

Sidney Myer Fund
Education Committee
Report



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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to capture and summarise the key achievements of the Sidney Myer Fund's Education Committee (the Committee) and to share stories of the grantees' successes. The report includes the positive impact of the Committee drawing on grant data and grantee interviews. For the purpose of this report, the Committee's work will be defined from its inception in October 2006 to its close in April 2018. Any education related grants falling outside this time period are not included in the report.

Background

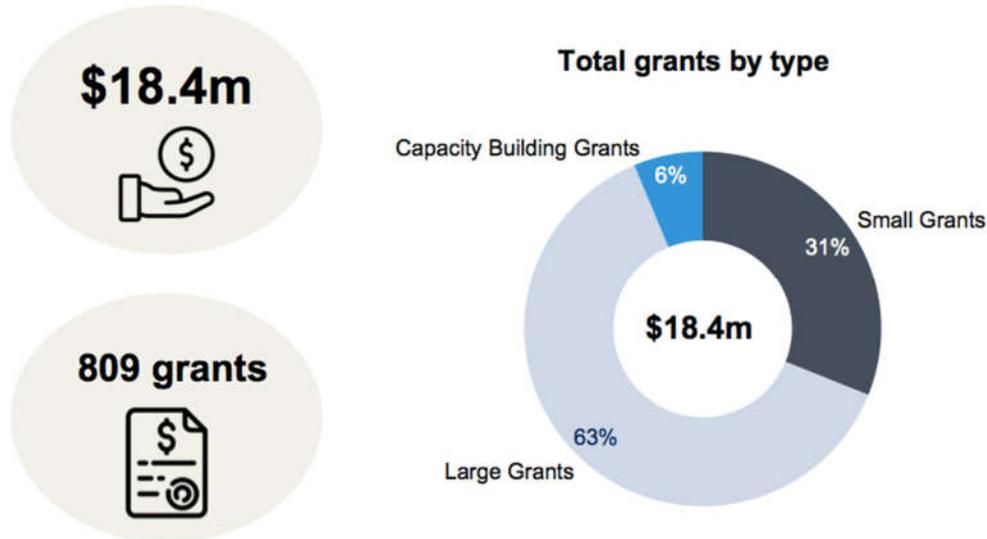
The Sidney Myer Fund (SMF) was established through the will of Sidney Myer who left ten per cent of his estate for the benefit of the community. A board of four Trustees governs SMF. In 2006, the Education Committee was established as a grant-making program of SMF. The overall objective of the Committee was to leverage the best outcomes in educational settings for young people aged 0-25 years.

The Committee has had a range of focus areas over the years, including Indigenous education, early years, improved educational outcomes, and teacher quality and effectiveness. Grants made by the Committee fall into three categories: large grants, small grants and capacity building stream (CBS) grants:

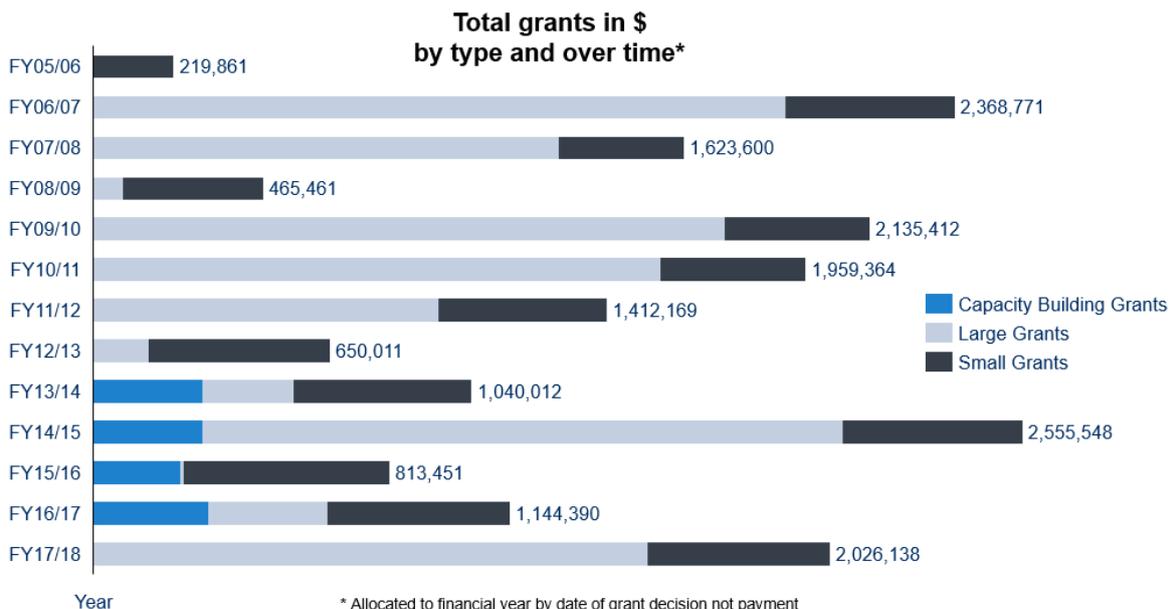
Large grants sought to fund large scale, substantial and multi-year projects that were lasting, sustainable and underpinned by credible research and evidence. Small grants aimed to fund discrete projects aiming to improve educational outcomes. Both the Large and Small Grants programs began from the first year of the Committee. Capacity building stream grants were introduced in 2015 to provide support directly to schools to strengthen capacity via peer observation and mentoring programs.

Education Committee – overall summary

Across the three main grant types (Large, Small, and Capacity Building Stream), the Education Committee has contributed a total of \$18.4m to improve educational outcomes for young people aged 0-25 years. A total of 809 grants were made in 13 years of operation.



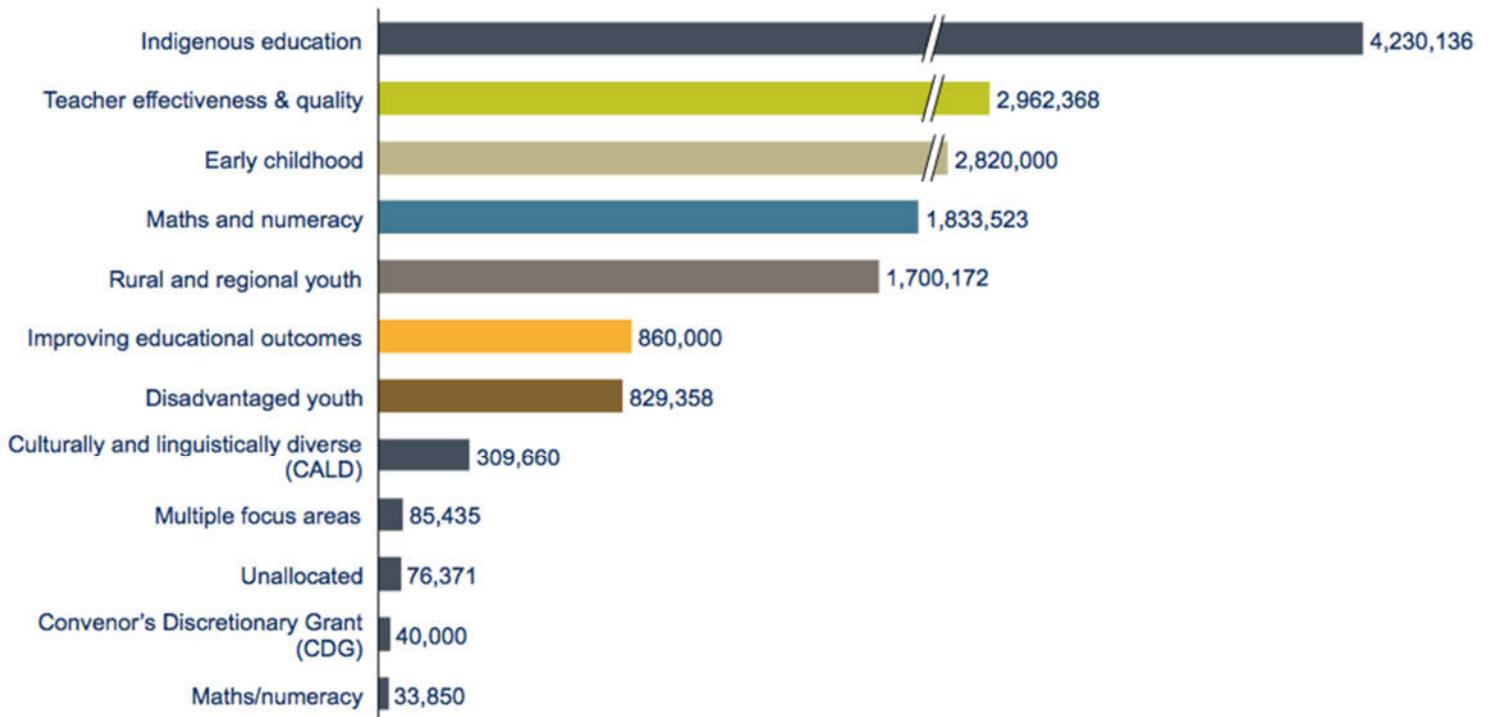
More than 60% of total grants by value were made through the Large Grants program, with Small Grants representing around 30% and Capacity Building Grants 6%.



What did we fund?

In terms of what types of projects were funded by the Committee overall, it is helpful to combine available data on 'focus areas' from Large Grants, Small Grants and Capacity Building Grants. Focus areas were determined through research undertaken by the Committee with the support of an external expert.

**Total grants in \$
by 'focus area' ***



*The data has been cleaned and re-categorised for simplicity where required, as some data had slight variations in coding. For small grants, the total data represents 53% of the total due to the remaining 47% not being coded.

Large Grants

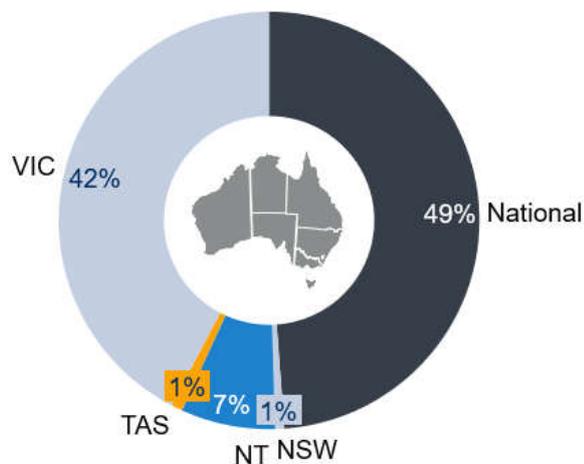
The overall objective of the Large Grants program was to leverage the best outcomes in educational settings for young people aged 0-25 years. From 2006–2012, the focus areas for the program were Indigenous education, early years, and improved educational outcomes. Over the years, the Education Committee made shifts in the focus areas to better respond to and address sector needs. In 2010 the focus area of improved educational outcomes was dropped. In 2013, improving teacher quality and effectiveness was added after the Committee, in collaboration with Learning First, identified this area as a growing need and effective way to improve educational outcomes. Large grants were mostly comprised of multi-year commitments as well as some one-off grants.



Where did we fund?

Nearly half of the \$11.5m in grants distributed was for programs that had a national reach. Victoria had the highest funding at state level, with 42% of grants by value.

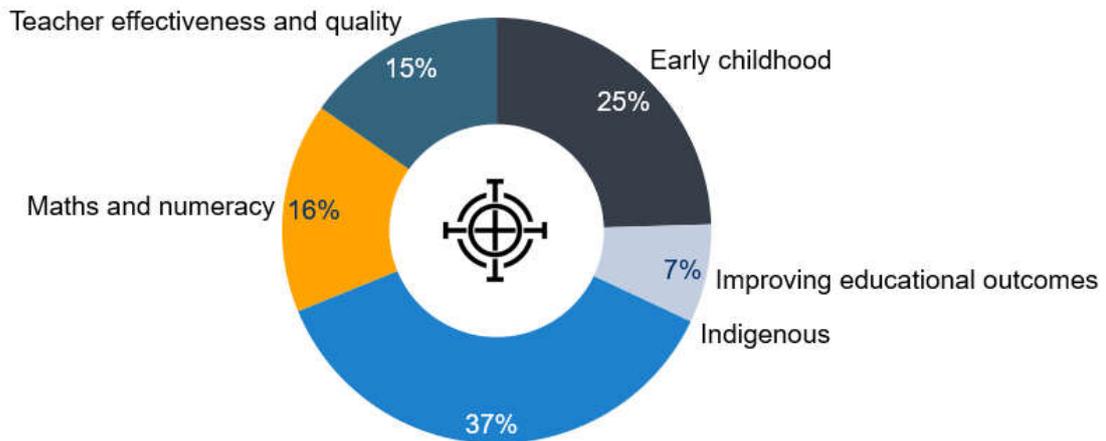
Proportion of Large Grants by state



What did we fund?

Over the lifetime of the Large Grants program, grants were made in five main focus areas (see below). The two largest focus areas were Indigenous education and early childhood. Together these two accounted for 62% of Large Grants funding. The other focus areas where grants were made were early childhood, teacher quality and effectiveness, and maths and numeracy.

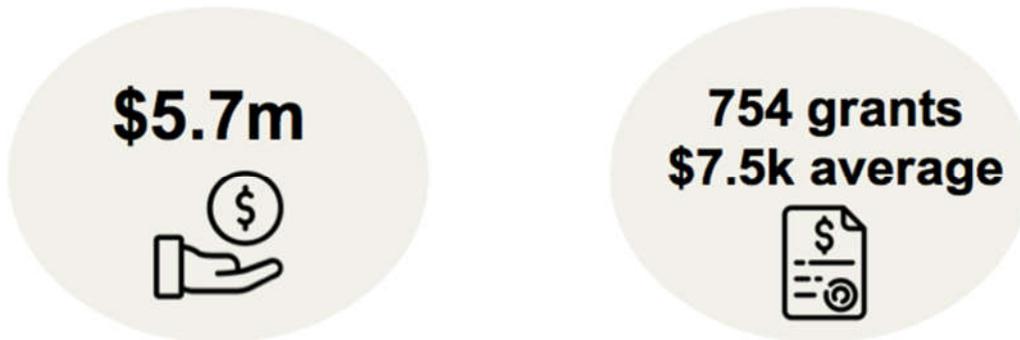
**Proportion of Large Grants by
'Focus Area'**



Small Grants

The Education Committee Small Grants program was created with the following objectives in mind:

1. Stay in touch with community needs
2. Be flexible for the benefit of the community
3. Provide quick response to community needs



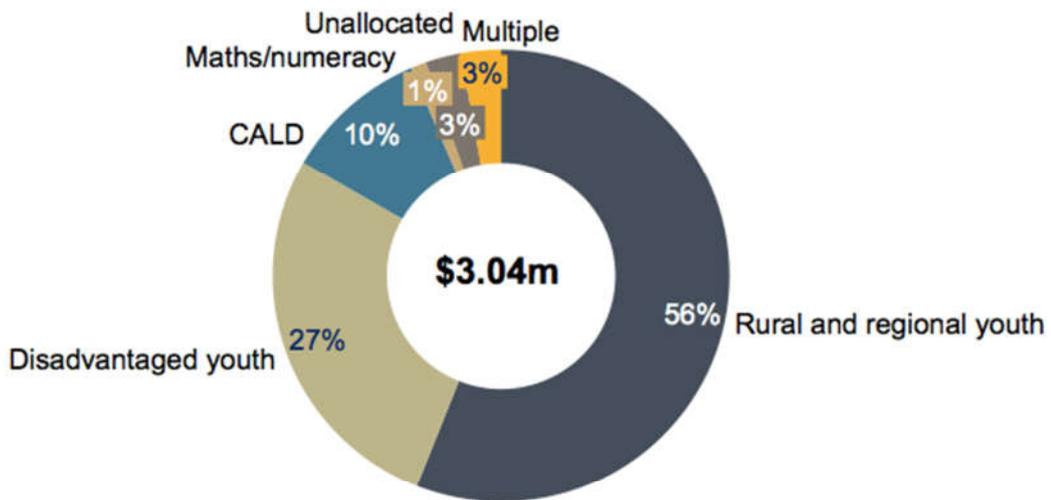
The program provided grants of up to \$10,000 to small community-based organisations or schools to improve students' educational outcomes. From its inception to close, the objectives and focus areas of the Small Grants program remained relatively unchanged. From 2006-2011, the budget for the Small Grants program was \$400-450K; in 2012, it was increased to \$500K to meet the rising demand of applications. Year on year the Committee undertook analysis to ensure the Small Grants program was meeting its objectives and adhering to guidelines.

Three main focus areas of the program were:

1. Small discrete projects that aim to achieve education outcomes for 0-25 year olds.
2. Projects that encourage integration and educational attainment for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students (CALD).
3. Rural and regional communities

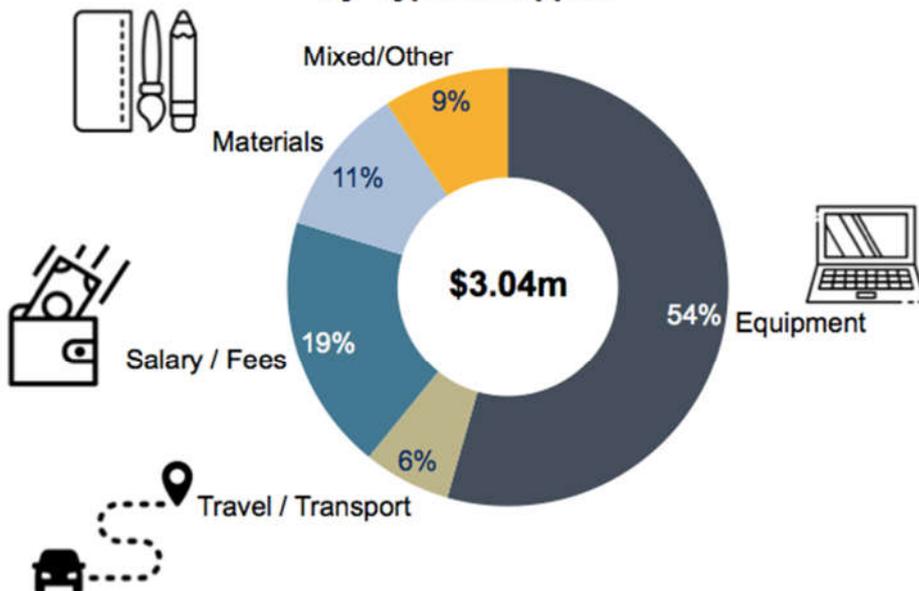
What did we fund?

**Small grants
by 'Focus Area' ***



* Data cleaned and re-categorised for simplicity and where required. Total available data represents only \$3.04m of \$5.73m in small grants (ie 53%).

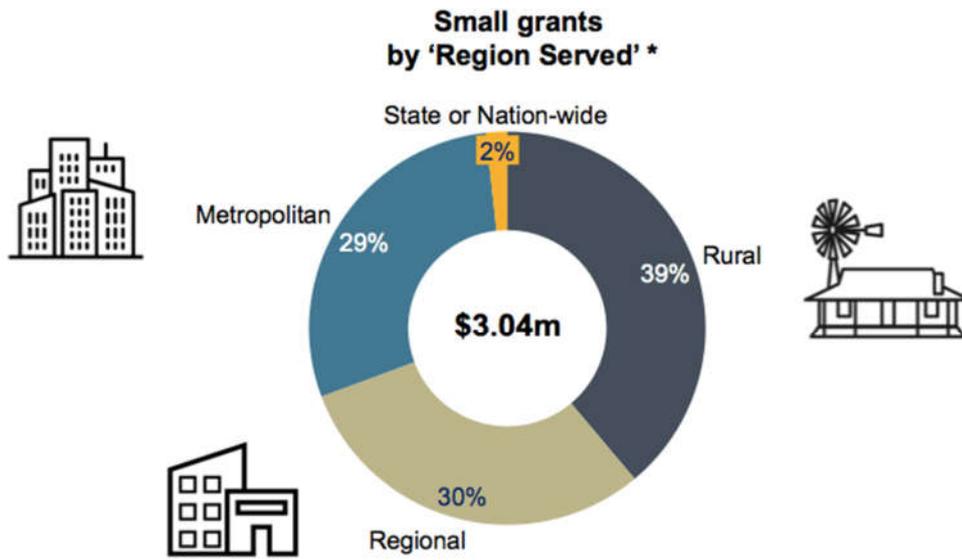
**Small grants
by 'Type of Support' ***



* Data cleaned and re-categorised for simplicity and where required. Total available data represents only \$3.04m of \$5.73m in small grants (ie 53%).

Where did we fund?

Small grants were almost evenly distributed among regions served: 39% grants were made in rural areas, 30% in regional and 29% in metropolitan. Rural and regional communities were a focus area for small grants; together these two regions comprise 69% of the Small Grants program.



* Data cleaned and re-categorised for simplicity and where required. Total available data represents only \$3.04m of \$5.73m in small grants (ie 53%).

Capacity Building Stream (CBS) Grants

CBS Grants were introduced in 2013. The program was designed to align with the Large Grants focus area of teacher quality and effectiveness. It provided support for schools to introduce peer observation and mentoring programs. Peer observation programs were found to be an effective tool to lift professional capacity of in-service teachers through research direct by the Committee and Ben Jensen, an analyst at the Grattan Institute at the time. Such programs are challenging to implement due to existing culture and lack of internal capacity within schools so the CBS Grants programs was designed to fill this gap.



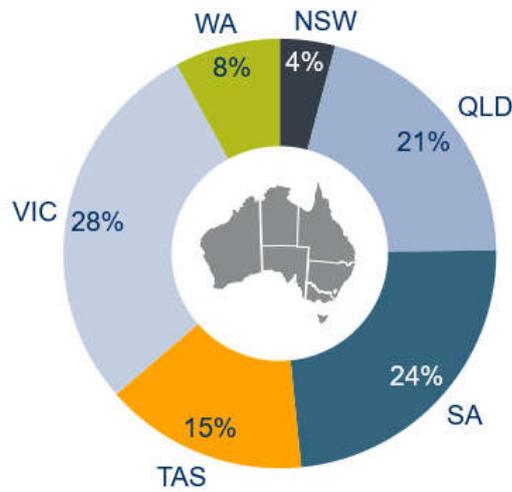
The CBS Grants program was open to government-funded state or low-fee Catholic and independent schools with an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)* score of 1,000 or below.

* For more on ICSEA see MySchool: <https://www.myschool.edu.au/more-information/information-for-parents/making-a-fair-comparison/>

Where did we fund?

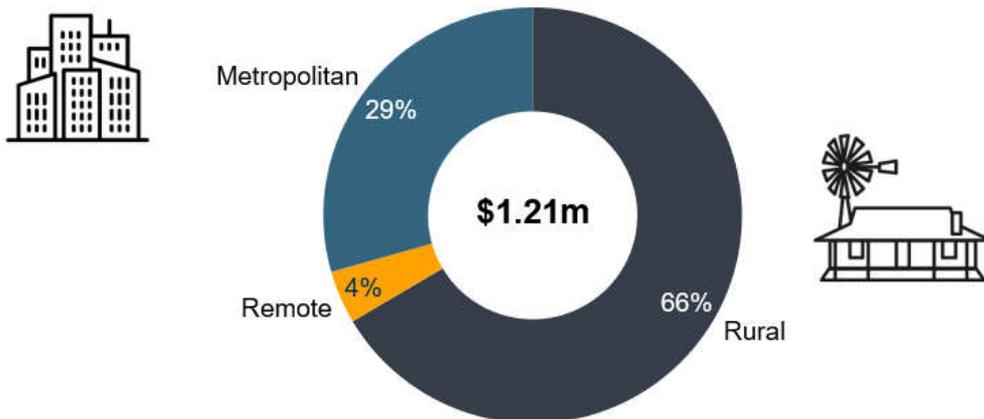
Grants were available to certain states/territories depending on the year and so grants in this program are more widely spread across states, with Victoria (28%), South Australia (24%) and Queensland (21%) receiving the largest share of funding.

Proportion of CBS Grants by state



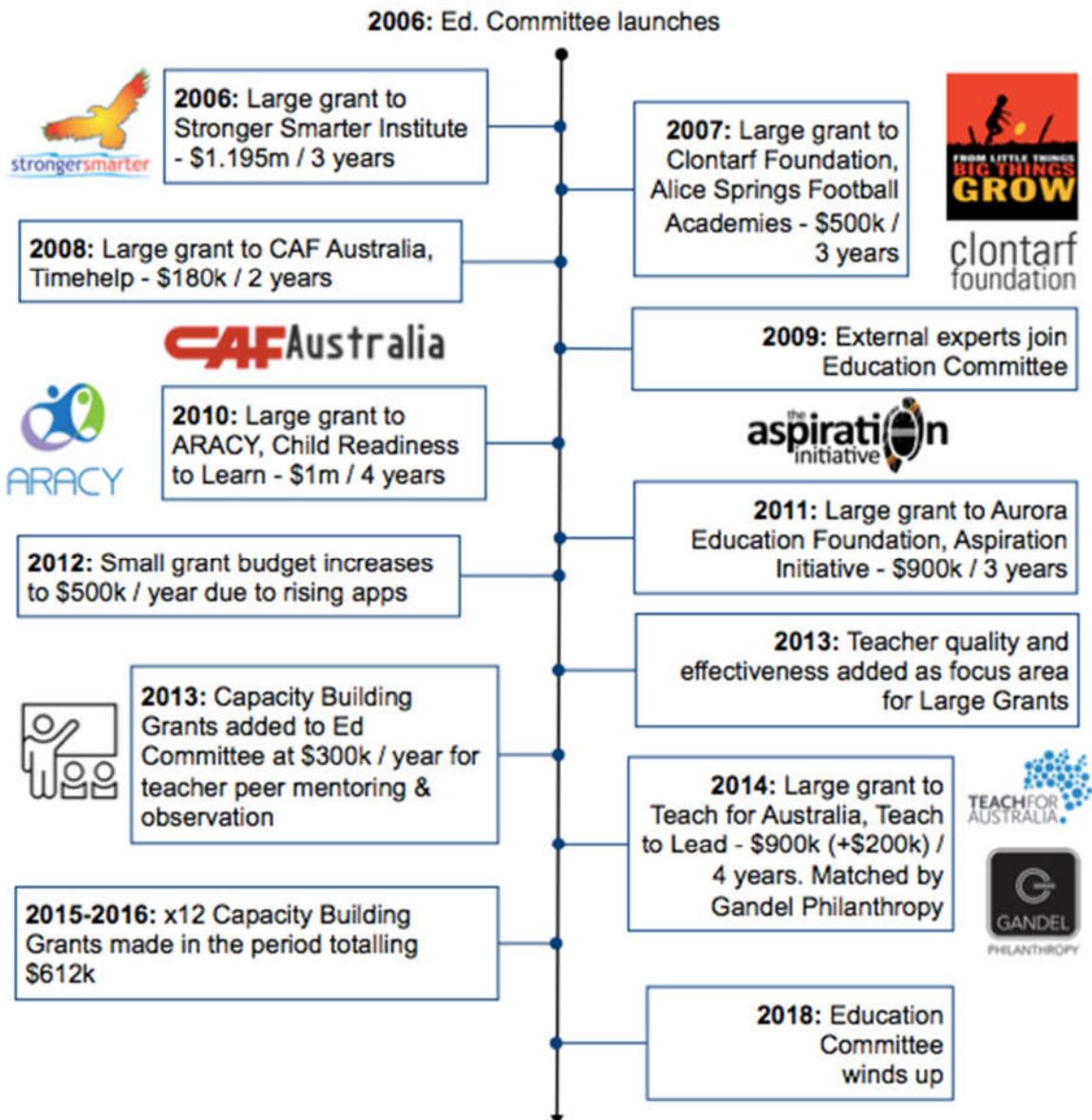
More than half of CBS grants were given to schools in rural communities.

CBS grants by 'Region Served'



Timeline

This timeline highlights some of the key decisions and successful large grants the Committee made over its 13 years. Three of the grantees (Stronger Smarter Institute, Clontarf Foundation and Teach for Australia) are profiled in the following section.



Grantee profile | Teach to Lead



At age 15, students from low socioeconomic (SES) backgrounds are, on average, three years behind their counterparts from high socioeconomic backgrounds. Teach For Australia's (TFA) vision is of an Australia where all children, regardless of background, attain an excellent education.



Teach to Lead was established as a program of TFA in partnership with a four-year funding commitment from the Sidney Myer Fund and Gandel Philanthropy. It is a selective one-year leadership development program open to all early career teachers with formal leadership roles in schools. It develops emerging leaders within schools serving low socioeconomic communities with dual aims: to improve leader efficacy and thereby boost student and school outcomes, and to accelerate their appetite for and promotion into more senior leadership roles.



Impact of SMF Education Committee grant:

“It showed to us that it was possible to create a program that helped to accelerate impact on student outcomes at the middle layer.”

-Melodie Potts Rosevear, CEO of Teach for Australia

Melodie described the partnership with the Sidney Myer Fund as one of “mutual trust and respect and candour.”

Teach to Lead is significant because it empowers middle level leaders to drive change from the middle layer, rather than from the top down.

Aside from the financial gift the grant provided, Melodie said that the development of Teach to Lead also has had a cultural impact on the organisation as a whole. It has challenged them to think more deeply about elements of their mission (notably, how change within schools can be driven), as well as commercial possibilities to support, sustainability.



TFA recently celebrated its 10-year anniversary and Teach to Lead is going into its fifth cohort.

TEACH TO LEAD

SCHOOL LEADERS MATTER.

Effective school leadership is vital to raising student and school outcomes, but many teachers don't receive the tailored training or preparation they need to help them excel in leadership roles.

Teach To Lead is Teach For Australia's professional development program for emerging school leaders. We seek to radically lift the leadership capacity of great teachers to leaders. Our mission is to develop a pipeline of exceptional school leaders serving low socio-economic communities, to break the cycle of disadvantage for students.



DEVELOPING HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AS LEADERS

6
STATES AND TERRITORIES

4
COHORTS

55
PARTNER SCHOOLS

82
GRADUATED FELLOWS

26%
of Fellows are working in **regional, rural or remote communities**

30%
of Fellows are also **Teach For Australia Alumni**

30%
are teaching in **primary education**

61%
are teaching in **secondary education**

9%
are teaching in **alternative education**

"This is probably the best leadership training program in the country. Good professional development is hard to do well. Teach To Lead does that." - Fellow, Cohort 2017

OUR IMPACT TO DATE



26% OF FELLOWS HAVE BEEN PROMOTED SINCE COMMENCING OR COMPLETING TEACH TO LEAD, WITH 13% HAVING BEEN PROMOTED TO A PRINCIPAL CLASS POSITION



100% of Fellows believe that their performance as a leader has **improved as a direct result of participating in Teach To Lead**



86% of Fellows believe that Teach To Lead has **improved their leadership performance** more than any other professional activity



100% of Fellows believe they have **improved leadership knowledge** as a result of the overall program



100% of Fellows believe that the **face-to-face sessions improved their performance** as a leader



89% of Fellows believe that the **Impact Initiative has improved their performance** as a leader

"Rigorous and challenging program that pushes you to always do better. Very few professional learning programs have the same level of intensity or one-on-one development." - Fellow, Cohort 2016

"It gave us an almost foolproof opportunity to reflect on data, identify potential improvement and actually test our ideas." - Fellow, Cohort 2018



Teach To Lead is an initiative of Teach For Australia, supported by the Sidney Myer Fund and Gandel Philanthropy.



Education and Training

Teach To Lead is delivered in Victoria in partnership with the Victorian Department of Education and Training's Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership.



Our vision is of an Australia where *all* children, regardless of background, attain an excellent education.

Grantee profile | Clontarf Foundation: Alice Springs Football Academies

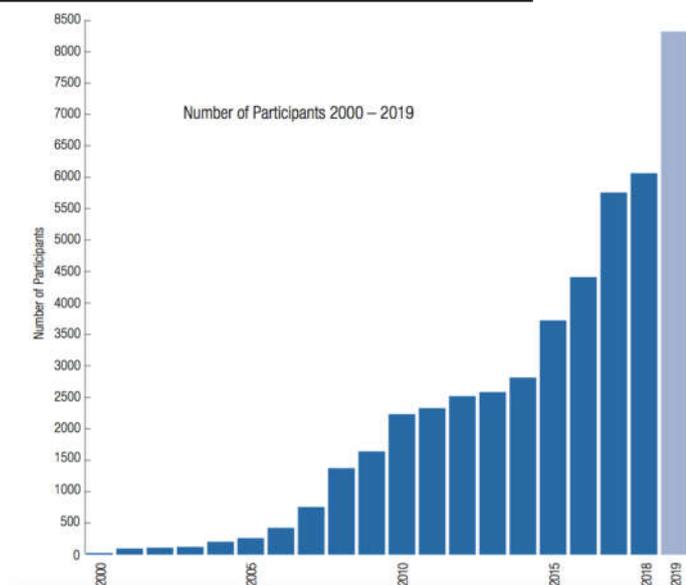


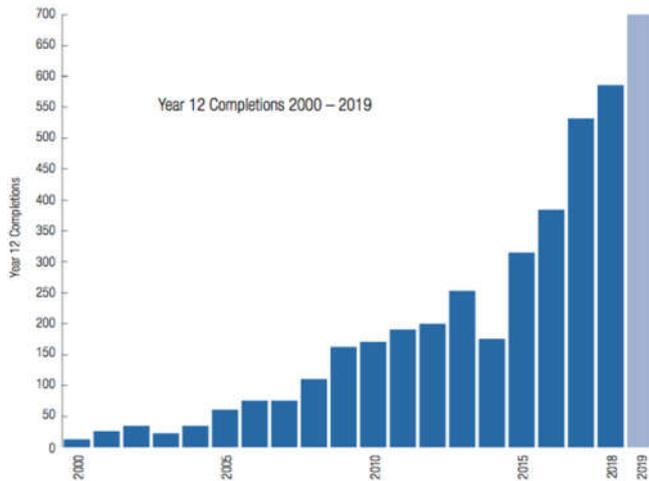
The Clontarf Foundation exists to improve the education, discipline, life skills, self-esteem and employment prospects of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and by doing so equips them to participate meaningfully in society.



The organisation started in 2000 with a single academy located at the Clontarf Aboriginal College in Waterford, WA. The program catered for 25 students and was operated by two staff members. 19 years on, the Foundation operates 115 academies in WA, NT, QLD, NSW, VIC and SA, supports more than 8,100 participants and employs over 400 dedicated staff members.

In 2007, Clontarf expanded into the Northern Territory with the establishment of two new academies





in Alice Springs supported by the SMF Education Committee grant – this marked the first expansion beyond WA.

Andrea Goddard (General Manager of Development, 2005-13) says that the impact and timing of the grant was significant because the Clontarf Foundation was in a formative period. The grant helped support replication of the model in Alice Springs and ultimately proved expansion viability.

After 2007, the Clontarf Foundation set out on an exponential growth trajectory. A number of SMF Education Committee Members travelled to Alice Springs to visit the Football Academies and acted as positive advocates for the program and organisation.

A persistent question that came up for the Clontarf Foundation was what were they going to do for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander females? Goddard went on to provide an answer to this question by founding The Stars Foundation, which has also received support from the Merlyn Myer Fund.

The mission of Stars Foundation is to support and enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls and young women to make active choices towards realising their full potential in all aspects of their development and wellbeing.

The Stars Foundation has been offering full-time, in-school mentoring and engagement programs for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women at risk of disengagement from school since 2015. They currently deliver programs in secondary schools in the Northern Territory, Queensland and Victoria.

Goddard credits her learnings from management of the SMF Education Committee grant to expand the Clontarf Foundation academies to Alice Springs as a contributor to her confidence in starting The Stars Foundation.

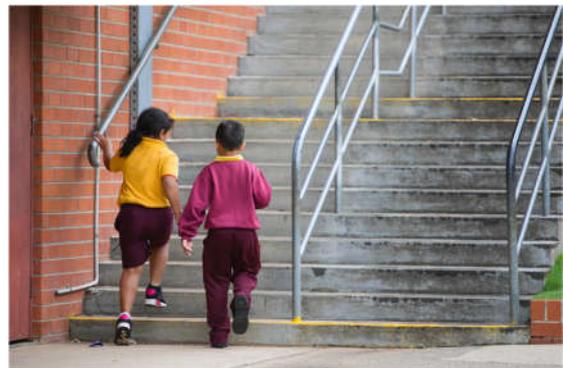


Grantee profile | Stronger Smarter Institute



The Stronger Smarter Institute (SSI) aims to directly improve the educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. It endeavours to see Stronger Smarter communities across Australia, where people are strong in culture, strong in identity and are able to enjoy prosperous, safe and healthy lives.

In the late 1990s, Dr Chris Sarra became the first Aboriginal principal of Cherbourg State School where he made significant changes to the way that Aboriginal students experienced education. Dr Sarra challenged the whole school community to have High Expectations Relationships (HER) with his students and fostered the 'strong and smart' approach, which embraced a strong and positive sense of what it means to be Aboriginal in contemporary Australian society.



This success led to the formation of the Stronger Smarter Institute (formerly known as the Indigenous Education Leadership Institute), which was established in 2005 as an innovative partnership between Education Queensland and the Queensland University of Technology. The Stronger Smarter Institute seeks to achieve scale in delivering the Stronger Smarter Approach to as many Indigenous students as possible by partnering with, and working through, school and community leaders.



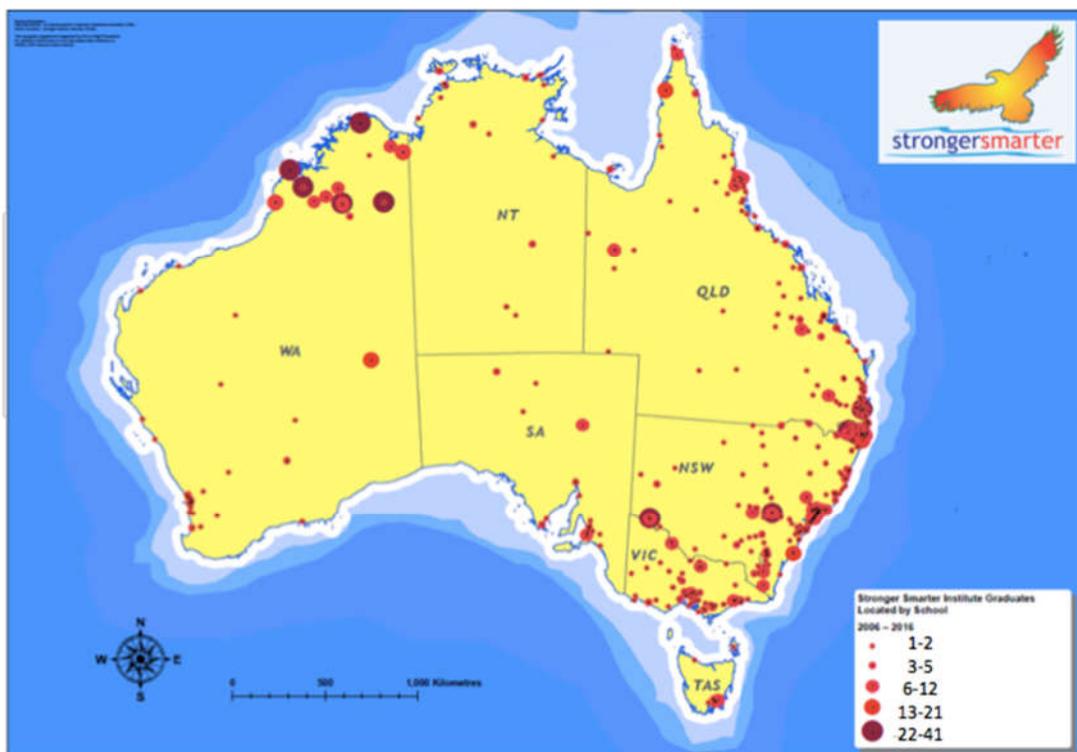
The Stronger Smarter Leadership Program was developed in 2006, with two programs per year for around 40 participants. By 2012, national and regional programs were providing professional development to approximately 250 participants per year.

Dr Chris Sarra says the timing of the Education Committee grant was critical.

Stronger Smarter Institute was in its infancy stage and the funding from the Committee, jointly supported by the Telstra Foundation, was a strong show of belief in the Stronger Smarter approach. He had just established the Institute at the time of the grant with a promise to change the tide of low expectations of Aboriginal children across Australia. And Dr Sarra made good on that promise. The grant enabled Stronger Smarter Institute to build a track record and move from infancy to maturity.

“The investment by the Education Committee in the Stronger Smarter Approach went to the core of where we needed to make a difference. It enabled us to influence the most profound space in education, the sacred nexus where a teacher stares a child in the eyes.”
– Dr Chris Sarra, Founder of the Stronger Smarter Institute

Dr Sarra believes the Education Committee understood this and the Stronger Smarter Institute was able to deliver great value because of the investment and shared values.



*Stronger Smarter Leadership Program (SSLP) alumni in schools across Australia**

To date the Stronger Smarter Institute has worked with more than 834 schools across the nation and 3,100 graduates of its leadership program who directly influence the classrooms and outcomes of over 54,000 Indigenous students.

* Stronger Smarter Institute. (2017). *Implementing the Stronger Smarter Approach*. Stronger Smarter Institute.



Key Takeaways

1. **Breadth and depth of perspectives.** In 2009, external experts joined the Committee. Depth of knowledge on the subject matter added an invaluable perspective. Having people around the table with expertise, diversity of backgrounds and lived experience is critical to make meaningful and impactful grants.
2. **Leaders not just ideas.** Getting to know the people who run the organisations we fund is critical. As much as we are investing in an idea and mission, we are saying to leaders of an organisation that we believe in you. The Committee's more successful and impactful grants (where organisations went on to grow and deepen impact with and after the grant) coincided with positive and meaningful relationships where there were clear alignment of values in the work the Committee and grantees were doing.
3. **Consistency of data.** The process of aggregating and then synthesizing grants data (including value, where the money went, type of project/ outcomes achieved) was somewhat time-consuming and challenging, suggesting that a review and potential upgrade of these systems could be beneficial.
4. **Timing of grants.** Large Grants made in the early phase of concept and/or growth were critical in helping grantees expand and scale their organisations. This has implications for how much of TMF/SMF's funding should be allocated to established/existing organisations. There is of course a risk/return trade-off here, but this analysis found large early-phase grants to be highly successful (see Grantee Profiles).
5. **More than money.** All grantees that were interviewed emphasised that of course the financial aspect was necessary and beneficial to their success but the belief, validation and brand that came with the grant was also invaluable. Having the support and added voice of Committee Members as advocates and being able to leverage the "Myer brand" were unexpected but very valued benefits.