



LEADERSHIP VICTORIA

CASE STUDY

Assessing the value of a community leadership program

“Leadership Victoria develops leaders for thriving organisations and positive social impact. Being able to measure that impact and to tune our approaches to maximising that impact is critical to shaping our activities and to building a bright future for Victoria and Australia.”

Richard Dent, Chief Executive, Leadership Victoria

Keen to assess the outcomes of its first program, the Williamson Community Leadership Program (WCLP), Leadership Victoria engaged SVA Consulting to conduct a Social Return on Investment (SROI) study. LV also wanted to better understand how to promote the value of these outcomes that would differentiate it from competitors.

Understanding its flagship program

LV was keen to assess and understand what outcomes it was creating through its first program, the Williamson Community Leadership Program (WCLP); how it could promote and communicate the value of these

outcomes; and importantly, what it needed to change to improve them. To help assess this, LV engaged SVA Consulting in early 2011.

Are we creating a positive impact and if so, how?

LV’s leadership team had two concerns. While it had anecdotal evidence that WCLP transformed leaders’ lives and that there was a positive impact on the community, there was no aggregated evidence to validate these claims.

Second, in a rapidly growing and competitive environment it was becoming harder for LV to differentiate its programs from others. After

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SERVICES

- ✓ Measurement & evaluation

IMPACT AREAS

- ✓ Community services

ABOUT SROI

SROI is used to understand, measure and evaluate the impact of a program, organisation or policy. It is a form of cost-benefit analysis that seeks to understand and measure the value of the social, economic and environmental outcomes created, and the costs of creating them.

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Image: Sonja Gibson, Director Tourism Investment Attraction, Tourism Victoria who completed WCLP in 2012.

discussions with SVA Consulting, these concerns boiled down to three related questions:

- Does WCLP create value for its stakeholders: the leaders who participate, the organisations that support the program, and the broader community?
- If value is created, what are the most valuable aspects of the program?
- What is the relationship between WCLP and the broader community benefits it seeks to achieve?

Building an evidence base

To help answer these questions, SVA Consulting used the Social Return on Investment (SROI) methodology. To build an evidence base, SVA Consulting developed a detailed understanding of the changes for five different stakeholder groups as a result of their involvement in the WCLP.

To gather evidence, in-depth surveys were designed for each group of potential beneficiaries. The surveys were supplemented with individual interviews with randomly selected representatives from each of the groups. This extensive consultation allowed the most important changes to be identified and measured. It also allowed an understanding of how to value, in dollar terms, the most important changes.

Significant value but not where expected

The SROI analysis allowed LV to clearly articulate the changes that WCLP creates for stakeholders. It also highlighted that value is primarily created for the WCLP participants. The WCLP experience is life-changing, and WCLP 'alumni' develop an incredible network of like-minded leaders that they can call upon for any personal,

professional or community challenge; the influence of their WCLP experience lasts for many years.

Other stakeholder groups that also benefited included non-profit organisations, and in turn society. With this link clear, SVA Consulting suggested a set of practical metrics that could help LV measure and evaluate its performance on an ongoing basis. These metrics aligned with what the organisation had the most ability to influence.

Overall, the SROI analysis demonstrated that WCLP creates significant value. For every \$1 invested in the program, approximately \$10.50 is returned in value.

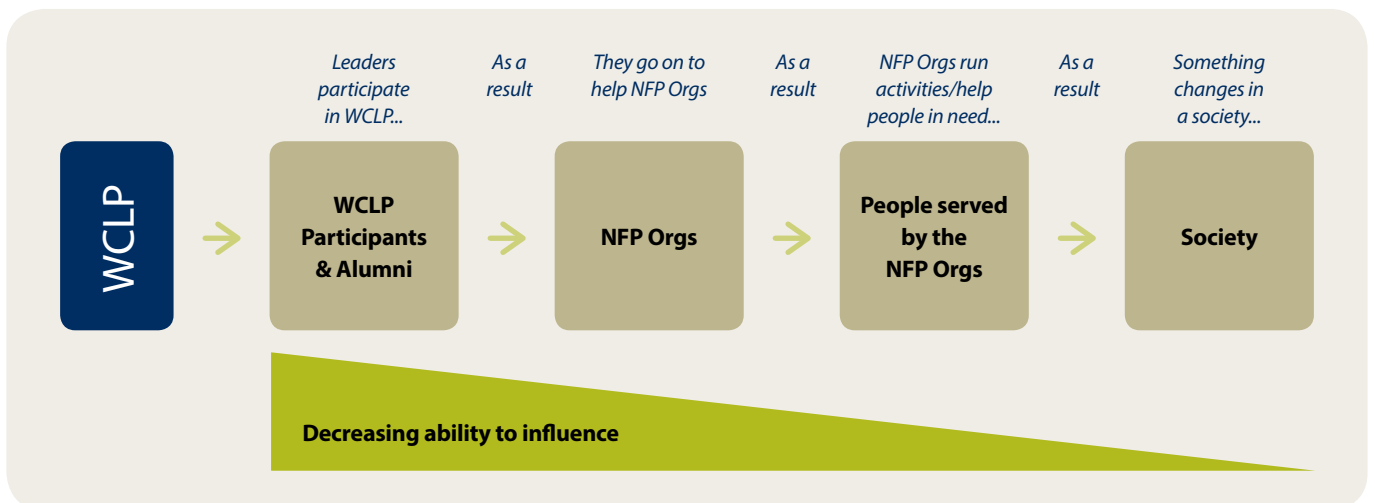
Embracing new ways of thinking

The SROI analysis gave LV confidence that the program creates value over and above the investment made in it. LV also learnt where most value was created, what it needs to measure and where it needs to focus its energy to improve the program's impact. These insights have changed the way the management team think about the program's impact. It understands that it needs to focus on outcomes (such as the impact on leaders) rather than inputs or outputs to evaluate the program's success.

ABOUT LEADERSHIP VICTORIA

Established in 1989 by the Hugh Williamson Foundation, Leadership Victoria (LV) is a Victorian-based organisation that provides leadership development programs to Australian executives across a variety of industries covering the commercial, government and non-profit sectors.

Williamson Community Leadership Program (WCLP) influence on stakeholders



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