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# Grantlines: Partnering Local Projects

## A practical guide for community groups to build partnerships for their projects

### What is *Grantlines: Partnering Local Projects*?

*Grantlines: Partnering Local Projects* is a guide for community groups who are interested in developing partnerships for local projects within and beyond their communities. It provides practical and proven ways for a community group with a local project to develop the foundations for effective partnerships with companies, business, organisations, associations and the philanthropic sector who share an interest in their community. It is a part of Turnstone Projects Grantlines service.

### Why would a community group use the Guide?

Locally-based volunteer groups and associations who seek to bring about positive, long-term change will often benefit from establishing partnerships with others within and beyond their community. Collaboration can bring additional energy, publicity, expertise, resources, profile and connections.

It is particularly useful when the issue being addressed requires a long-term commitment, is complex or relies on others to help bring about change. It is also useful when the initial project being proposed can be a catalyst for ongoing work that will help the community and communities further afield.

### How does the Guide work?

The focus is very much on the community group taking the lead. To do this, the Guide identifies some of the key elements that prospective partners will want to know about the project and those proposing the work. It blends a workbook approach with ideas, activities and further references. In this way, it can be either a toolkit or a reference, depending on the skills and experience of the group.

### Benefits of using the Guide

The Guide can help community groups in the following ways:

1. Developing the skills for forming partnerships within the community.
2. Making relevant companies, organisations, service providers, government agencies and the philanthropic sector aware of your work in a planned and consistent way.
3. Promoting your community / town / region to a wider audience.
4. Enabling the community to engage in discussions early on with potential partners and help bring projects to life more quickly.
5. Providing consistent and regular material about your project to all interested parties.
6. Establishing partnerships to: bring resources, networks and connections that advance your project; add value for the partners in the work they do; and through this, supporting your community's viability and sustainability.

*Grantlines: Partnering Local Projects* helps community groups build or hone their skills in establishing effective and appropriate partnerships beneficial for all.

## Partnership project examples

Projects suited to partnerships are those that are long-term or bring about major positive change in a community.

Examples include:

- improving early childhood health and ensure a successful transition to school;
- establishing a community garden to promote healthy eating that also includes opportunities for education and training qualifications, employment and business;
- bringing new life to historical but disused community 'assets';
- providing support for the community during or following industry restructuring;
- supporting an annual arts-based or education-based event that brings a range of people from within and beyond the community together;
- purchasing a significant item – historical or contemporary – that helps build the identity of the region and boost its tourism potential; and
- helping a community centre that provides a broad range of services – from maternal health to migrant resettlement – with additional resources and planning to accommodate increasing demand.

There are, of course, many other projects that benefit from having strong partnerships. What projects have in common is a need for collaboration in order to address the often complex and challenging issues involved.

### This Guide promotes an asset-based approach

This Guide uses an approach to partnerships that is about leveraging from existing assets within the community. Assets can mean any business, organisation, association or individual already connected to or interested in the community. People and organisations with a connection to or interest in your community are often keen to contribute. In many cases they will already be contributing but they may also be looking for new, different or more sustainable ways to engage. This Guide aims to help community groups identify these groups and make these connections.

The benefits of undertaking an asset-based approach include:

1. Providing a detailed and systematic approach to identifying potential partners.
2. Ensuring all members of the community group are clear about who is being approached and what is being requested.
3. Identifying those potential partners who share similar values, culture and focus with the community.
4. Informing the broader community about your project by preparing clear and compelling information about what you are doing and why.
5. Building a collaborative model of engagement with the broader community.

### Cost of the Guide

The Guide is freely available to community groups from the Turnstone Projects website.

### About Turnstone Projects and Rebecca Iliffe (MA IntRel UNSW, BAppScAg Melb)

Rebecca Iliffe established Turnstone Projects in 2003 to work with companies, organisations and communities where shared interests exist. Turnstone Projects works in three related areas: Grantlines, partnering people and projects for good; asset-based regional investment attraction; and project development.

Rebecca began as a professional wool classer in shearing sheds across eastern Australia, followed by early stage processing and facilitating technical training for international users of Australia wool. She then spent over ten years working with government and industry in business and community in development and investment attraction roles in rural and regional areas.

Rebecca has a strong interest in and engagement with philanthropy both as a grant seeker and grant maker. With her husband James, and the involvement of their two young sons, their small family trust supports innovative education-related projects in metropolitan and rural areas across Australia.

Rebecca is based in Sydney, having lived, worked and travelled widely in Australia.