

Annual Report 2021



Australian Business Volunteers

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Australian Business Volunteers (ABV)

Our Mission

**Strengthen business
and institutions to
enable a strong and
vibrant private sector.**

Our Vision

**To alleviate poverty
by using business
expertise to drive
inclusive economic
growth and
wellbeing.**

Our Purpose

**Strengthening
communities
through business.**

Our Partners



National Australia Bank



Newcrest Lihir Gold Limited



Bank of South Pacific



IAG



Arup



Centre for Humanitarian Leadership Deakin University



Australian Catholic University



Nauru Chamber of Commerce



Net Zero Emission and the City of Ballarat



Resilience NSW



First Nations Foundation



Woolworths



ID Know Yourself



Special Olympics



CSIRO



Savi Moni, PNG

Small business owners on Lihir Island New Ireland Province PNG



DFAT



UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office



ABV is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

ABV is a member of the AIBC, Australia PNG Business Council

Chair's Report

Mark Epper
ACA, GAICD

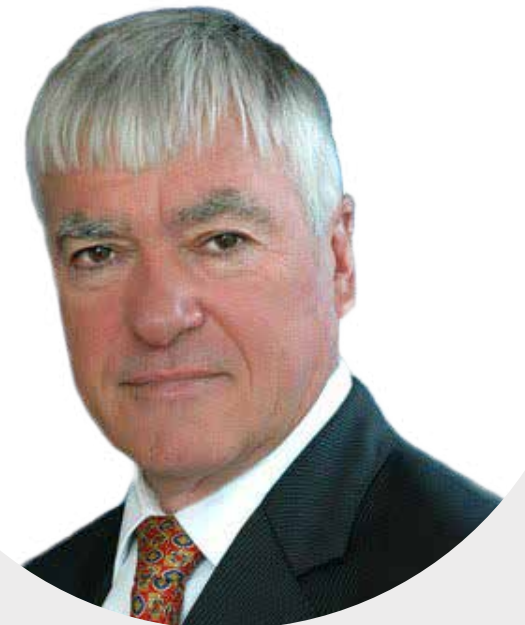
I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as a director of Australian Business Volunteers (ABV), the last three years as Chair. It is somewhat sad that this is my final report as my second three-year term has come to an end.

I am proud of what ABV has achieved in the past few years. Previously I have referred to ABV's transformation journey. I believe this journey is now complete and ABV has achieved a level of sustainability that bodes well for the organisation's future success and its ability to serve our communities through business in the best possible manner.

ABV is fortunate to have Liz Mackinlay as its CEO. Liz's knowledge, enthusiasm, and resilience has benefitted ABV in often challenging circumstances. Liz has developed a great team of dedicated people who serve the organisation with the same knowledge, enthusiasm and resilience. Congratulations and thank you to all ABV's employees for what has been achieved over the past few years.

As always ABV's volunteers have made valuable contributions, not only serving our communities, but also working with Liz and the team to make ABV a more agile organisation.

ABV's current strong position is reflected in our partners and programs. Several years ago, ABV recognised that we needed to expand the number of organisations we work with, particularly to increase our number of corporate partners, and to expand the number of geographies we work in. Today we have a solid group of long-term partner relationships and operate in four countries in our region. This again underlines ABV's strength and is reflected in the three-year strategy that was endorsed by the Board at the last board meeting.



Adding to this, is the seven top class programs developed over the past few years, which are available for the communities we serve. These are described in this report.

In my time at ABV I have been fortunate to work with a number of talented directors. Thank you for this opportunity and experience. I also wish to thank the current Board for their support, dedication and counsel.

I wish ABV, its staff and Board all the best and look forward to learning of your future success.

Yours sincerely,

Mark

Re-imagining Volunteering in the 21st Century

Liz Mackinlay
Chief Executive Officer

In the great disasters of history, from the Spanish Flu to World Wars, famine, fire, flood and drought, Australians have volunteered. Volunteered their time as part of the Civilian Defence Force during World War Two, or as Rural Firefighters during our ferocious fires, or to clean up floods that follow the fires; it's in our DNA.

As CEO of Australian Business Volunteers, where we identify as an international development and skilled volunteering agency, I'm proud of our 40-year history managing thousands of businesspeople donating their time throughout Australia and across the globe. This is a testament to the strength and commitment of our Australian volunteering force. Our skilled volunteer network describes the benefits they receive to be of equal value to them in terms of personal benefit, camaraderie, and experience.

The beauty of volunteering is this two-way learning and relationship. Volunteering isn't a one-way process where the expert provides knowledge and wisdom, and the grateful recipient says thanks for that learning. Volunteering is most effective when the volunteer and the people they're working with learn from each other, creating experiences and memories that are lasting for all. The beauty of volunteering is that it is based in altruism, a quality possessed by people whose focus is on something other than themselves, and its root reveals the object of those generous tendencies. It's the focus on the other and not ourselves which defines the value of volunteering.

The challenge and opportunity of the current COVID-19 world, and our world for the next few years, is to take our love of face-to-face volunteering and blend it with remote volunteering.



'Remote is not a pivot for us'

Since 1981 Australian Business Volunteers (ABV) has successfully designed over 5,000 development projects, managing more than 5,000 volunteers across 35 countries and every single project to this day has a large component of remote support. The current global crisis requires us to 'shelter in place', meaning socially distant and working remote is not a huge sidestep for our distributed network.

Our expert International Development staff don't all work together in an office. They never have. Our Skilled Business Professionals might meet on the phone, only seeing each other face to face sometimes after months of work and assignment preparation. And the support does not end when the volunteer returns home. ABV

is unique in our volunteering offering in that we offer our volunteers to be part of one team with our staff, seamlessly working together on projects and programs that allow us to strengthen communities through business. Our volunteers can literally be based anywhere in the region, as can our staff who range from Program experts to Program Managers delivering on the ground in Australian and overseas projects to our highly effective Operations team based here in Sydney NSW.

Projects are recorded, monitored and reported remotely from staff located across Australia and the region; the volunteers' ongoing support for the individuals and organisations they have been working with and ABVs continued iteration of programs and negotiations with partners all continue remotely. Critical to this program design, delivery and evaluation approach is that everything we do is driven from the community, and the vision of a better life that they define. We always tailor our programs to the context they will be implemented, for example a Melanesian/PNG centric approach for our PNG programs through to culturally appropriate approaches to Australian First Nations programs and all the contexts in-between.

Embracing the other, those that aren't exactly like us, is a unique opportunity in a COVID world. Countries around the world are experiencing vastly different crises ranging from 2020's heart-breaking mortality rates in Italy, the UK, Spain and USA to challenges with food security across the Pacific to Australian health systems bracing for the impact of a disease they won't be able to manage. In this time, the power of our shared humanity is our greatest gift. Our Australian ingenuity and altruistic history of volunteering is needed if our region is going to survive through this pandemic. The challenge is: How do we support our neighbours here and abroad?

With four decades of experience managing, deploying, understanding, and innovating in the volunteer sector both face to face and remotely, we believe ABV thrives because we design programs that provide volunteers with what they need to do the work and that the outcomes we commit to with our corporate partners, who fund the work, are being achieved for the benefit of the communities we serve. This hands-on approach to ensuring change happens in accordance with the plan, and adapting when it needs to, is what outcomes focussed, adaptable, skilled volunteering is all about. Now more than ever, we need to remember and commit to the life-giving, society-changing act of volunteering that's focussed on enabling the changes our local communities want.

It's been a privilege to lead ABV through the difficult onset of the COVID pandemic to our year-end strong position with multiple trusted corporate partners supporting our work from bushfire and flood affected Australia to PNG and Nauru. Our volunteers have stayed loyal and active despite the slowdown and we're excited to welcome more Skilled Business People, more corporate partners and more communities to partner with ABV into FY2021-2022. Resilience for ABV is about having a clear purpose, a trusted team and existential flexibility, to quote Simon Sinek, and we've got that in spades.

*I hope you enjoy reading ABV's
FY20-21 Annual Report.*

Liz

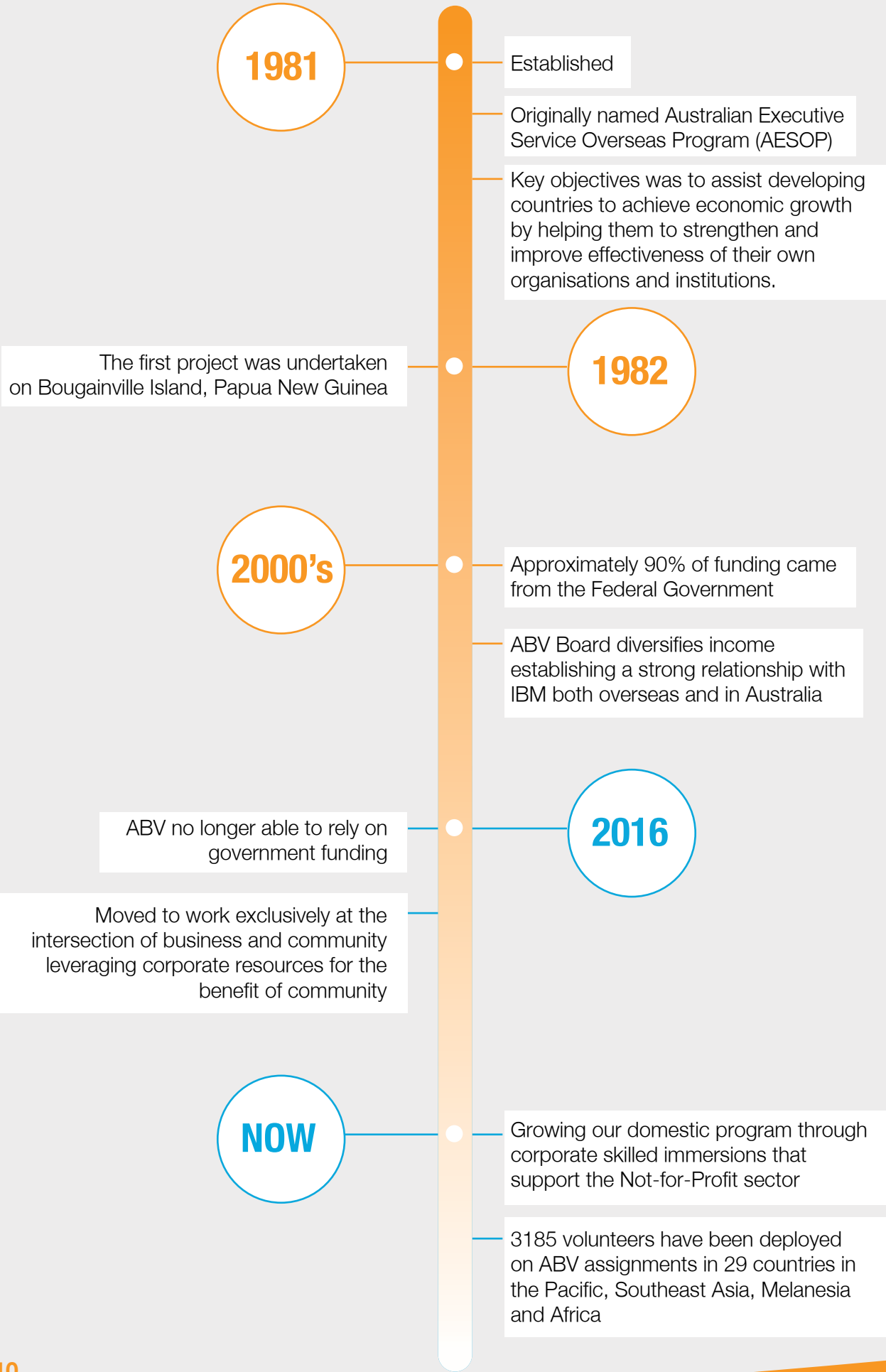
Sustainable Development Goals

How do we measure up?

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) provide a framework for development efforts for communities, organisations and nations around the world. ABV is committed to measuring our work against the SDGs as the most effective way of measuring our outcomes and impact for the communities we serve.



At a Glance - 40 years



Australian Business Volunteers 1981 – 2021

Recognising 40 years of delivering business support to small businesses around the Asia Pacific.

“A great achievement worthy of celebration.”

Originally named Australian Executive Service Overseas Program (AESOP), Australian Business Volunteers (ABV) was established in 1981 as a pilot program between the Confederation of Australian Industry (CAI) and the Australian Development Assistance Bureau (ADAB). The program aimed to mobilise Australian business expertise to benefit businesses and organisations in developing countries. The first project was undertaken in 1982 on Bougainville Island PNG.

When AESOP was first established one of its key objectives was:

“To assist developing countries to achieve economic growth by helping them to strengthen and improve effectiveness of their own organisations and institutions.”

Today ABV has a purpose “Strengthening communities through business”. This is remarkably like that first objective set in 1981. The organisation has developed and evolved, but remains true to the basic premise of its origins.

Originally funded by the Federal Government, during the early 2000s, (with approximately 90% of its funds from government), the ABV Board determined that the organisation needed to diversify its income. A strong relationship was established with IBM, and over several years, many significant projects were undertaken through the ABV/IBM partnership, both overseas and in Australia. Partnerships were developed with other companies, but the diversification was limited.

However, in 2016 the real crunch came. ABV was not successful in gaining a role in the government funded volunteer program so it could no longer rely on government funding. This necessitated a complete pivot and over the past five years we have moved to work exclusively at the intersection of business and community, leveraging corporate resources for the benefit of community. We have grown our domestic program through corporate skilled immersions that support the Not-for-Profit sector and by walking alongside disaster affected communities.

A secret to ABV’s success is that the assistance provided by our business professionals is attuned and tailored to meet the needs of the enterprises we are working with while the volunteers gain a sense of pride and personal enrichment as the work they do is worthwhile and beneficial to both the enterprises and countries who host the ABV assignments. Many volunteers have developed long and enduring relationships with the people they have worked with.

ABV’s 40-year celebration is for the thousands of people who over those years have contributed to the organisation’s activities – staff whose wisdom and support has been invaluable, our business volunteers who have freely donated their time and expertise and our partners whose friendship and hospitality have been an integral part of every project. Over the forty years a remarkable 3185 volunteers have been deployed on ABV assignments in 29 countries in the Pacific, Southeast Asia, Melanesia and Africa.

ABV is a unique organisation that will continue to make a significant contribution to the development of Australia and our region for many years to come.

Let’s celebrate!!

Bushfire Resilience Projects: Cobargo



When the head and the heart are still reeling from trauma, a set of steady hands and sturdy feet may be the difference between standing still or moving forward.

No doubt 2020 was a difficult year and for many Australians life's challenges continue. However, for one small community in the NSW Southern Tablelands, it was the last day of 2019 that left a town traumatised, scorched and scarred far beyond any impacts a future pandemic may hold.

The devastating bushfires that ravaged the Bega Valley township of Cobargo and the surrounding communities on New Year's Eve 2019 heralded a season now known as the Black Summer Bushfires.

Only three days after the unprecedented fires, Cobargo residents were unwittingly thrust into the international media spotlight when a last-minute visit by the prime minister failed to connect. The attempted outreach was shared on screens around the world and amplified the heightened emotional pain of a freshly traumatised community. According to locals the visit was 'divisive' and 'abrasive.'

On the night of that now infamous exchange, serendipity stepped in at a dinner being held some 300kms away in the town of Yass. CEO Liz Mackinlay was among the dinner guests.

“The PMs visit attracted a lot of attention and was a topic of discussion at dinner,” Liz recalled. ‘I suggested that in six to eight months’ time, when the politicians and media have left town, and the community is left exhausted and still traumatised, they will likely need support to move forward with the building back better that they envisage.’”

As fate would have it, the dinner conversation led to connections being made between Liz and Zena Armstrong who was president of the Cobargo Folk Festival and went on to become president of the Cobargo Community Bushfire Recovery Fund Inc. That connection was the catalyst for a game changing partnership that continues to this day.

Jump forward to September 2020 and as predicted, Liz Mackinlay and her ABV staff drove into Cobargo to begin a three-day scoping visit with a broad range of local community groups.

Developed through 40 years in the field, ABV's framework for supporting bushfire affected communities encompasses international disaster recovery theory and practice, world-class business volunteer management, business continuity planning and resilience, trauma-informed engagement, and place-based planning approaches.

ABV's support delivery model typically involves a combination of key stakeholders; corporate partners who contribute financial support and leadership; skilled volunteers from corporate partnerships, ABV's skilled business professionals who donate their time to support the projects; and the not-for-profit or community organisations that require skilled support.

From October 2020 to February 2021, more than 30 skilled volunteers were sourced, onboarded, and matched to local community groups and small businesses to support them in their rebuild, recovery, and resilience building initiatives. The volunteers came from ABV's pool of skilled business professionals and its partners, who also led the program; ABV's key strategic partner NAB, as well as IAG insurance company, the Australian Catholic University, and Arup global advisory, design, planning and engineering group.

The beneficiaries of ABV's Bushfire Resilience Project included Shona Taranto and John Walters of the Cobargo Quaama Business Recovery Group Incorporated, an inspiring duo of community champions.

At first glance Shona and John may be strange bedfellows borne of adversity, but any generation or gender divide is countered by a joint passion and commitment to getting things done, to making things happen. The dynamic duo agree that they are intellectually matched and able to

grasp the big picture concepts inherent in a community's recovery. Together, Shona (the brains) and John (the grunt) create a formidable pairing.

Prior to the fires the two had rarely crossed paths. John was an occasional customer at Shona's main street retailer, The Dispensary, where he would buy salad greens that Shona grew on her property or, once a year, don his fire helmet and ask for donations to the local fire brigade services where he was president and an active firefighter. Among his many responsibilities, John held the hose.

Tragically, Shona lost her shop in the fire. John, who was actively involved in the battle on New Year's Eve, took on the role of Cobargo RFS community coordinator for the next month or so. When a not-for-profit wanted to talk with local businesses as a group, Shona and John created the Cobargo Quaama Business Recovery Group (CQBRG). John was elected vice-chair, and Shona, in the absence of anyone else putting their hand up for the position, offered to stand for the position of chairperson for the group. “I agreed that if nobody else could do it, I would volunteer my time for 4-6 weeks max to get the committee up and running”. Shona is still chairperson of the group more than 18 months later and is humbled and honoured to be in the role and supported by the committee.

Shona and John share personal recollections of the fires and their aftermath describing 'weeks of black skies and no sun', a continued 'midsummer with active spot fires all January and half of February.' The event is variously described as 'catastrophic', 'unprecedented', and 'apocalyptic'.

And yet, despite the devastation, the Cobargo community united on a path to recovery. It's a trait too often borne of necessity, if not tragedy.

“The reality in the country is that if something has to get done often the individual has to do it themselves,” Shona said. ‘If anything, we need to learn how to outsource a little more.’”

John recalls the spirit of Cobargo being very strong during the initial recovery period. Locals directly affected by the fires were living in the showgrounds. Neighbours were making friends with neighbours they hadn't met previously. Residents continued to support each other long after the media had left town.

In reality, the community was left with the visual scars still exposed in the commercial heart of Cobargo. As John has stated often 'it was like a giant dagger had been stabbed in the heart of the town.'

'Cobargo has always been hard working and constantly punches above its weight,' Shona said 'That's certainly true for the groups who had been doing some amazing work – a true testament to the community.'

But fractures had started to appear. Through no fault of their own, the community and the various bushfire related organisations that had been created started to silo based on specific needs; a greening group, a renewable energy and resilience group, or a family-owned property with aspirations of becoming a museum.

Individuals, community groups, businesses and local government authorities were putting their hands up for financial support of their ambitious recovery plans. In fact, more than \$1.6b worth of applications would eventually be submitted for a pool of just \$250m.

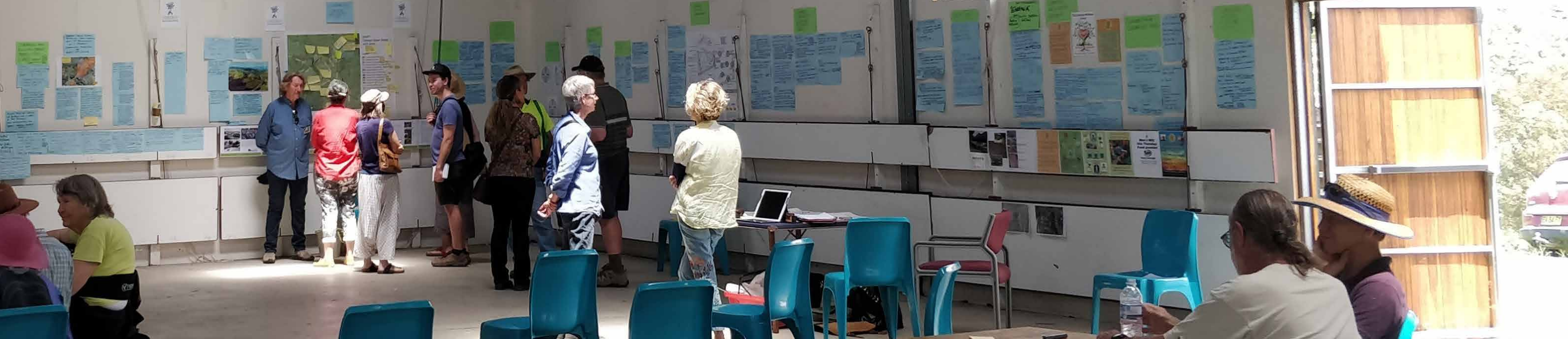
The community was worn out and worn down. Tired. Exhausted. And now dealing with the overlap of a global pandemic! As the heads and the hearts tried to manage conflicting goals and general fatigue, ABV stepped in with steady pairs of hands and sturdy feet to offer their service and support those in need. ABV staff also relocated to the area for a month to help support the community project leads and ensure the 30+ volunteers were closely linked and well supported to deliver effective remote support.

ABV's preparedness to sit with, walk alongside and actively listen to communities, rather than prescribe solutions, allowed them to deliver targeted and immediate support where it was most needed. During a three-day Visioning Workshop held in November 2020 Liz and the team brought a diverse range of community stakeholders together to develop a shared vision of 'building back better' and greater coordination between community projects. This Visioning Workshop and subsequent Stream Two activities were co-funded by NAB, IAG, Arup and the Cobargo community.

John acknowledged the success of the workshops. 'Liz did an extraordinary job to bring the community together through compassion, empathy and an ability to engage with us that encouraged ownership of ideas and solutions. Liz built on the strong social capital that already existed and helped us expand our thinking and reframe some of the challenges we faced. Having Liz present provided a forum and mechanism for the community to unify around shared goals.'

While the township of Cobargo was recognised as a thriving little country town, there were issues that meant some buildings were commercially unviable and the town was struggling economically after three consecutive years of drought in the local region. In a lesson that's as relevant for bushfire recovery as it is for a post-covid world, the plans to rebuild Cobargo were courageous and ambitious. The proposed Village Square, New Post Office and Market Hall projects as community led initiatives with innovative concepts to rebuilding for the future, received praise from many government agency representatives for setting a gold standard in bushfire recovery.





“Liz spent as much time listening as she did talking. And she didn’t talk until she’d listened,” recalls John. ‘She was facilitator, catalyst, enabler and coach. ABV provided an essential glue that stopped the community from falling apart.’”

When Shona and John became aware that their own council had submitted grant applications for multimillion dollars towards projects of that didn’t directly impact on Cobargo, Liz stepped in and filled an advocacy role through the media. ‘Let’s just say that Liz’s approach was more streamlined and tempered than some of my words to the media,’ John recalls.

In the ten days leading up to the deadline for funding submissions Shona and John put their individual lives on hold and worked around the clock to complete the CCDC grant submission. While ABV volunteers had been instrumental in helping to tell the Cobargo story, frame the funding cases, offer assistance with various aspects of the grant submission the final leg to the finish line was up to the hearts and heads of the community – in this case Shona and John who, emotionally and physically exhausted, pushed the final submit button only 18 minutes before deadline for the first project and the submit button for the second project with less than 2 minutes to spare.

“The last week or so was very nerve-racking,” says John. ‘After sending the submissions I had no nerves left. I went and collapsed in a heap.’”

On 1 July 2021, Shona called John to check his email. The funding outcomes had arrived. Some smaller projects had been knocked back. However, the two main town centre redevelopment submissions had been successful, granting the newly formed Cobargo Community Development Corporation Limited \$9.62 M funding to rebuild both sides of the main street under the CCDC project proposal.

“I think Cobargo did exceptionally well,” says John. ‘There’s an old proverb that says a crisis is an opportunity riding a dangerous wind. We managed to find a silver lining in the dark clouds of the black summer bushfires. Now we can make the community’s rebuild vision for Cobargo a reality.’”

Liz and the team from ABV and its partners are currently working with the CCDC Limited to assist in delivery of further community consultation ‘We walked alongside the community and listened to their needs. We’ve supported their emerging priorities and facilitated place-based planning. This is Cobargo driving their future with ABV walking alongside,’ said Liz Mackinlay.

‘Our work here is not finished and it’s far too early to raise the mission accomplished banner. We will be heading back to Cobargo in the coming weeks to once again provide the arms and legs, the hands and feet necessary to support the community of Cobargo, to deliver on its brave new vision.’



Cobargo community partners:



Cobargo Bushfire Resilience Centre Inc.



Cobargo RSL Sub-Branch



Cobargo Community Bushfire Recovery Fund Inc.



Cobargo Green Recovery Inc.



Cobargo Quaama Business Recovery (CQBR) Group Inc.



Cobargo Community Development Corporation Limited

Community of Cobargo



Anna Durward, a new member of ABV's pool of skilled business professionals, was one of the volunteers who supported the Cobargo Bushfire Resilience

Centre to write submissions for recovery funds. Anna had been through a similar experience in bushfire-affected Port Macquarie where she successfully applied for funds for her community.

Anna brought with her a breadth of knowledge, skills and experience having worked for a decade in project management and design within the sustainable building industry, earned a Master of Science: Strategic Leadership towards Sustainability in Sweden, qualified as a trauma counsellor, and aspired to volunteer with ABV on her way to working for the UN one day.

Inspired by the people she was meeting, Anna attributes the community's success to its agility and resilience. 'Resilience is being able to endure life's challenges in a regenerative

way.' Anna explained. 'We have to keep an open mind and allow for emergence; it requires a preparedness to be agile and adaptive, to hold on to hope and optimism, to not get beaten down.'

Anna worked remotely to avoid adding pressure to the community, providing support to several community organisations while also supporting the development of two large funding applications for the Cobargo Bushfire Resilience Centre, both of which were successful.

'Regenerative leadership demands constant renewal, circular regeneration, moving, evolving. As a volunteer we must be willing to undertake whatever tasks are necessary with professionalism compassion and respect. You ask a lot of clarifying questions; practice deep listening and learn to read between the lines,' Anna says.

'It was really rewarding, and I wish other skilled businesspeople would get involved. Volunteering can be a remarkable opportunity to meet and work with new people and cultures, to build connections and relationships that are meaningful, and to learn and grow as an individual and a leader.'

They focused on how the redevelopment aligned to the RSL's mission statement and community objectives, its financial viability and concerns of local residents regarding heritage protection.

'Following my first conversation with Glen he mentioned that he had slept soundly for the first time in months,' Zarnie says. 'I hadn't felt that we'd 'achieved' anything major in our conversation but for Glen the process had become overwhelming. Engaging with me gave him an impartial and supportive person to share his concerns and challenges, allowing him to reset and move forward in a more positive mindset. It was incredibly moving to hear this'.

'The lived experience of the people in affected communities is likely to be completely removed from your own. Everyone I engaged with in Cobargo was inspiring. I would tell anyone considering volunteering that you have an opportunity to have a real, positive impact on people's lives and that is priceless.'



Zarnie Robertson, a Senior Associate at NAB, provided remote business mentoring and grant application support for the Cobargo Bushfire Resilience Centre (CBFRC) and the Cobargo RSL Sub-Branch.

Zarnie supported the CBFRC to prepare grant applications that would allow the CBRC to undertake the Badja Forest Rd Fire Oral History Project - the cornerstone content for the CBRC. He also worked with Cobargo RSL Sub-Branch President Glen Morrison to formulate an approach for assessing viability of various options for redevelopment of the historic RSL Hall.

Report from Cobargo Bushfire Resilience Centre

The Cobargo Bushfire Resilience Centre emerged as a community response to the Badja Forest Rd firestorm that destroyed much of our region on NYE 2019. Our not-for-profit organisation aims to honour the events of the Badja Forest Rd fire and to support the social and economic recovery of our region, while empowering our local community to become more fire safe and more resilient for the future.

We were introduced to the Australian Business Volunteers in the aftermath as we started to prepare grant applications to facilitate the rebuilding of the main street of Cobargo, which was decimated by the fire. Since our first meeting, our organisation has been upheld by a scaffold of support given to us by a myriad of volunteers from ABV who have contributed to developing our grant applications, business case, future centre programs, community consultation events and have been there to supportively listen to us as we vented our frustrations.

We are excited that, as a result of that assistance, the Cobargo Bushfire Resilience Centre was successful in securing funding under the BCRF to undertake the Badja Forest Rd Fire Oral History Project in a unique partnership with the National Library of Australia. In July, our organisation received the news that we had also been successful in our application to the BLER fund to construct a Centre on our main street. The Centre is significant to the recovery project of the main street and its construction will return a beating heart to our community. Both of these projects have the capacity to affect the lives of community members for decades to come and we are grateful for the assistance ABV has provided to make this happen.

Thank you.

Rhonda Ayliffe
Vice-Chair
Cobargo Bushfire Resilience Centre



Bushfire Resilience Projects: Southern NSW

The Black Summer bushfire season was exceptional in many ways. The fires, which impacted every state and territory in Australia, scorched more than 46 million acres of land, destroyed almost 10,000 buildings including 3,500 homes, killed an estimated 480 million mammals, birds and reptiles, and resulted in the deaths of at least 34 Australians. While recovery costs are expected to surpass \$4 billion, the economic impact is more likely to top \$100 billion.

Cobargo certainly received its 15 minutes of international fame and attracted the ongoing support of ABV, its corporate partners and volunteers. However, the unfortunate reality is that Cobargo is one of myriad communities across the country that needed support. In fact, almost two years after the fire season, small communities across Australia are still reeling from the natural disaster and remain in a state of traumatic disrepair. They have, according to community voices, been left behind.

Enter George Barrett, an experienced community development professional who joined ABV as Senior Program Manager for Southern NSW in May 2021 made possible by the NSW government Resilience NSW Bushfire Community Resilience and Recovery funding.

While George had worked with rural and disadvantaged communities in the past, he faced a massive learning curve on arrival into a region he knew little about. Conversely, these forgotten communities had little if any knowledge or experience with ABV.

‘Many of these communities are quite alternative and purposively located ‘off the grid’, beyond the last electricity pole,’ George explains. ‘These are localities more than townships. A general store. A 12km stretch of road. A caravan park or a few holiday rentals. And many of them had lost everything; 80-100% loss of property!’

At the core of George’s greatest challenge was the need to build connections and trust – for him to find and connect with local community leaders, government representatives, disaster agencies and recovery officers.

‘Quite often I would end up being directed to speak with the local Fire Captain. And although those individuals were exhausted and traumatised, or even hospitalised with PTSD, they were, at the end of the day, the heroes of many communities,’ George recalls. ‘I also spent a lot of time cold calling or on social media, trying to find out who the local leaders were, posting on their personal pages, or dropping into a relevant feed to offer support or foster connection.’

Much like the diverse groups that formed hugely productive partnerships in Cobargo, George found himself connecting otherwise disparate local individuals, organisations and councils with each other to solve the community challenges in a unified manner.

And just like Cobargo, and in fact much of ABV’s work, it was compassion, empathy and objectivity that proved to be among the most valuable attributes for building connections.

“I was struck by the personal experiences that people were prepared to share openly. The level of trauma was often overwhelming but the resilience and gratitude that they showed was quite humbling for me.”

George’s responsibilities include rolling out the Community-led Disaster Recovery and Resilience Building program that was built and piloted in Cobargo. Specifically, George has been tasked with supporting communities across four local government areas (Bega Valley, Eurobodalla, Queanbeyan-Palerang and Snowy Valleys). He is currently walking alongside communities in Kiah, Towamba, Wonboyn and Eurobodalla.

Within a very short time frame, and restricted through lockdowns, George managed to build strong connections, link volunteers with appropriate organisations and, based on identified needs in the communities, bring corporate partner Arup – a global advisory, design planning and engineering firm – to the table. NAB’s ongoing support to ABV’s bushfire recovery work underpins the work George is doing and enhances the BCRRF funding.

George and the communities of Southern NSW have an extremely busy and challenging year ahead. Regional lockdowns during the pandemic have played havoc with the best laid plans.

Priority projects include the Lower Towamba Recovery Group’s application for funding to rebuild Mustering Ground Rd, Wonboyn Lake Ratepayers Association need to install a 130-metre pedestrian walkway adjacent to the local caravan park, and the rebuilding of the Kiah Community Hall. None of these projects are simple. For example, before the Kiah Community Hall can be rebuilt an off-ramp road is required to gain access to the site. Each of the multi-million-dollar projects will require intensive support from ABV’s highly skilled volunteers, drawn from the community and our corporate partners. For example, Arup’s expertise will be needed to pull together detailed project plans, advise on engineering challenges and provide technical advice.

Suffice to say, the task at hand is daunting. The rebuilds and recovery projects will take years to accomplish. And once the build is complete, business development and continuity expertise will be required to ensure ongoing viability for commercial enterprises as well as community resilience building.

The piloting of ABV’s Community-led Disaster Recovery and Resilience Building program in Cobargo has contributed to putting that community on a clear path to rebuilding and recovery. Thanks to the efforts of George, NAB, Arup, volunteers and the communities themselves, communities across four LGAs in Southern NSW can also look forward to a brighter future. However, these positive futures must be tempered with the fact that there are other localities and communities across NSW and Victoria that have ‘been left behind’.

It will take huge commitments from governments, corporate partners, volunteers and locals to recover from disasters and build community resilience. With summer around the corner and the global challenge of mitigating the effects of climate change, many communities remain on tenterhooks. ABV remains poised to walk alongside these communities and provide the skilled hands and feet necessary to support the head and heart.



Apeketon Business Hub

After 40 years sending skilled volunteers overseas to support communities in developing countries, Australian Business Volunteers (ABV) has reinvented its trusted delivery model to overcome global challenges and keep its promise to the people of Lihir in Papua New Guinea.

Eighteen months after the global pandemic first shut down borders, restricted international travel and dramatically impacted the health and wellbeing of millions around the world, the Apeketon Business Hub on Lihir island has welcomed new clients and workshop participants following an extended hiatus from in person contact.

First opened in 2019, the Business Hub offers a program of skill development workshops to aspiring and established small business operators in Lihir. It also provides clients with mentoring and consulting services available at the drop-in resource centre, sponsored by Newcrest LGL and delivered in partnership with ABV.

The Hub currently services 70 registered businesses in the local Lihir community and, in its first year, delivered 13 custom-designed training programs to 144 participants. The doors were closed in March 2020, due to the global pandemic, which limited in-person contact and prevented international travel.

Senior Program Manager, Henry Ume-Taule and Senior Project Officer, Betty Komes, provide the regular friendly faces on site and were delighted to return to Lihir in November 2020. However, ABV's skilled business professionals, who donate their time and skills to deliver workshops, have, until recently, been unable to deliver the programs.

Henry acknowledged the trying times and said he was happy to return to Lihir and reconnect with the community.

“We’ve been able to maintain virtual connections with community since the pandemic arrived, but it’s great to get back to Lihir and meet in person again, to re-connect with local operators, and to continue working with our previous graduates as well as new workshop participants.” said Henry.”

CEO Liz Mackinlay committed ABV to keeping its promise to the Lihir community: to support them to create sustainable business and employment opportunities for their communities.

‘During this time of uncertainty, ABV dedicated volunteer skilled business professionals and staff revamped the workshops and created a dynamic blended delivery model that includes fresh, new video content, face-to-face facilitation, the introduction of virtual volunteers and the maintenance of essential digital connections,’ said Liz.

“The new model allows us to support business development through effective and empowered local staff with support virtually from our team in Australia – a combination of volunteers and staff. We’re 100% able to support business development despite border closures with our new model, which we’re delighted to be able to do in our 40th year”.

The revamped Your Enterprise Scheme (YES) Start Up workshop was the first of the new blended model. Delivered in September 2021, the workshop combined digital technology and onsite contact to ensure that it remained informative and instructive as well as interactive and engaging for all participants, volunteers, and staff.

Lihirian businessman Jackery Bachavien took part in the September workshop and found the program very relevant.

“Although I have been running my business for several years, it brought me back to understand the basic of business and has put me on the right course,” Jackery told the Project team. “The facilitators presented the course excellently using face to face interaction, group activities and experts over the video link, giving me a multiple sources of information. I wish I had attended this course before I started by business.””



Savi Money Pilot Success

The Family Money Management Program (FMMP) is another core skills development workshop delivered by ABV through the Apeketon Business Hub.

In late 2020, a pilot program of a modified FMMP was created with PNG micro-financiers Savi Money Plus. ABV Program Manager Henry Ume-Taule delivered the new iteration of FMMP to 12 staff from Solar Solutions Ltd in Lae and Port Moresby.

The two classroom days, normally consecutive, were delivered one week apart, as were the two half-day 1:1 mentoring sessions. This suited the business operations as it limited the amount of time staff were out of the office.

The mentoring sessions allowed for open and honest discussions as participants shared their real-time financial challenges. While this may also be emotionally challenging, participants found it very useful. Participants leave with a clear and measurable financial goal and the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve it.

Henry Ume-Taule hailed the pilot a success and is looking forward to further developments with a range of potential clients.

‘It was great to see PNG businesses invest time and resources to bring financial literacy to their workforce,’ said Henry. ‘This will add great value for Savi Moni Limited and Solar Solution as their staff build discipline around money management. A happy workforce free from financial burden is a workforce that will deliver beyond expectations.’

Some of the comments from Solar Solutions staff who took part in the Savi Money FMMP.



“I want to start a trade store in my place of residence, but I didn’t know how”

“I am a single mother and with this knowledge I see my savings growing with the additional income to take care of my loan and expenses”

“I now count my money every day over internet banking, and this enables me to discipline myself not to spend unnecessarily at will.”

“My dream to contribute to my new family home in Lae is now achievable – thank you ABV for this program”

Celebrating Success

For more than 40 years ABV has delivered intrinsic value to myriad volunteers, skilled business professionals, corporate partners, and the community organisations they have supported. Of course, the flow of benefits doesn't stop there, and it is the lives of individuals and families at the very end of the support chain, that give true meaning and value to ABV's work.



One such beneficiary, and an inspiring success story, is Ms Loise Kondiak, a 30-year-old wife and mother of two children from Nayal Clan, Lisel Village on Lihir Island.

Along with raising her children and nurturing her family, Loise is the Sole Proprietor and Business Owner of Elai Limited and the Coordinator for Lihir Sustainable Development Program now Lihir Wide Program.

Loise graduated from Pacific Adventists University in Port Moresby in 2014 and was subsequently employed at Puma Energy Limited. Her strong desire to return to her mother's land and the opportunity to benefit from the Newcrest gold mine activity, prompted her to return to Lihir.

In 2019, Loise came across posters on the notice boards in Londolovit town, which advertised the Apeketon Business Hub's business development workshops. Clearly not one to shy away from hard work, Loise attended and completed the five-day Family Money Management Program (FMMP) and followed up with the five-day Your Enterprise Scheme (YES) Start Up training program delivered over two consecutive weeks.

Loise described the YES Start Up workshop as an eye opener.

“The basic business skills and knowledge I gained from the YES Start Up course was a real awakening for me,” Loise said. “The business model canvas gave me the basic tools and know-how and helped me to do business correctly. I finally found the solutions I needed for starting a business.”

“I continue to connect with Apeketon Business Hub for advice and support to strengthen my skills as well as the processes within my business. The Hub provides a centre of development and opportunities. It encourages and broadens my thoughts around business opportunities in the mine and externally, and I regularly bounce ideas off ABH staff.”

As a direct result of the workshops, Loise was able to prepare her business documents and applied for vendors and accreditation through Monadelphous for labour hire employees as storeman, blaster and boil makers. She also secured a business loan through Bank of South Pacific's SME Loan program.

The loan allowed Loise to purchase a brand new 15-seater bus, which is used for the business daily operations. And more importantly Loise now owns a four-bedroom house she built in her husband's village with the profits from her business.

Loise's hard work and determination, with a little help from ABV, has given her and her family a life that she says has more meaning and satisfaction. Loise acknowledged that her biggest support comes from the partnership she has with her husband Albert Silambe who is the Operations Manager at Elai Ltd and father of her two beautiful children.



BSP Financial Group Mentoring Program

International travel restrictions and border closures haven't stopped ABV doing what it does best. On the contrary, the BSP Financial Group Limited (BSP, formerly Bank of South Pacific Limited) and ABV Mentoring Program has remained active in Vanuatu, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and the Cook Islands since the program was initiated in August 2019.

The BSP's program was designed to provide best practice mentoring by experienced and culturally aware mentors, with a particular focus on offshore leaders in the BSP's Leadership and Management Development Program (LMDP).

ABV mobilised its extensive registry of skilled business professional as mentors to support the leadership of capability development of banking professionals in the Pacific region. The approach to mentoring integrates international development theory and good practice mentoring according to the International Standards of Mentoring and Coaching Programmes (ISMCP).

Ideally the BSP program would include sending SBPs to the designated country for two face-to-face sessions, followed up with remote sessions held at least monthly and delivered virtually. While travel restrictions have put a stop to in person sessions, virtual mentoring has continued to reap benefits for all concerned.

Allowing for an unmet desire to connect in person, overwhelmingly positive feedback from BSP staff is testimony to the success of the program to date.

The initial cohort of seven BSP leaders were matched in August 2019 and an additional three mentor-mentee relationships were established in April 2020. Throughout the important matching process, the mentees have driven much of the decision making around their participation. This included selecting a mentor from a range of potential profiles to ensure alignment of skills and experience required to meet the goals set by the mentee, through to establishing regularity and content of mentoring sessions.

Mentee development objectives varied across the ten participants based on individual needs and levels of leadership experience.

Based on BSP management's decision to extend their Leadership and Management Development Program to four years for those currently participating in the program, and ABV's achievement of tangible outcomes for mentees in 2019/20, it was agreed in October 2020 to continue mentoring throughout 2021.

The broad development themes included management and leadership skills and competencies, project management skills, organisational and personal efficiency, business effectiveness, strategic and innovative thinking, networking and increased confidence in communication, public speaking, team and customer engagement.

ABV skilled business professional Evelyn Moolenburgh is mentor to two of BSP's women leaders in Solomon Islands and Tonga, Joyce and Anaise. While Eveyln was able to meet Joyce in person, her relationship with Anaise has been built over Zoom. The two modes of delivery come with their own challenges and benefits.

'I spent a week with Joyce in 2019 getting to know her lifestyle, her island and her work life and colleagues,' Evelyn explained. 'Not having met Anaise in person, it has taken longer and more deliberate effort to understand her world and context over Zoom. You can't just see a picture of her life and ask a question for clarity.'

Fortunately, the shared commitments of mentor and mentees have overcome the tyranny of distance and resulted in positive outcomes for all.

“ I love working with the women in the pacific islands; you can inspire and show them that women can achieve anything,’ says Evelyn. ‘One of my mentees has gone from, in her words, ‘being quiet’ to a confident Financial Manager who is ready to step up, and only in 12 months. ”

'It is very exciting when they jump on zoom or a call and can't wait to tell you about an achievement or a project that was successful. It is rewarding to share that excitement. I hope they would say that the program has inspired them to achieve their goals and that they have developed a friend from Sydney'.

The program really motivates and encourages me to become more successful in the future as a leader. It not only applies to the workplace, but it covers every aspect of life.

This mentoring program has been a very good tool. My mentor is clearly a compassionate and professional person who is insightful and respectful and has taken care to focus on my needs and development and being flexible to my timing and requests. To me, this is important and speaks volumes on the quality of the mentors that ABV has provided. My mentor is ... someone I feel strongly that I can trust.

I enjoy the way the program is currently run, and patiently await such a time as I might be able to meet my mentor in person so she is able to see in action some of the suggestions we have brainstormed now in action, and get a holistic look at my workplace and work environment which might offer more insights into changes if any I can make to improve on my efficiency and outputs to make a positive impact.



Nauru Private Sector Development Road Map Project

After gaining its independence in 1968, the small pacific island nation of Nauru enjoyed the second highest GDP per capita in the world, generated from extensive phosphate mining. When the primary reserves were largely exhausted in the 90s, however, the country was left in an economic and environmental quagmire. The noughties saw significant investment to support economic recovery efforts through the Pacific Regional Assistance to Nauru, along with the development of Nauru's commercial fishing industry, tapping into some of the richest fishing grounds in the Pacific. In recent times, the services sector connected with Australia's Regional Processing Centre (RPC) for asylum seekers has replaced phosphate mining and manufacturing as the main source of growth.

Today, Nauru is at a point of transition. It has high unemployment (38%) and an over reliance on the public sector for employment (64%). These challenges combined with the decline in phosphate mining and the activity associated with the RPC, highlight the imperative for Nauru to diversify its economy and create a sustainable future for its population of approximately 13,000 people.

At the 'Desperate Imagination' meeting held by the President of Nauru in January 2020, Nauru Chamber of Commerce (NCC) President, Mr. Sean Oppenheimer, was invited to deliver a presentation to Nauru's Ministers and Heads of Missions on the private sector development opportunities for Nauru.

“ As a national priority, private sector development had become urgent, so prompt action needed to be taken,” said Sean. ‘Nauru is now facing a moment of change, with a great opportunity to develop a vibrant private sector that can significantly contribute to resilient economic growth in Nauru.’ ”

In February 2020, a conference call between Australian Business Volunteers (ABV), members of the NCC and a representative of DFAT Australia discussed how ABV might support and strengthen the work of the NCC and promote stronger government collaboration and private sector development.

Since that initial call, the Nauru Chamber of Commerce and ABV, supported by the Australian High Commission in Nauru and UK High Commission in Solomon Islands, have worked in partnership to develop a Private Sector Development Road Map with the goal of supporting the development of a vibrant and inclusive private sector that contributes to sustainable economic development in Nauru.

Cross-sector collaboration is central to achieving the Road Map's goal. From the outset, the project sought to engage widely across government, public and private sectors, as well as community and regional stakeholders. The first step was to establish a Project Governance Group (PGG) to provide inputs and guidance on the stakeholder engagement activities and Road Map development. PGG members consisted of representatives from government, state-owned enterprises, private sector and the community.

“ The Chamber aspires to foster cross-sector collaboration and the Road Map will advance private sector development in alignment with Nauru's broader socioeconomic aims, said Sean Oppenheimer. ”

Responding to the need for Nauru to develop new sources of economic growth and income, the subsequent co-design process involved the active participation of a wide range of stakeholders committed to the development of a practical Road Map that would support locally-led private sector growth, generating employment opportunities and promoting social inclusion.

CEO Liz Mackinlay acknowledged that ABV has been privileged to walk alongside the Nauru Chamber of Commerce in the development of the Road Map.

‘The Road Map is intended to be a practical, ‘living document’ that strengthens communities through business, and supports and promotes locally-led, private sector driven solutions, open collaboration across all sectors, as well as youth leadership and entrepreneurship,’ Liz said. ‘It is an important step towards developing a diversified, inclusive, and sustainable private sector and a resilient Nauruan economy into the future. The Chamber of Commerce Board and all who participated in the process showed creativity, enthusiasm and entrepreneurship.’

The Road Map was developed by collaborating with representatives across government, public and private sectors, community and youth leaders, as well as regional experts. A range of activities were conducted including a document review, Delphi survey process (multi-round survey building consensus), questionnaires with micro, small, medium and larger businesses, as well as interviews with government representatives and a series of workshops with community and youth leaders. Out of these consultations, four key strategic development priorities emerged, which formed the basis of a two-day co-design workshop with cross-sector stakeholders, mapping out practical activities, collaboration mechanisms and partnership opportunities.

Although the COVID global pandemic prevented ABV's ability to travel to Nauru, it also strengthened the project's locally-led approach, with ABV supporting the NCC to implement several key activities in-country, thereby building greater awareness of the NCC with stakeholders. These in-country activities were supported by online components including the Delphi survey and co-design workshop facilitated by ABV with in-country support from the NCC.

The resulting Road Map has been designed in stages, with Stage 1 focusing on short-term priority development areas, with a view to medium and longer-term priorities being developed through subsequent stages of the Road Map.

Moving forward, implementation of the Private Sector Development Road Map centres around working groups made up of cross-sector representatives, supported by the Nauru Chamber of Commerce, thereby promoting inclusive collaboration and shared accountability. It is anticipated that regular review cycles will be conducted (at least annually) to review progress and update activities and/or milestones as required.

The first stage of the Nauru Private Sector Development Road Map was released in June 2021 and identified four priority areas:

- Fishing Sector;
- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Capacity Building;
- Sustainable Tourism;
- and Diverse Land Uses.

One element of the Road Map is to generate business opportunities from Nauru's new seaport and resurfaced airstrip. The port construction project is jointly funded by the Government of Nauru, the Government of Australia, the Asian Development Bank and the Global Climate Fund to build a climate resilient sea transport hub for Nauru. Aside from reducing shipping costs, ensuring reliable shipment of food, medical supplies, fuel and other essentials, the project will open opportunities for the private sector in and around the new port facility. The airstrip resurfacing project funded by the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific will increase certainty for business owners and managers by increasing the safety for Nauru's air transport for another two decades.

NAB and ABV Innovative Skilled Volunteering Program

In an environment of heightened public awareness and astuteness, the Peter Parker Principle - with great power comes great responsibility - has never been more relevant for multi-national corporations and small businesses alike.

As one of the 'Big Four' and Australia's largest business bank, NAB leads the way in social impact, inclusivity, and social innovation. Its three-pronged approach to community investment focuses on Philanthropy, Social Impact, and the creation of Shared Value through leveraging core assets and expertise. NAB aligns its Social Impact strategy with its core business operations to ensure authentic and measurable change. It puts its customers at the centre of everything it does and leverages its strengths as a bank, a major employer, and an active member of the community to create sustainable social impact.

Through an innovative partnership with ABV, NAB is honouring its commitment to making a positive and sustainable impact on the lives of its customers, people, shareholders, communities, and the environment that they operate in.

Established in 2017, the NAB Skilled Volunteering Program (SVP) is the result of a co-design workshop that involved ABV and representatives from NAB's Social Impact team and its Talent/ People Team. The workshop looked at how best to motivate, reward and engage employees across the NAB business while creating social impact for not-for-profits and social enterprises in Australia. It delivered agreed outcomes, expectations, and recommendations that incorporated elements of NAB's capability development framework as well as its corporate values and behaviors.

Now in its fourth year, the Skilled Volunteering Program continues to deliver an enviable triple benefit. It enhances the skills and experience of participating NAB staff, builds capacity and capability within the community organisation, not-for-profit or social enterprise that it partners with, and contributes to NAB's strategic drive to deliver measurable and sustainable social impact.

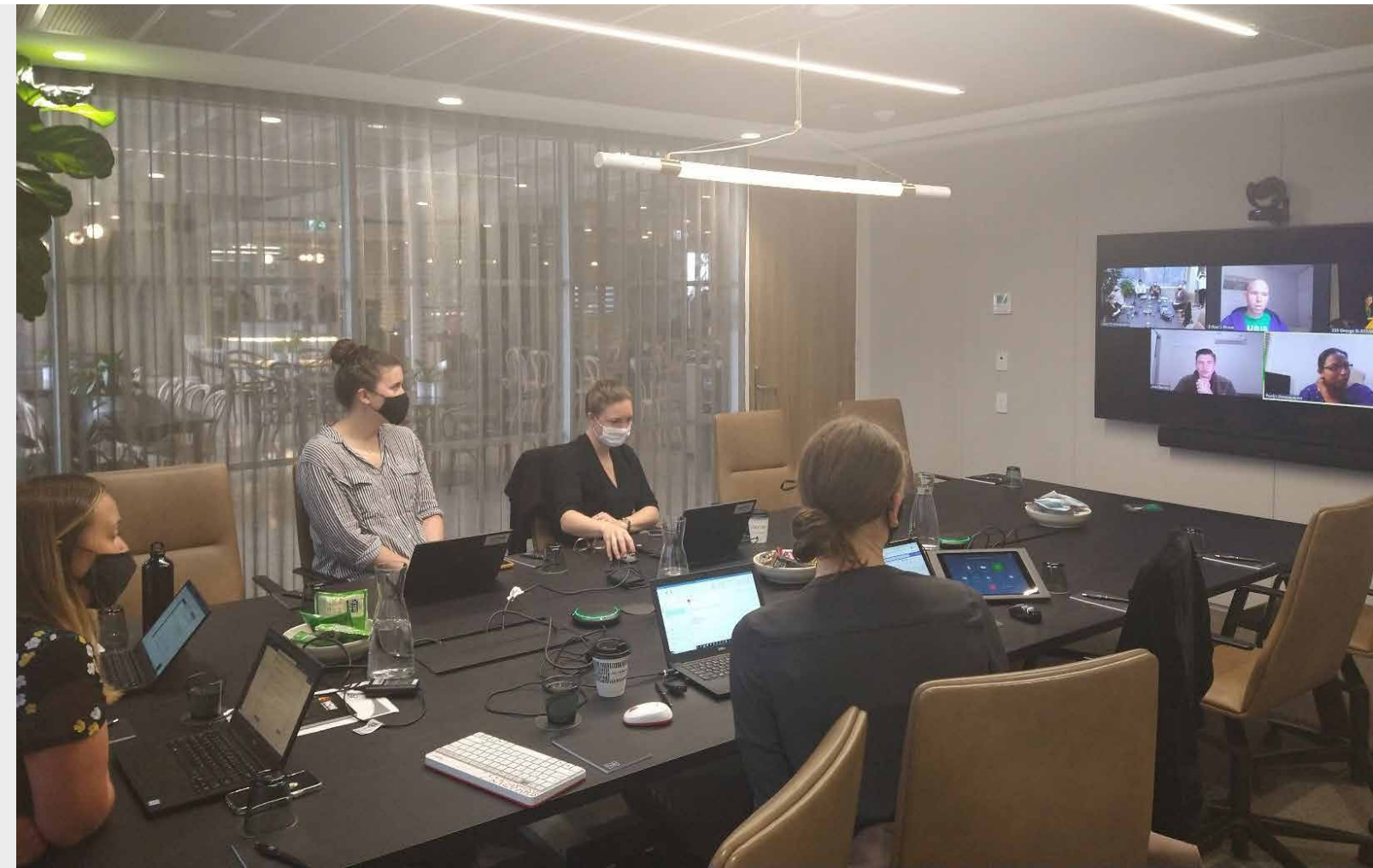
At the core of NAB's Skilled Volunteering Program is a six phase NAB Community Strategy Challenge, which places NAB employees into a facilitated immersive project with a social enterprise or not-for-profit, where they share relevant knowledge and skills to assist the enterprise to solve agreed business challenges.

The immersive nature of the program allows NAB staff to step out of their regular comfort zones and walk in the shoes of charitable organisations for a two-week period. Due to restrictions stemming from the current pandemic, recent programs have been delivered virtually over a three-week period.

Once NAB and ABV agree on a community partner, the CEO of ABV and the community partner meet to confirm alignment and ensure that desired outcomes will add genuine value. ABV's facilitator works closely with the community partner to scope the business challenge to be solved and agree suitable timeframes for the project.

The immersive challenge then follows a process of Exploration and Discovery, Creativity and Design, Collating and Collaboration and the final phase of Reflection and Celebration. This process is based on design-thinking approaches and incorporates reflective learning throughout. Participants are encouraged and supported to acquire, develop and improve their leadership skills and capabilities through co-facilitation and collaborative teamwork. The difference between this approach and a typical project sprint is that the experience is intensively facilitated, and personal learning journeys are supported. ABV aims for a transformative experience for employees, while delivering relevant and valuable solutions for the community partner. It's not uncommon to receive positive feedback espousing professional and personal awakenings gained during the challenges.

The results speak for themselves with an average participant net promoter score of more than 90. (Net Promoter Scores are globally benchmarked and assess participant program satisfaction with a number -100 to +100.)



Over the years the NAB Skilled Volunteering Program has successfully delivered measurable outcomes with seven community partners and built a growing alumni of more than 50 NAB employees. Previous beneficiaries include bushfire-affected communities in Cobargo; victims of domestic violence supported by Two Good Co. who deliver meals to shelters; and women, girls and families accessing micro-financing through Good Shepherd. The outcomes for community partners range from strategy plans to process improvement mapping to customer experience design and business case development.

NAB's Head of Strategic Giving, Laura Cochrane acknowledged the generous benefits that flow from the NAB Skilled Volunteering Program. "We are building a skilled volunteering

program with Australian Business Volunteers that has triple impact. It benefits the community, NAB colleagues individually and NAB as an organisation, Cochrane said.

“ With 40 years of experience, ABV has superior facilitation skills and exceptional management of our volunteers. Together, we are creating sustainable social change. ”

Most recently, the NAB Skilled Volunteering Program has worked with Special Olympics Australia, and the Committee for Ballarat with Beyond Zero Emissions.

NAB with Special Olympics Australia

Special Olympics Australia (SOA) is part of a global inclusion movement using sport, health education and leadership programs every day around the world to end discrimination against and empower people with intellectual disabilities.

Not to be confused with the Paralympics, which is for elite athletes, Special Olympics is a year-round, multi sports program for people with intellectual disabilities. SOA’s volunteers create accessible sports training, coaching and competition opportunities, which are offered week-in and week-out in local communities throughout Australia.

NAB is currently the Principal Partner of Special Olympics Australia.

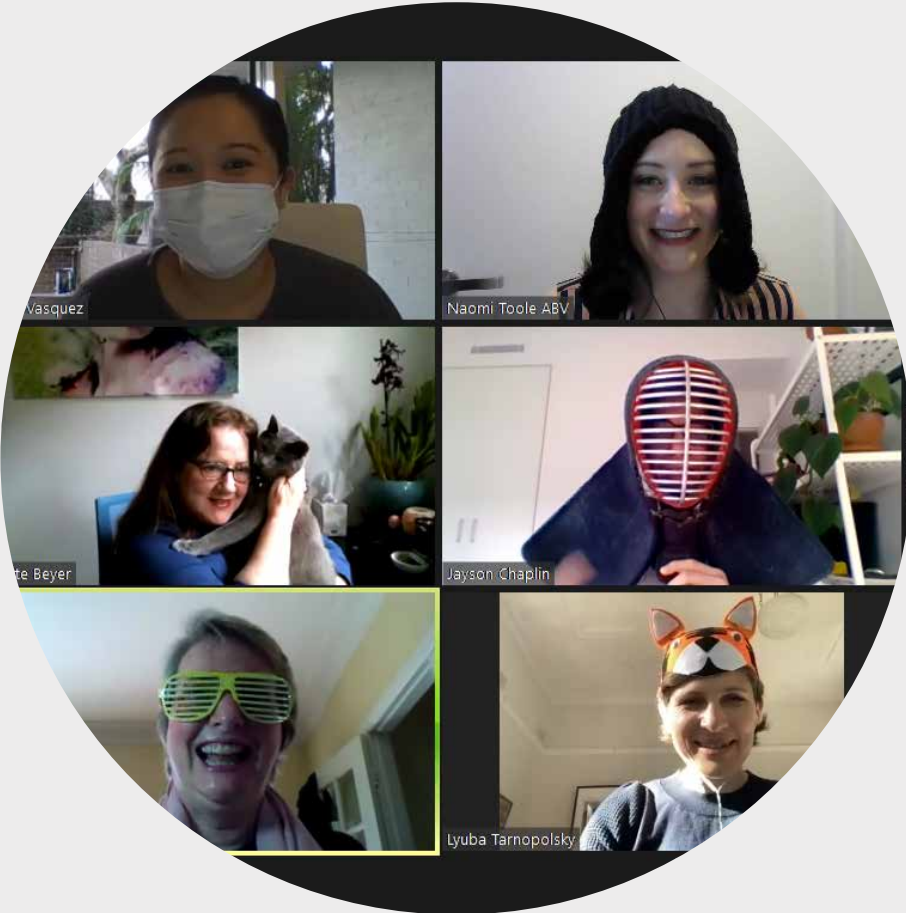
During NAB’s Community Strategy Challenge with Special Olympics, held in July 2020, ABV facilitated a review of the organisation’s business model, structure, processes and income streams with SOA staff and NAB volunteers. The aim for the team was to identify options and approaches for SOA to:

- better position themselves as thought leaders,
- increase their recurring revenue streams, and funding reserves, and;
- better target, recruit and retain young people with an intellectual disability in their programs

Following an extensive SWOT analysis and an examination of the current strategic direction, SOA’s business model was aligned to grow its core revenue and become a thought leader within the intellectual disability sector.

This resulted in the expansion of the value proposition centred around athletes, the creation of a value proposition for volunteers (coaches, teachers, parents) and the introduction of new channels to deliver programs.

These new initiatives are to be supported by a revitalised marketing strategy focused on targeted communication and creating brand awareness and a funding strategy supported by a clear value proposition for corporate partners and government grants.



At the close of the group’s final presentation, Special Olympics Australia CEO, Corene Strauss expressed her overwhelming gratitude for the incredible work and talent that have contributed to the Community Strategy Challenge and its final report.

“ This has been an incredible experience and way beyond what I expected,’ Corene said. ‘It’s revealing and also tells me as a leader, that we are on the right path and not alone in this journey. I cannot thank you enough. ”

Post-challenge feedback from NAB’s participating staff included admiration for Special Olympics Australia, appreciation for ABV staff’s facilitation skills and commitment, and pride in NAB’s initiatives to support the community. Staff also acknowledged learning new skills that they would take back to their ‘day jobs’.



The skilled volunteering program is a great way for NAB to give back to the community and support NFPs. I am very proud of the social enterprises that NAB supports in the community.

One of the highlights of the year for me

I picked up some amazing facilitation skills and have a deeper conceptual understanding of how to create a high performing team environment

I learnt how to approach problems differently and to allow time to brainstorm with colleagues rather than trying to jump in and solve a problem

It was a great experience working with a cross-skilled team from all parts of NAB to see the talent and experience within NAB and to learn from others that you normally don’t get a chance to work with.

We spent a long time in discovery and learning before starting to work to solve the problem and this was invaluable not just for the project but in building my understanding and appreciation for the issues faced by NFPs in today’s economic and political climate

NAB with Committee for Ballarat and Beyond Zero Emissions

Established in 2005, the Committee for Ballarat (C4B) investigates and advocates for outcomes that will advance its vision for a thriving and vibrant regional community, recognised for its liveability, sustainability, and inclusiveness. Beyond Zero Emissions (BZE) is an internationally recognised climate change and energy think tank that shows through independent research and innovative solutions how Australia can prosper in a zero-emissions economy. BZE was supporting Committee for Ballarat to gain a better understanding of the types of projects and financial models that will attract financial investment. BZE has been working with communities, through their Zero Carbon Communities (ZCC) initiative, and their ZCC Investment Reference Group, to unlock barriers to place based zero emissions projects.

This NAB Community Strategy Challenge brought the two organisations together to meet complementary aims. BZE goals from the NAB Community Strategy Challenge were to investigate a replicable and scalable funding model for other regional areas to use when moving to renewable energy. The Committee's goals from the

NAB Community Strategy Challenge were to understand how to reduce industrial emissions with a broader goal to reach zero emissions for the region.

In order to determine what steps Ballarat's industrial community could follow to transition to renewable electricity, and how this model could be replicated, the Challenge followed a three-step process. Over the course of the Challenge, participants from NAB, C4B, BZE and ABV explored Ballarat's electricity opportunities and challenges as well as current emissions, usage, and costs. This led to the definition of key goals and the identification of potential solutions. Due to the technical complexity of the issue and the short timeframes for analysis, a key recommendation for C4B was to apply for feasibility funding, as future actions would require engagement of experts to inform the decisions and plan implementation.

The sheer complexity of Australia's energy sector, combined with the short timeframe did not appear to detract from the opportunities for learning and development of other knowledge and skills required to deliver positive outcomes.

Feedback from BZE included the following comment, which best summarises the

challenges and positive outcomes. 'The NAB team did amazingly well in getting their heads around many complex problems and confidently presented what they determined as relevant, yet broad solutions. The project was ultimately very successful in encouraging the Committee for Ballarat to undertake work that they would not have otherwise started or known how to. They are far ahead than they were prior to the program, and it has brought their membership closer together. BZE has been fortunate to first-hand observe this multi-stakeholder approach and assess its effectiveness.'

The Committee for Ballarat also acknowledged the 'great opportunity to engage diverse thought, skills and knowledge, with objectivity and critique'.

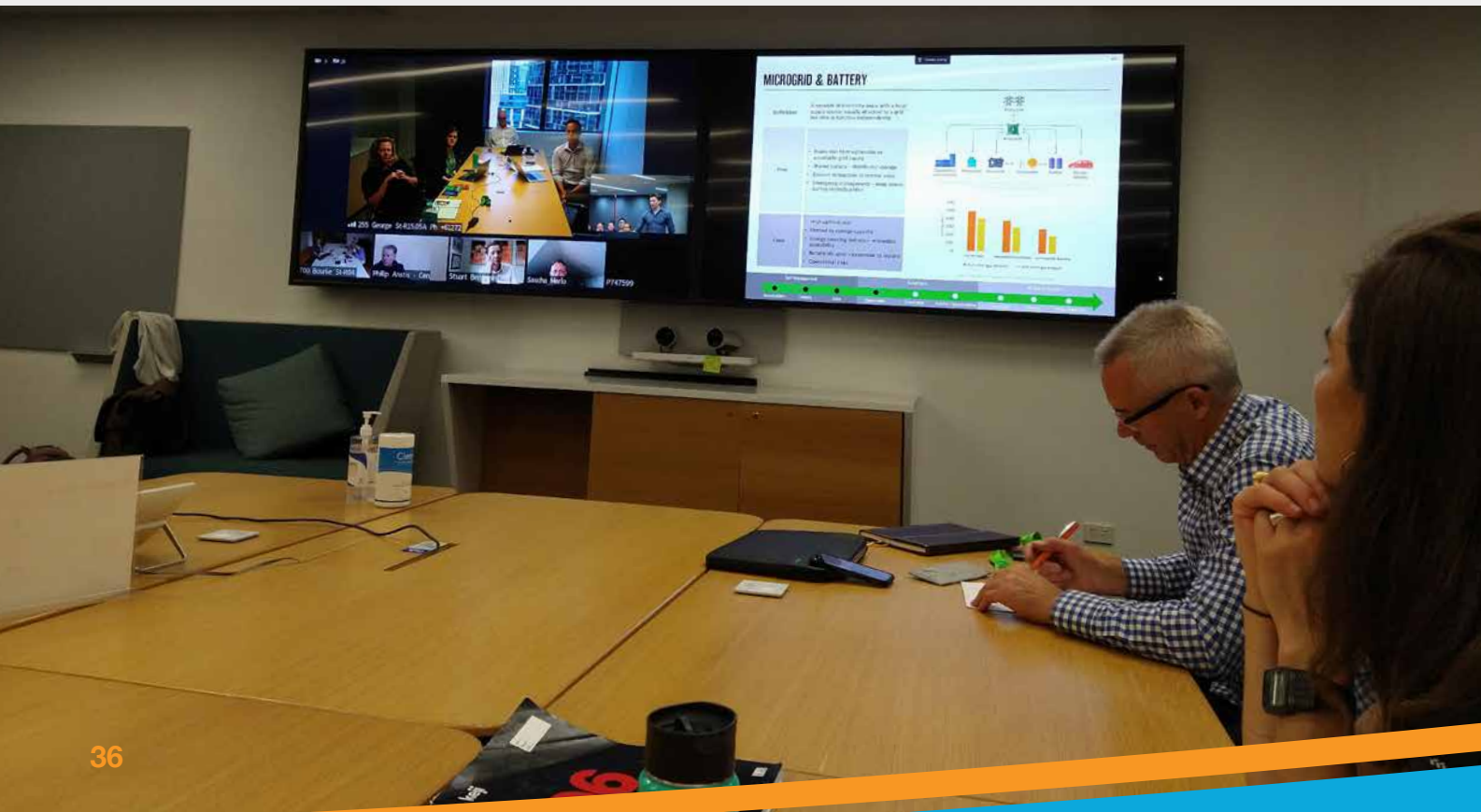
Post-challenge feedback included acknowledgement and gratitude for ABV Program Director, Naomi Toole's professionalism, facilitation skills, enthusiasm, motivation, and organisation.

As with previous challenges, participating NAB staff were grateful for the opportunity.

I learnt a huge amount about an area of interest to me that sits well outside my day job. I found this a stimulating and rewarding opportunity.

There is a great sense of gratitude from the immersion sponsor for the value they received, but it goes just as much the other way, and it is a privilege to receive the benefit of their knowledge and experience to explore their topic.

The experience exceeded my expectations – I gained skills that are applicable to my current role at NAB, but also learned a huge amount about renewable energy plus the way that businesses outside of NAB work.



Piloting Immersive Skilled Volunteering with Woolworths



In 2020, ABV and Woolworths undertook a proof-of-concept pilot with WooliesX Indigenous community partner, ID. Know Yourself (IDKY) and ten employees, engaging in two immersive projects over 2019 and 2020.

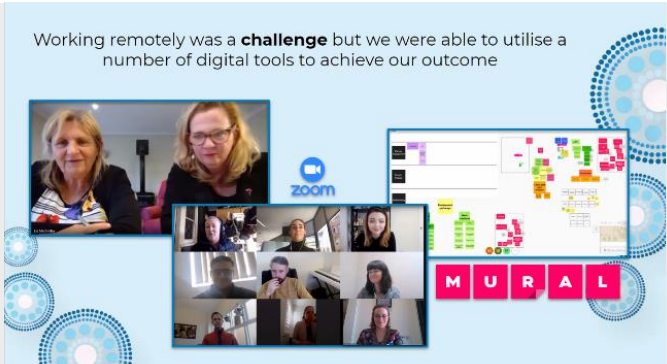
The Woolworths Skilled Volunteering immersion program sought to motivate, reward and engage employees whilst creating sustainable social impact. The program aimed to help Woolworths drive an increase in sustainable social change through building the capability of a community partner to deliver good in their communities, contributing to a better tomorrow where all Australians have an equitable voice and access to opportunities for prosperity. The proof of concept exceeded expectations.

CEO and Founder of ID. Know Yourself Isaiah Dawe stated “We had an absolutely incredible time and gained so much through this immersion with Australian Business Volunteers and Woolworths Group.” IDKY Elder in residence Aunty Glendra Stubbs further commented that the Program was “so very worthwhile”.

Participants were provided a unique opportunity to step outside their traditional institutional work environment and stretch their skills and capabilities in a ten-week light touch immersive project, followed by a two-week intensive immersive project. Testimonials provided by participants gives further weight to the impact this program made on them personally and professionally.



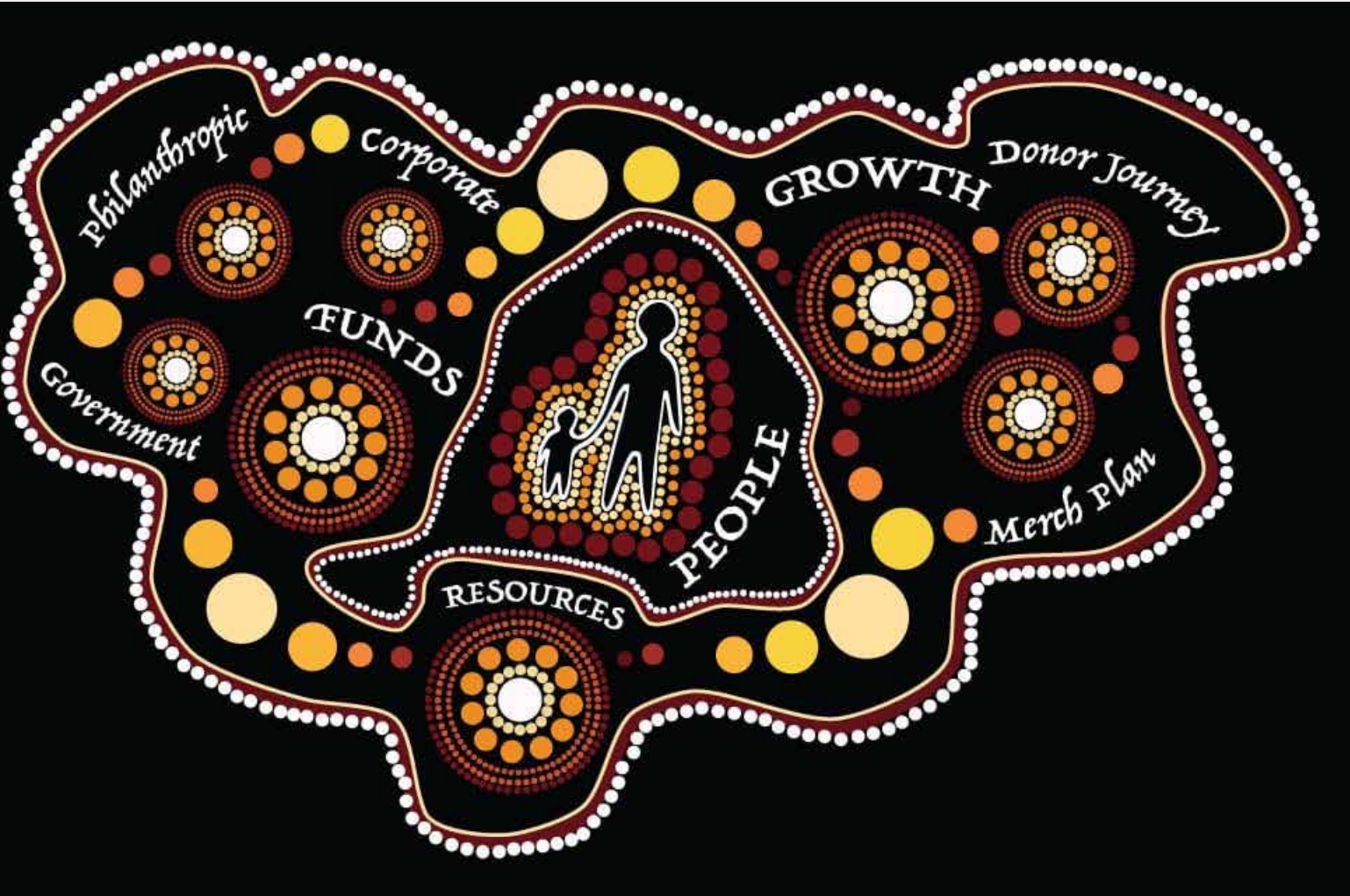
WooliesX intensive immersion team on presentation day – ABV facilitator Naomi joining remotely.



Above: Aunty Glendra (IDKY) & Liz Mackinlay (ABV CEO) on zoom with intensive team.



Left: Intensive team final presentation



This has had a significant impact both personally and professionally. I will be sharing my experiences with friends, family and colleagues to ensure there is awareness of the challenges that exist.

This program was personally very giving and self-rewarding. Allowed me to work on different areas that I wouldn't normally and use skill sets that I usually wouldn't in my daily role.

This experience has changed me. It highlighted some important social and community issues to me that I believe I can, in my own small way, advocate for. I plan to become an advocate for these issues in casual conversation as well as look for opportunities to support where I can through my role and position at Woolworths.

Yes it absolutely has, both professionally and personally. It's enabled me to expand my network internally, as well as polishing up my collaboration skills and identifying a few areas I need to work on! Personally I found it hugely rewarding and I feel very invested in ID.KY and their mission.

ABV team did an amazing job in structuring and facilitating this intense program online. Throughout the program, you have steered us in the right direction and helped us to always keep the bigger picture in mind.

Our People

Meet the team



Liz Mackinlay
CEO



Faith Gudgion
Chief of Staff to CEO



George Barrett
Senior Program Manager



Cate Giovanelli
Volunteer Special Projects Manager



Rick Steele
Program Director



Jessie Fisher
Program Director



Henry Ume-Taule
Senior Program Manager



Betty Komes
Program Manager



Nani Doodoh
Volunteer Recruitment Manager



Naomi Toole
Program Director, Innovation



Materua Tamarua
ABV PNG Sponsor



Julia Bowen
Business Operations Manager

Meet the Board of Directors



Mark Epper
Chair

Mark has spent 27 years as an audit partner with KPMG, and has served on the Board of KPMG and its Remuneration Committee for several years. In addition to his deep financial expertise Mark has a broad base of industry experience and extensive experience with ASX Top 200 companies. He has worked in Australia and internationally, particularly China and Philippines, as Partner-in Charge of the NSW China Practice and lead partner on KPMG's quality review programme in Australia, China and Manila. Mark holds a Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting, is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia and New Zealand and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Frances Healy
Chair, Governance Committee

Fran's career spans over 35 years in both State and Commonwealth governments and the not-for-profit sector. Fran was CEO for Greening Australia (Tasmania) for seven years. Other positions have included as Communication Manager for Tasmania's National Parks and Wildlife, Senior Policy Analyst in the Department of Premier and Cabinet and Business Development and Communication Manager in the of CSIRO Division of Marine Research. Fran has been Chair of Volunteering Tasmania and a Director on the Board of Volunteering Australia. She is a member of the Tasmanian Resource Management and Planning Tribunal and has been a member of the Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Council, Tasmanian Marine Farming Planning Review Panel and the Tasmanian Product Safety Committee (2005-2007). She has a Bachelor of Science with a double major in Zoology / Botany, a Diploma of Education and a Diploma of Company Directors. Fran has been a volunteer on five ABV assignments.



Louisa Minney
Chair, Finance Committee

Louisa has over 25 years' management consulting experience. As Director of her own business, AidLogic, Louisa provides advisory and consultative services aimed specifically at increasing the benefit and impact of development assistance. Louisa is currently working with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and Fairtrade Australia and New Zealand developing initiatives that increase economic participation and employment opportunities, with an emphasis on the economic empowerment of women. She is also the National Secretary of the United Nations Association of Australia. Concurrent to her civilian career, Louisa serves in the Australian Army as an Officer in the Australian Army Reserve, and is a Subject Matter Expert on diversity and inclusion, and Women, Peace and Security to Vice Chief of the Defence Group and the Peace Operations Training Centre.

She was a nominated participant in the 2020 Australia Summit and has recently been recognised as a Distinguished Alumni of her alma mater, Flinders University.



Jane Madden

Jane is the founder and Principal of a Canberra advisory firm, specialising in strategy, capability and international business development, including with several technology firms. Jane also works as an executive coach to private and public sector leaders. Jane held positions at the most senior levels of the Commonwealth Departments of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Industry, and Prime Minister and Cabinet. She led a highly successful diplomatic career, including as Ambassador to UNESCO Paris, Counsellor, Australian Embassy, Tokyo and assignments in Asia, Africa and Pacific. She was Chief Operating Officer at the Digital Transformation Office and subsequently Deputy Secretary of the Australian Trade and Investment Commission, Austrade (2015-17). Jane is also a highly regarded non-executive director with over fifteen years' experience as chair and member of boards and committees across government, business and the not-for-profit sector. She currently serves on the boards of the Black Dog Institute, Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT), Australian Business Volunteers, and a number of start-up ventures. She is the President of the National Foundation for Australian Women (NFAW).



John Edwards

John Edwards has held Senior Executive/Leadership and Board/Advisory roles in both engineering and technology firms, as well as a number of start-ups and early stage businesses. He has also held Partnership and VP roles in international management consulting firms in Australia, Asia, and Europe, with a strong focus on business transformation, strategic marketing, and the business impact of technology. More recently much of his focus, research, and advice have been concentrated on digital transformation, and practical routes to successful adoption of new technology.

John has led businesses in Europe, Asia, and Australia. He is a Fellow of both the Australian (AICD) and UK (IOD) Directors' Institutes. John has an Honours Degree in Production Engineering, and has an MBA from the Wharton School in the USA, with US Honors Society Membership (Beta Gamma Sigma).



Richard Grupetta

Richard has over 26 years' experience in both the public and private sectors including as a former Australian diplomat, advisory firm Partner and now as a corporate advisor to global brands navigating international business, the Australian Government and business development objectives. With a long-term background in management consulting, Richard offers expertise in business strategy, governance, risk compliance, design, government advocacy and private-public sector partnership development. This is enhanced by experience from his leadership roles within PwC and Grant Thornton, leading their Asia Practice Groups, supporting Australian business expand business opportunity with the region across from Japan, South Korea, China, South, and South-East Asia. A graduate from Monash University and the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Richard has spent 22 years within the Asian region and is fluent in the Japanese language.

Meet the G-8

Our Skilled Business Professional Working Group

ABV has amazingly loyal and talented volunteers with incredibly adaptable and useful skills. During the early months of the pandemic, our team saw an opportunity to bring a group of eight of our Skilled Business Professionals who donate their time alongside our team to help us complete several organisational projects and priorities. The group of eight was invited into our team and attended regular team meetings, took on special projects and provided key strategic advice in those

uncertain few months. The group of eight help ABV with business development, have undertaken curriculum review for all our programs, have helped advise on IT and procurement issues and have become important members of the ABV team. Through this pilot, ABV will be adopting a One Team philosophy for our Skilled Business Professionals and staff, co-creating and co-delivering world class programs that strengthen communities through business.



Liane Arno started volunteering with ABV in 2006 and has since helped develop curriculum and deliver workshops for the Your Enterprise Scheme (YES) program. Liane brings a strong corporate background in human resource management and recent small business experience as a semi-retired publican.

What skills sets do you most bring to your role with ABV?

A passion to help others succeed; a tenacity to make things work - even when things don't go to plan; a good sense of humour - oh and the HR and business skills.

What are the greatest benefits you get from being a volunteer skilled business professional?

Being part of a team that does not distinguish between its permanent staff and volunteers - but engages and informs.

Who/What has inspired you in 20/21?

Liz Mackinlay. How many other people would have been able to take ABV from an organisation reliant on government funding and in situ service delivery to one where ABV is now positioned to deliver overseas through blended learning and remote mentoring as well as locally in Australia?



Matt Stone has turned five decades of professional experience in business, banking and finance into an impressive volunteer career. He joined ABV in 2006 and has made significant impacts in communities throughout Asia Pacific. Matt has been part of the YES program delivery team for the past 15 years.

What ABV moment in FY20/21 has stuck with you the most?

Successfully working with the G8 members to develop the framework and materials to be able to deliver our core development workshops virtually.

Who/What has inspired you in 20/21?

ABV's ability, via strong leadership from CEO, to develop and grow and basically reinvent itself as a unique, flexible organisation that can work with corporate partners in areas of disaster recovery locally, as well as in isolation to deliver high standard development opportunities in the region.



Cameron McFarlane began sharing his extensive corporate business skills with ABV in 2001, when it was known as AESOP. Cameron has lived in Fiji and Indonesia and worked across the Asia Pacific region with ABV on programs including YES, BBG and specialist projects.

What are the greatest benefits you get from being a volunteer?

The enjoyment of working co-operatively with a fantastic group of people, all with authentic intentions and a desire to help ABV succeed; being heard and appreciated when making a contribution; witnessing the results of our efforts; being provided with the opportunity to utilise skills in a socially constructive way.

What ABV moment in FY20/21 has stuck with you the most?

Seeing the transformation of ABV, from a publicly funded moribund NGO into a vibrant, agile and resilient social enterprise, evidenced by its success in winning and delivering contracts, building a strong and capable paid workforce and the redefining of its volunteer workforce.

Who/What has inspired you in 20/21?

Most definitely CEO Liz Mackinlay, her strategic vision, leadership skills and a genuine caring person. Also, the willingness of ABV staff to explore and support new business opportunities.



Since starting with ABV in 2019, management consultant and small business owner, **Evelyn Moolenburgh** has added more than 40 years professional experience to the talent pool of Skilled Business professionals. Evelyn began volunteering with the girl guides and for local fundraisers at school and progressed to community firefighting and as a mentor with ABV's Bank of South Pacific Leadership Development Project in Tonga and Solomon Islands.

What ABV moment in FY20/21 has stuck with you the most?

I love working with the women in the pacific islands; One of my mentee's has gone from a timid analyst to a confident Financial Manager who has just been promoted, and only in 12 months.

Who/What has inspired you in 20/21?

... the way everyone has had to make changes to be able to manage through the challenges of the last few years. Ingenuity that was inspirational and a leveller.



Jo-Anna Crawford-Bryde

is an education specialist with more than 27 years' experience and joined ABVC in 2018. She has made major contributions to education and curriculum reform projects around the Pacific including work in Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Fiji, Nauru, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Sri Lanka and Indonesia.

What attracted you to ABV and volunteering?

I was looking to contribute in a positive way, use my skill set and do so with an ethical and professional organisation.

Who/What has inspired you in 20/21?

The great sense of collegiality and wonderful enthusiasm of the ABV staff despite the challenges of working in the new COVID world.



Peter Barnett joined ABV in early 2019 and has shared his skills in procurement, logistics and IT during two four week stays in Port Moresby, PNG. He has a reputation as a collaborative partner who achieves positive outcomes and focuses on team development.

What are the greatest benefits you get from being a volunteer skilled business professional?

Being able to make a real difference to the lives of those I work with.

What ABV moment in FY20/21 has stuck with you the most?

Not being able to volunteer overseas

Who/What has inspired you in 20/21?

I continue to try to make a difference with all my volunteer activities.



Jane Anderson is an expert in adult education who has lived and worked in the UK, France, Algeria, USA, Belgium and Canada, among others. Jane began with ABV in 2016 and has made significant contributions to the development of curriculum and course materials, most recently with Family Money Management Program (FMMP).

What attracted you to ABV and volunteering?

The opportunity to work in international settings with a mature, niche organisation which utilises, values and respects professional skills and shares the same values.

Who/What has inspired you in 20/21?

Knowing we continue to make a difference in really challenging circumstances and seeing our leaders pivot, continue to achieve excellent outcomes, and set us up to be ready to dive back into more activities as the restrictions ease.



Keith Thomas is a retired IT professional and Project Manager who joined ABV four years ago and now works across corporate IT office and communications systems as well as local community needs such as the Regional Connectivity Program.

What are the greatest benefits you get from being a volunteer skilled business professional?

Interesting projects, mixing with a group of people dedicated to helping others in Australia and our near neighbours.

What ABV moment in FY20/21 has stuck with you the most?

Working with a number of people in ABV as we developed a new IT environment

Who/What has inspired you in 20/21?

The work at Cobargo and its impact on the local community.

Financials

Our Financial Health

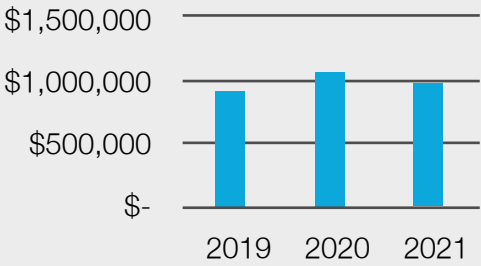
Since 2019, ABV has weathered the COVID-19 'storm' and has emerged stronger and poised for significant growth in revenues and has concrete plans to rebuild our reserves.

The current financial position and future state for ABV is healthy. March to September 2020 saw a suspension of our partnership with the promise of reinstatement once the initial stages of the COVID pandemic passed. Final quarter of 2020 calendar year saw a recommencement of all of our partnerships with new partnerships coming online in the third and fourth quarters of 2021. ABV has always provided support remotely and so with a renewed focus on strong local staff, and our Skilled Business Professionals providing support online to our local staff and community members, whether here in Australia or across the Pacific, ABV has adapted to the new conditions COOVID has wrought. Our financial position reflects this.

Furthermore, we now have several new programs that we are actively planning and negotiating. We are expanding our relationships with existing partners and developing new partnerships with a range of corporate, government and community organisations. These programs have a projected total of more than \$5million revenue.

2021 has been a year of recovery and rebuilding and ABV is investing in our staff, recruiting development experts to work on our emerging programs and highly skilled and experienced administration staff to build the systems, processes and capabilities to support our new mode of operation.

Revenue





DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

In accordance with a resolution of the directors of Australian Business Volunteers Limited, The Trustee Company for the AESOP Foundation, the Directors declare that:

- 1) The financial statements and notes present fairly the Foundation's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012; and
- 2) In the directors' opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Foundation will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

For and behalf of the Board of Australian Business Volunteers Limited,


Director **MARK EPPER**
Date: **28 October 2021**


John Edwards (Oct 29, 2021 10:24 GMT+11)
Director **John Edwards**
Date: **Oct 29, 2021**

Pro Bono Partners

We'd like to thank each and every one of our amazing Skilled Business Professionals and Pro Bono Partners who supported our projects and initiatives throughout 2019-2020.

The donation of your expertise, passion and your time is greatly appreciated and we appreciate your continued support of ABV.



Legal Support



Salesforce Support



PWC in PNG - Tax and Legal Advice



2021 Audit

How you can get Involved

Become a member

If you would like to become a Member of ABV, you can head to our website and complete the 'Become A Member' form at: abv.org.au/about-us/become-a-member/

Or email us at info@abv.org.au

Volunteer your time

If you would like to become a Registered Volunteer for ABV and be eligible for any of our great assignments, you can head to our website and follow the Volunteer Registration Process:

abv.org.au/volunteer/apply/

Or email us at recruitment@abv.org.au

Become a corporate partner

If an organisation you are part of would like to know more about Corporate Skilled Volunteering or any other type of collaboration, please email us at info@abv.org.au

or call +61 412 827 133

Other ways you can stay in the loop

Subscribe to our newsletter for the all the latest news and opportunities

abv.org.au/contact-us/newsletter/

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Australian Business Volunteers | Strengthening communities through business

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