

# 2010 Progress Report

## PURPOSE

To support the development of social enterprise in the ACT by providing advice, access to mentoring, pro bono business services and relevant networks.

### The Hub Model

Social Enterprise Hubs are an innovative approach to developing partnerships between government, philanthropists and the community sector to support the development of social enterprises in Australia.

They provide place-based business and support services to accelerate the growth of social enterprises through networking opportunities and access to resources that would not otherwise be available or affordable.

The key objectives of a Social Enterprise Hub are to:

- Increase the sustainability of new or existing social enterprises
- Increase employment opportunities for people excluded from the labour market
- Increase the capacity of social entrepreneurs to run their social enterprises
- Improve social inclusion.

The Hub works to meet these objectives by offering a number of services to social enterprises including:

- Meeting Place – opportunities to network with existing entrepreneurs through regular meetings and events
- Business development – support to organisations to enable them to start up or increase their sustainability
- Procurement support – advice and guidance on tendering for government or commercial contracts
- Impact evaluation – annual tracking of the growth, performance and impact of the social enterprises
- Pro bono support – access to mentoring and pro bono support from a range of corporate partners.

Combined, these services are aimed at transforming enterprises from ‘piece meal’ organisations to robust, sustainable trading entities delivering social benefits and employment.

### History of the Hub

The ACT Social Enterprise Hub was initiated in 2008 and officially launched June 2009. The Hub’s core purpose is to increase employment opportunities for residents of the ACT who are excluded from the labour market.

The Hub is a partnership between Social Ventures Australia (SVA), PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), SNOW Foundation, Mental Health Community Coalition (MHCC), ACT Health and the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services ACT (DDHCS ACT).

Pro bono support is crucial to the Hub’s success and is a vital offering to the social enterprises supported. The following organisations provide this much needed service: Walter Turnbull, Minter Ellison, Papercut, Mel Hill Photography and Cut Through Marketing.

### Impact

Since the Hub’s launch in June 2009, the profile and understanding of social enterprise as a business model has escalated within the ACT community. The social enterprises supported by the Hub have created 24 sustainable jobs for people excluded from the labour market as well as provided training and/or a source of income for another 45 people.

The ACT Social Enterprise Hub has provided extensive support to a number of organisations and individuals exploring the possibility of setting up a social enterprise – six social enterprises and one transitional employment initiative have been set up.

In addition to facilitating significant pro bono business services and networking opportunities, the Hub assisted two enterprises with successful grant applications, helped two with their launches and generated significant media coverage in relation to the enterprises.

The Hub ran three workshops over the past 12 months on developing a social enterprise and Indigenous Cultural Tourism. Social tendering is now on the ACT Government’s agenda as a result of a presentation to the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Assembly, and an expert panel discussion event, ‘Public \$ For Public Benefit in the ACT’. Social tendering workshops have since been scheduled for ACT Procurement Solutions as well as other government departments. In June 2010, DHCS announced a one off grant of \$80,000 towards the Hub’s operations.



# ACT Social Enterprise Hub

## Supported Social Enterprises

The following social enterprises were supported through the Hub over the past 12 months:

**Noah's Ark Child-care Centre** provides a valuable and trusted child-care service for parents, while also offering sustainable long-term employment and training for women from marginalised backgrounds (such as migrants and refugees), parents of children with special needs, and stay-at-home mums returning to the workforce with a wealth of experience but no formal qualifications.

**Café Ink's** main purpose is to provide people who are perceived as disadvantaged with a supportive environment, and to increase their social and economic participation through paid employment, development of work skills and the opportunity to access certified training.

**Ronnie's Succulent Snails** is a snail farm for the restaurant market, set up to provide a job opportunity for Ronnie, a 21 year old Canberra man who has a moderate intellectual disability and chronic epilepsy, which means mainstream employment is not an option for him. Breeding and growing snails provides him with a steady income while supporting his physical, mental and social development.

**Burrunju Aboriginal Corporation** is an Indigenous art gallery that provides meaningful and sustainable employment for members of the local Indigenous community; offers artists an opportunity to promote and sell their work; runs workshops for artists and school groups; and has a mission to ensure younger members of the community are familiar with their culture and heritage so it can be passed on to future generations.

**Paperworks** operates as a hand-crafted paper production business that offers a source of income and an interactive community for disabled or disadvantaged people who learn traditional crafts such as book binding, paper making and marbling with the aim to one day provide semi-self sustained employment.

**A Grade Mini Parts** purchases specialist car parts from an interstate wholesaler, to sell to local Mini enthusiasts in the Canberra region as well as online to the rest of Australia. The enterprise was set up to employ a young man with autism and another with a brain injury and epilepsy.

**Medius Ventures and Spence IGA** is a new company established to develop partnerships and joint venture arrangements that support the organisation's social goals. The first venture undertaken is a partnership with the Spence IGA Supermarket, which has

committed to filling 50 per cent of staff positions by training and employing people with mental health issues.

## Looking Ahead

The ACT Social Enterprise Hub will continue to offer tailored support to the existing social enterprises over the next 12 months and grow them into robust sustainable businesses which can create employment opportunities for people excluded from the labour market. The number of social enterprises supported will increase with several start-ups already in the pipeline. The Hub will continue to identify opportunities in the marketplace and work with social enterprises that target the gaps. The Hub will also continue to support and promote the start of social enterprises with the support of the ACT Government and social tendering contracts.

## Investment

Year of initial SVA investment	2008
Total cash distributions for past 12 months	\$16,000

## In-kind support

Mentors secured	6
Value of in-kind support	\$28,200

Jobs created or secured over the total period of the Hub for marginalised people over the past 12 months	<b>24</b>
– Noah's Ark	6
– Café Ink	10
– Medius & IGA	5
– Ronnie's Succulent Snails	1
– A Grade Mini Parts	2
People receiving training and/or a source of income through the enterprise	<b>45</b>
– Burrunju is selling the art of 15 artists: 150 pieces worth \$30,000 have sold since October 2009.	15
– Paperworks have taught papermaking skills to over 30 people: \$3,000 of product has been sold at markets; and two people have obtained some resulting employment.	30