable monitoring of changed circumstances that might require contract variations.

4.1 How can the government ensure opportunities are available for new and emerging organisations to access funding?

This is exactly where government has failed our organisation, missing an opportunity to expand our proven youth prevention programs nationwide. We applied for another federal grant round after the first 3-year grant, and were overlooked despite the success of the programs. Communication within government departments between grant rounds is essential.

4.2 What programs, supports and information are already available for smaller CSOs to help build capacity of the organisation? Are these working?

Very little that we are aware of. No.

4.3 How could larger CSOs support smaller CSOs? What are the barriers to providing this support?

We have found that often larger CSO's either do not want to support smaller organisations. Also, we have found that some larger CSO's we have communicated with share different values and program aims. Before we became incorporated, we experienced several instances where other CSO's that we requested to be our auspice partner have refused this and instead wanted to take over our programs because they could see how successful they were.

5.1 What is your experience with and reflections on place-based funding approaches?

Please refer to 4.3, above.

5.2 What innovative approaches could be implemented to ensure the grant funding reaches trusted community organisations with strong local links?

No comment.

5.3 Which areas do you consider have duplicative funding or gaps you think need to be addressed, and what is the evidence?

We are of the few Queensland organisations that runs innovative and effective youth prevention programs. As mentioned, grants often do not cover our work or the age groups we target. We have 20+ years of evidence from feedback on our program outcomes received from past participants, school principals, guidance officers and parents,

5.4 Where there is a community-led change initiative, could shared accountability to community and funders (government) strengthen service delivery?

Again, community often seeks youth prevention answers (e.g more police) different to the early intervention we provide.

6.1 If any, what are the problems or challenges you think have been overlooked?

Greater awareness of innovation by smaller CSO's. Lack of willingness to accept recognition received by organisations. In our case internationally (Investments in Youth Prevention Conference (Sweden), and in Australia (2017 Telstra Business Awards - Charities Category).

6.2 What other solutions or changes could also be considered?

No comment.

6.3 What does success look like?

The smiles of program participants at the end of each programs or camp, and positive feedback about a child's progress received from parents or school principals post-program.