

# The TFN Ripple Effect – Our Impact To Date

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Australians are famed for their spirit of entrepreneurship, particularly when coming up with new ways to tackle our most persistent community problems. However, many innovations fail because of a lack of access to funding and resources. These barriers are limiting our potential for a more equitable society.

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The Funding Network (TFN) has pioneered an inclusive approach that is addressing this issue. We build the capacity of grassroots non-profits by harnessing the power of storytelling via live crowdfunding events, then lever these to create deeper donor connections to community through mentoring and in-kind support.

The events create a rich sensory environment. Audiences are keenly attuned to the emotions and actions of each other and the people presenting. This sparks waves of generosity and goodwill that often lasts long into the future.

The result? TFN is building bridges between business, philanthropy and the social sector; transforming compassion into action and unleashing the vast potential of citizen support for our communities.



[www.thefundingnetwork.com.au](http://www.thefundingnetwork.com.au)

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

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## Our vision

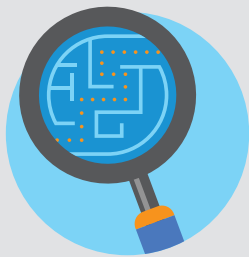
A more equitable society and a social sector that has access to the connections and resources it needs to thrive.

## Our purpose

To build the capacity of grassroots non-profit organisations by helping to democratise giving and facilitating deeper community engagement.

## Our model

### TFN LIVE OUR EVENTS



#### Research:

Identify grassroots non-profits with innovative solutions to community problems, and align philanthropic support through live crowdfunding events.



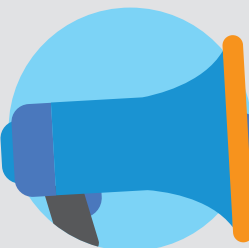
#### Review:

Undertake due-diligence on applications, then curate an independent selection panel to select three grassroots non-profits and social enterprises to pitch at each event.



#### Inspire:

Create memorable and inclusive experiences, uniting non-profits with those seeking to make a meaningful contribution to the community.



#### Report:

Provide donors with updates and impact stories 12 months on, so they can see how their funds and in-kind support are changing lives for the better.

### TFN LEARN OUR CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES



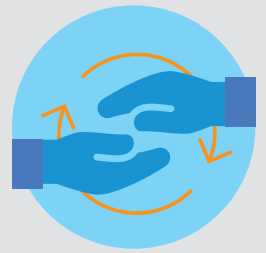
#### Upskill:

Train and mentor non-profit leaders to clearly articulate their purpose, their stories and their funding needs through pitch coaching workshops.



#### Teach:

Guide and support corporate and non-profit clients to run their own live crowdfunding events by sharing our methodology and key elements for success.



#### Mentor:

Facilitate mentoring opportunities for non-profit CEOs with corporate CEOs and Non-Executive Directors where expertise and learnings flow both ways.



#### Volunteer:

Facilitate skilled volunteering opportunities for individuals and corporations interested in learning new skills and building the capacity of non-profit organisations.

## The TFN ripple effect – our impact to date\*

TFN is not just about funding, it is a catalyst for connecting the right people and resources with the right grassroots non-profit organisations, where everyone can build their capacity for good.

**4,065**

Event donors

**44** Flagship events

(Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, Brisbane, Perth)

Leveraged funding

**\$1,500,000**

(Received post events from TFN network)

Total of

**\$5,964,003**

funds facilitated

Approximately

**\$1,000,000**

worth of in-kind services facilitated

**50+**

Event co-host partnerships with businesses and foundations

**159**

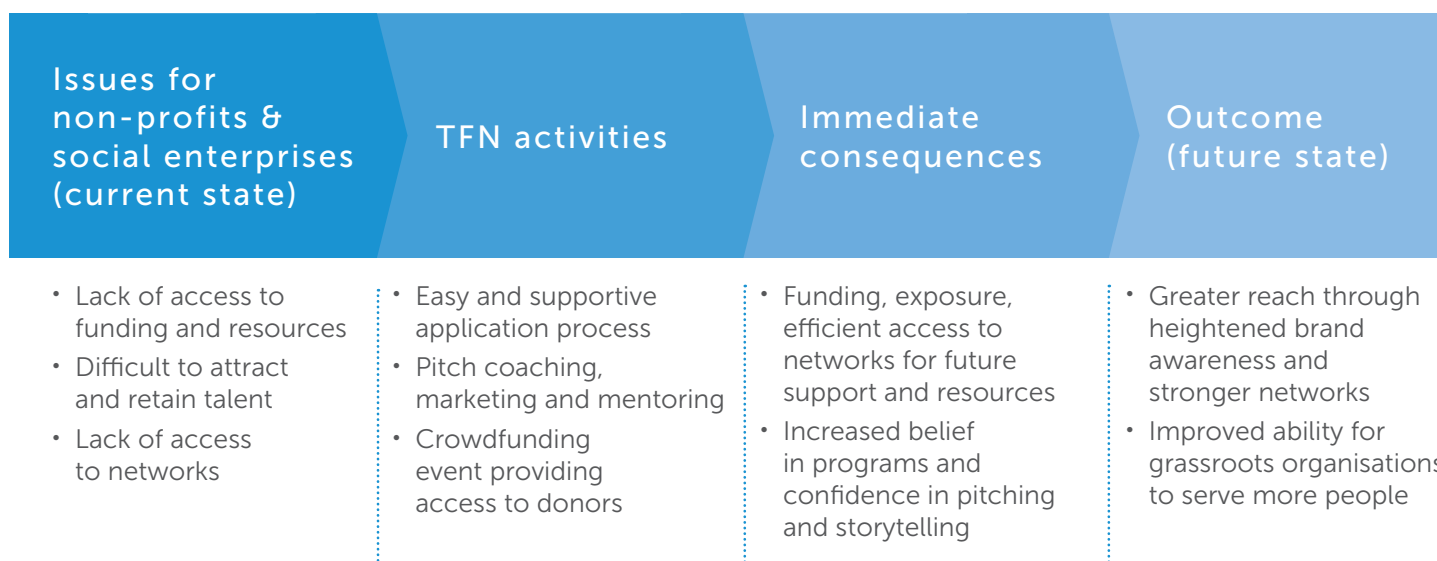
Non-profit and social enterprise alumni

**452**

Pitch coaching workshop participants

Since inception in 2013, TFN has undertaken live crowdfunding events that have enabled 159 grassroots non-profits\* to access funding and capacity building support totalling over \$8 million in value. We have invested in resources to build the skills and networks of our non-profit alumni, enabling them to scale their growth and deepen their impact.

## TFN theory of change for grassroots non-profit organisations



## Purpose and design of our evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation, undertaken by SVA Consulting, was to assess the impact TFN has on its non-profit alumni over time. It was designed to test TFN's theory of change and gain a deeper understanding of the multi-dimensional effect of the model.

What we wanted to find out	Methodology
1. What was the TFN experience like for non-profit alumni?	1. 60 online anonymous surveys with a mix of both structured and open-text questions
2. What was the overall impact of TFN on non-profit alumni?	
3. How did individual elements of TFN contribute to the overall impact?	2. 19 in-depth open format interviews with a diverse sample of non-profit alumni
4. What are the implications of these findings?	
5. What are the recommendations for the future?	3. An analysis of TFN operational data, which captures financial and in-kind support provided during and after each event

## Key findings

This evaluation of TFN demonstrated that it has been a transformative experience for many grassroots non-profits and social enterprises, creating a lasting impact that goes well beyond the funds raised at events.

**49%**  
Portion of the impact attributed to the collective giving element.

Two thirds of respondents said that TFN had a critical or important impact on their ability to get to where they are now.

**8.9**  
Average rating of overall positivity of the experience for non-profit alumni (out of 10).

**51%**  
Portion of the impact attributed to capacity building, relationships formed and other non-monetary elements.

**71%**  
Rated the experience of working with TFN as a 9 or 10.

*It's like TFN attaches a rocket ship to little non-profits. It helped us grow dramatically – we've achieved 150 per cent compound growth over 3 years.*

## Primary insights

The financial benefits from TFN's support have a major impact on the growth and sustainability of our alumni, which was found to be complemented by non-monetary benefits, particularly relationship building and capacity development.



### TFN provides flexibility to raise funds for their most critical needs.

Alumni each raised over \$28,000 on average at TFN events, which has allowed them to put resources towards their key needs.



### A third of alumni received valuable in-kind donations.

Thirty per cent of alumni received in-kind donations that were "extremely valuable" or "very valuable" as a result of TFN connections, such as professional services or board membership.



### The value of TFN's support extends beyond fundraising.

When asked about the relative value of different elements of the TFN experience, respondents weighted other non-monetary aspects equally to the funding.



### Increased credibility with donors.

Most alumni felt that TFN had increased their credibility with donors, with many saying it enabled them to connect with donors that they otherwise never would have been able to.



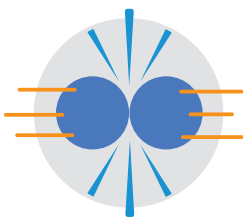
### Alumni reflect positively on the TFN experience.

Alumni found the process of applying, preparing, pitching and reporting to be efficient and non-burdensome.



### Alumni learn a lot through the experience.

The entire TFN participation is considered a learning experience, but pitch coaching appeared to be the differentiator. There is a notable shift in confidence of non-profit leaders from before pitch coaching to afterwards.



### Alumni gain the most impact when they take advantage of multiple elements of TFN.

The alumni who found the experience to be most impactful typically leveraged multiple benefits from their involvement, including fundraising, valuable relationships, in-kind support, and a pitch strategy they could continue to use for future fundraising efforts.



### Relationships made through TFN have the potential to be transformative.

Almost all alumni made lasting connections and over half of these considered these relationships to be "extremely valuable" or "very valuable". Some of these relationships had transformative effects, either in terms of generating ongoing funding or other operational benefits.

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## TFN learnings

By virtue of their size, grassroots non-profits rely on 'enabling organisations' like TFN to reach extensive networks to support their growth. This evaluation has highlighted an opportunity for TFN to deepen its impact by identifying mechanisms to strengthen connections between non-profit alumni and donor networks and streamline opportunities for further in-kind and post-event support.

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## How did individual elements of TFN contribute to the overall impact?

Respondents were asked to rank the relative benefit of different elements of the TFN experience to understand which elements have the strongest contribution to the overall impact. Funds received were the most highly ranked element, however they also show that other elements, particularly the access to new networks and pitch coaching, were also very highly valued and sometimes over the money itself.



### Fundraising

Funding is considered the single most valuable element of the TFN experience. Alumni explained that the funds they received helped to cover program costs, hire new staff, or provide “breathing room” for their operations.

Respondents described the experience of fundraising through TFN to be much more satisfactory than typical grants processes. The timing and speed was considered to be very helpful. They also valued the flexibility with which funds could be used.

*“This was a great example of how to engage people’s hearts, talents and finances through a highly creative and exhilarating experience.”*

While all alumni received funds after they pitched at a TFN event, 38% went on to receive further funding from the TFN network. The median amount was about \$10,000 and the maximum was around \$400,000.

### Confidence and encouragement

Confidence building and affirmation were aspects that were described as valuable components of TFN’s model. Respondents reported a notable shift in confidence after the event, as a result of both the pitch coaching workshop and the opportunity to gain support from a live audience en masse.

### Connections and relationships

Networking and relationship building was considered the second most valuable element of the TFN experience. Almost all respondents stated that they made lasting connections as a result of their participation and over half considered these to be “extremely valuable” or “very valuable”.

*“Following our presentation we met a number of people at the event. These people have gone on to become our major donors. We have also been put forward for a number of opportunities we would not have come across had it not been for the people we met at TFN.”*

### Marketing and promotions

For most, ongoing marketing and promotion from TFN was a ‘nice-to-have’, but not a huge part of the TFN impact. A few respondents provided examples where they were able to access new audiences as a result of TFN’s promotional effect and use this to raise awareness of their organisation.

Most alumni experienced a positive effect from their association with TFN in terms of their credibility with donors. For small non-profits, this association was significant in that it allowed access to new connections that would have otherwise been out of reach.

### Capacity building

The learning and capacity building aspect was consistently mentioned as a high-value component of the TFN experience. Survey and interview results put this slightly behind the relationship building element, coming in as the third highest ranked element of participation. Pitch coaching was the most important component of this.

Using TFN’s framework enabled them to share their organisation’s mission more clearly and succinctly, to develop stories that cut through the clutter of daily communication and to shape their narrative into something powerful and motivating.

*“The overall coaching and preparation experience was far more beneficial than we ever imagined it to be. To finesse our pitch - in length, suitability for target audience, and punch - is a real art and the coaching from TFN was invaluable.”*

### In-kind support

Two-thirds of respondents stated that they received some form of in-kind support as a result of connections made at a TFN event. This is consistent with data collected by TFN which tracks in-kind donations received for up to 12 months after an event, and shows that around \$1.5 million worth of support has been received by alumni since 2013.

The findings demonstrated that in-kind support has the potential to be a valuable part of the TFN experience, particularly when organisations have the tools and capabilities to make the most of the opportunity.

To read the full report, visit [thefundingnetwork.com.au/impact](http://thefundingnetwork.com.au/impact)

### References

Sources compiled during this evaluation

1. Survey of TFN non-profit alumni, conducted by SVA Consulting, October 2017, n=60
2. Interviews with TFN non-profit alumni, conducted by SVA Consulting in partnership with TFN, October 2017 n=19
3. TFN Outcomes at a Glance data collection