

## 2012 update and strategies for 2013

From our earliest discussions, it became evident that we had a three-pronged task to guide our strategy:

1. Create links between boards to foster dialogue, develop our analysis and inform action;
2. Make our presence and messages clear to government, policymakers and other funders;
3. Develop together some strategies that will ensure the survival and relevance of our community organisations into the future.

This update reports on where we got to in 2012 and invites your help through 2013.

### 1. Engaging Boards:

- We have relied on networks, email and [Facebook](#) to let Boards know we exist, and to encourage board members to make contact. We have had contact from about 300 people across almost that many organisations through 2012. We'd like board members to put the Coalition of Community Boards on their meeting agendas and keep their board updated. We do not know how many are doing this – **please let us know if you are.**
- This year we plan some [discussion forums](#) to give board members more opportunity to contribute to discussion and to help us all develop our analysis. In 2012 we had one public event in the city to mourn the loss of SQW. We also had 2 forums – one at Southbank and one at Deception Bay.
- We held a regular [teleconference](#) through 2012, through which we framed some [terms of reference and a charter](#).
- We supported a campaign to try and secure the continuation of Get Set for Work funding and we have publicly supported other campaigns about funding losses. You can listen and [view some of the media coverage here](#)

### 2. Engaging Policy Makers and Funders:

The purpose of this part of our strategy is to ensure those who make policy decisions understand the importance of small to medium community organisations, to ensure they can draw on the experience of community orgs when considering future funding models, and to try and work out the future shape of policy.

- We wrote to all members of the Queensland Parliament and have so far visited 17 of them.
- We have met with Minister Tracy Davis and Minister John Paul Langbroek and one of our members raised CoCB issues with the Premier, as part of an electorate visit.
- In terms of Federal government, we have met with Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan to discuss the future of small organisations. We have also been talking with senior officers in state and federal governments.
- We have also been invited to attend the [Social Inclusion Ministerial roundtable](#). At this stage, we are unsure to what extent it will be possible to have any influence from this position but will continue to attend. [Records of the first meeting can be found here.](#)

*Several MPs told us that their electorate are not raising issues. We do encourage all boards to ensure their MPs know what is happening.*

Some MPs that we spoke with take the line that the economy comes first and we will have to wear some hardship, whilst others are concerned to ensure the survival of small organisations. We could consider making public where our local MPs stand.

*In terms of policy, it is clear that neither level of government wants to continue funding small organisations. They are looking to other models.*

In the Federal Government case, this is emerging as favouring funding consortia through a large NGO as lead agency. State government position is not yet as clear – but certainly will involve some rationalisation. We need to formulate a response to this and are keen for more discussion with boards about it. We'll soon be inviting you to be part of an e-discussion on these matters. We are keen to make a contribution to the policy thinking of funding models.

### **3. Strategies for Survival:**

A number of strategies for survival are already emerging. Organisations are considering amalgamation and consortia and other such arrangements. We are keen to track these arrangements, share learnings from them, and analyse their impacts on both communities and the people that our community organisations serve.

We continue to value small, innovative, flexible community organisations.

We recognise that organisations have to be efficient businesses that they have to raise funds in more diverse ways, and that both professional and industrial standards must apply. Yet, our roots in citizen and community engagement (that have been somewhat eroded as the sector has professionalised), remain an important part of the wider democratic state.

Our contribution to an active democracy and the capacity of community organisations to mobilise support for and from various parts of our communities, are our unique contribution and we think worth fighting for.

*Can we hold professionalism and citizen ownership together?*

The Coalition of Community Boards has been engaging with various people in an attempt to imagine a somewhat different structural arrangement that would facilitate this.

---



**Interested but have questions?**

Get in touch for a private chat [admin@cocb.org.au](mailto:admin@cocb.org.au) or find out more on our website:

[www.cocb.org.au](http://www.cocb.org.au)

[www.facebook.com/coalitionvoice](http://www.facebook.com/coalitionvoice)