

social ventures australia  
investing in social change



## SROI - Investing in Impact News

An initiative to increase awareness of Social Return on Investment (SROI) in Australia

*A partnership between:*



Welcome to the fourth quarterly newsletter from the [SVA](#), [Centre for Social Impact](#) and [PricewaterhouseCoopers Foundation](#) partnership, dedicated to promoting the understanding of Social Return on Investment (SROI) in Australia.

SROI is an internationally recognised tool for understanding and measuring the impact of a project, program, organisation, business or policy. Through engaging a range of stakeholders, the methodology assists in identifying the social, environmental and economic benefits generated and place a value on this impact. This value can then be compared to the investment required to generate the benefits.

This newsletter will keep you informed of what's going on in SROI in Australia, let you know about any events of interest and help keep you up to date with new developments overseas.

If you have any stories or events that you would like to see included in the next issue of the newsletter, send your suggestions to [Claire Kearney](#).

### In the news

#### **Head of SROI Network, Jeremy Nicholls, on Sky News**

Jeremy Nicholls was interviewed by Social Business on Sky News Australia during his last visit to Australia. Social Business discusses the latest news in not-for-profit activity, corporate responsibility, philanthropy and volunteering. In conjunction with the [Centre for Social Impact](#), this monthly program focuses on key issues around social entrepreneurship, public and social innovation and the emergence of new social businesses.

You can view Jeremy's interview on the Business Channel website [here](#).

### **Measuring impact: the SROI pathway**

The summer issue of Philanthropy Australia's *Australian Philanthropy* journal which focused on impact, outcomes and outputs featured an article with SVA's Kevin Robbie and the Centre for Social Impact's Les Hems on 'Measuring impact: the SROI pathway'.

This edition will be available for download by Philanthropy Australia members following the publication of the next edition of the journal.

<http://www.philanthropy.org.au/publications/journal/>

### **SVA adds to the ranks of Australian accredited SROI practitioners**

SVA now has seven accredited SROI practitioners, the highest number of accredited SROI practitioners within one organisation in Australia. SVA's accredited SROI practitioners are Gundula Cöllen, Olivia Hilton, Simon Faivel, Claire Kearney, Kevin Robbie Lisa Rudner and Jo Scott.

### **Measuring social value**

The Young Foundation's Geoff Mulgan writes about the challenges of measuring social value in the Stanford Social Innovation Review. The article attracted some thoughtful comments – why not read the article and add your feedback too?

[http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/measuring\\_social\\_value/](http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/measuring_social_value/)

### **Spreading the word: measurement and evaluation workshop tour**

Through their experience of reviewing thousands of funding applications, the Perpetual Foundation observed that many non-profit organisations found it difficult to respond to questions around the measurement and evaluation of their programs.

To help address this challenge, the Perpetual Foundation worked with SVA Consulting to design a measurement and evaluation education package which they delivered, free of charge, to invited non-profit organisations across the country.

The package included a two-day workshop, follow-up half day workshops offered to each participant and a supporting DVD.

One hundred and forty participants from over 50 non-profit organisations from the environment, arts, health, youth and ageing (amongst other) sectors attended the workshops, which were held across five states in October and November 2010.

The intense two-day program was delivered by the SVA Consulting team, supported by the Perpetual Foundation and addressed many of the measurement and evaluation issues that the sector had identified as challenging. Examples of topics covered included how to define what organisations do and the consequences of their actions, prioritising what to measure given limited time and resources and how to measure 'intangibles'. The workshops also introduced participants to Social Return on Investment (SROI).

The individual half-day workshops to participants were delivered in January and February 2011 by a team of SVA consultants, with the aim of further embedding the measurement and evaluation learnings. The supporting DVD will be distributed to participating organisations later this year.

Feedback from the project has been positive, with one participant commenting that the workshop provided “an objective methodology to determine existing and future programs and a framework to use in future grant applications”.

## SROI training

Jeremy Nicholls, Chief Executive of the SROI Network and one of the world’s leading experts in SROI, returns to Australia this autumn and CSI will be hosting a number of workshops in May, to be delivered by Jeremy.

Taking place in both Sydney and Melbourne, the workshops offer a one-day introduction to SROI, suitable for leaders and managers from the third sector, non profit and social investment sectors who want to understand the scope of SROI and impact mapping, how to apply the principles within their own organisation and how to communicate the findings with funders and government agencies.

The two-day SROI Certificate training course is an in-depth workshop designed for people who want to know more about SROI, or who are working towards their SROI accreditation.

Date	Course	City
3 May	Introduction to SROI – Social Return on Investment. Why measure impact?	Sydney
4-5 May	Social Return on Investment Certificate training (two day)	Sydney
9 May	Introduction to SROI – Social Return on Investment. Why measure impact?	Melbourne
10-11 May	Social Return on Investment Certificate training (two day)	Melbourne

For enquiries, please contact Esther Lefas at [csi@unsw.edu.au](mailto:csi@unsw.edu.au). Registration for the courses will also be available online from Monday 4 April at [www.csi.edu.au](http://www.csi.edu.au).

## Q&A

Gundula Cöllen is an SROI Analyst with SVA and an accredited SROI practitioner. We ask Gundula a few questions about her practice.

### **1. As an accredited SROI practitioner, what skills do you bring to the SROI analyses that you undertake?**

The SROI training has provided me with the confidence to apply the SROI principles, especially in regards to using the filters (attribution, deadweight, displacement and drop-off).

During the SROI training you are asked to work through a real example of an SROI using a program of your choice, where any potential challenges with the project can be directly addressed. This practical training has stood me in good stead for the SROI analyses that I have undertaken.

### **2. What interests you about SROI work?**

I enjoy working with organisations on SROI analyses to help them unpack their programs and to clearly understand the benefits that their programs offer to the community.

SROI is different to other measurement and evaluation tools, which can be completed by simply doing desk research, as it is based on extensive stakeholder engagement through interviews and surveys and this process alone can add a lot of value to an organisation.

### **3. How does one become an accredited SROI practitioner?**

In order to become accredited, you will need to be a member of the SROI Network; prove that you have completed an approved Accredited Practitioner training before the date of your application; provide a CV and a statement of involvement and interest in SROI and submit an SROI report for assurance to the SROI network. [See bullet points below for further details.]

The SROI report you submit will be independently checked by qualified assessors and assured by a panel to have been prepared in line with the principles of SROI and is therefore to a consistent standard.

### **4. What advice would you give to newly accredited practitioners?**

Try to get a clear idea of what your hypothesis of the theory of change is, before jumping into interviewing your stakeholders. Thinking about the 'program logic' is pivotal in helping you design the right questions for your interviews. Extensive stakeholder engagement can be very valuable to an organisation, as long as the interview schedules are well thought through.

At SVA we now have a team of SROI analysts and are able to discuss any issues internally. It's important to have a good sounding board, especially when it is your first SROI.

#### **Want to become an accredited SROI practitioner? Here's how:**

- Join the [SROI Network](#)
- Prove that you have completed an approved Accredited Practitioner training before the date of your application (for dates and costs, contact the [Centre for Social Impact](#))
- Provide a CV (1 A4 page) and a statement of involvement and interest in SROI (1 A4 page)
- Submit an SROI report for assurance to the [SROI Network](#)

### **SROI in action in Australia - CEFA - a case study**

The [Country Education Foundation of Australia](#) (CEFA) is a national not-for-profit organisation that provides rural and remote communities with the know-how and support required to establish their own Local Education Foundations. These local foundations in turn provide grants to local youth who are leaving high school and need a helping hand in order to make the transition into further education, training or their chosen vocation a successful one.

SVA Consulting undertook an SROI analysis to better understand and value the impact that CEFA has on its various stakeholders and have a compelling and powerful story to share with donors, partners and volunteers.

The outcomes for each major stakeholder group included:

**Grants Recipients and their families experienced:**

1. Reduced financial pressure
2. Increased focus on studies often leading to higher academic results
3. Higher education level often leading to better income

**Local Education Foundations and communities experienced:**

4. More empowered and active local education committee members leading to increased social and economic activities for committee members
5. Tighter and stronger-knit communities across socio-economic backgrounds and generations leading to increased social and economic activity within the community

**Education Partners experienced:**

6. Increased government funding to education partners for achieving student diversity and equity targets
7. Increased revenues for education partners due to students being less likely to drop out of their course when they are supported by CEFA

The SROI for CEFA is 3.1:1, that is for every \$1 invested in the organisation, \$3.10 of social value is created.

The SROI result helped set the agenda for CEFA's recent national conference by identifying a number of levers to further improve their social impact.

*"In all of our conversations with donors and CEFA communities/potential communities we are discussing various aspects of the SROI findings. It really boosts the validity of what we are doing and the credibility of the organisation."*

Jocellin Jansson, CEO, Country Education Foundation of Australia (CEFA)

For more information, please contact CEFA on 1300 652 144 or at [www.cef.org.au](http://www.cef.org.au)

SROI Newsletter Issue 4, March 2011

To sign up for future newsletters, please email your full name and contact information to [subscribeSROInews@socialventures.com.au](mailto:subscribeSROInews@socialventures.com.au).

If you have a story or event for the newsletter, please contact Claire Kearney [here](#).

If you no longer wish to receive the SROI newsletter from Social Ventures Australia, please click [here](#).

If you no longer wish to receive any emails from Social Ventures Australia, please click [here](#).

Your privacy is important to us. Please review our Privacy Policy [here](#).