

# LEADING LEARNING IN EDUCATION AND PHILANTHROPY (LLEAP)



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2013 Survey Report: Leading by evidence to  
maximise the impact of philanthropy in education

To advance the education and life opportunities of school students, especially those experiencing disadvantage, is more difficult to achieve when you don't know what schools need or what prevents them from accessing and maximising the impact of additional support from philanthropy. LLEAP addresses these issues.

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(This report is best printed in colour to aid the readability of graphs.)

## LLEAP PARTNERS

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# Leading learning in education and philanthropy (LLEAP)

## 2013 SURVEY REPORT: LEADING BY EVIDENCE TO MAXIMISE THE IMPACT OF PHILANTHROPY IN EDUCATION

### OVERVIEW

There are people who wish to give in a structured and planned manner, money, time or talents to advance the education of students in need. However, they may not know what schools and their communities need or what prevents them from accessing this additional support. Conversely, what those from schools know and understand about philanthropy is limited. Historically, not-for-profit organisations, with their various programs or services, have been the intermediary between school communities and philanthropy.

The Leading Learning in Education and Philanthropy (LLEAP) survey provides the most comprehensive study we have ever had in Australia on these issues.

Across the three years since LLEAP's inception, **1,416** responses to LLEAP surveys have been gathered. In 2013, there were **604** responses (425 schools; 98 not-for-profit organisations; 81 philanthropic foundations or trusts).

The 2013 national LLEAP surveys gathered information from three groups: a representative national sample of schools and from convenience samples of not-for-profit and philanthropic respondents.

To deepen our understanding and create more effective engagement of philanthropy in education, information has been gathered from the three groups about:

- what student outcomes they were especially trying to improve;
- for whom;
- the types of additional support they were seeking (or providing) to help them address their key outcome areas of focus; and
- how they wish to use this support to advance the education of students in need.

In addition, details related to each group's capacity to initiate and develop relationships with one another were explored.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2013 LLEAP SURVEY

Across the board, the most frequently identified intended beneficiaries were those disadvantaged by 'low socio-economic status' (selected by 68% of schools; 84% of not-for-profits, and 88% of philanthropics).

### Schools

- Schools were especially focused on improving 'academic outcomes' (54%), 'teacher quality and quality teaching' (44%) and the 'social and emotional wellbeing' (41%) of students. This emphasis changed when viewed through different lenses (e.g. urban/non-urban school locations).
- 'School attendance' was more a focus for non-urban schools (61%) than urban schools (38%).
- Significant differences were evident depending on the socio-educational advantage of the school. Those from lower socio-educational communities were especially focused on improving 'student behaviour' (80%), 'school attendance' (78%) and 'student retention' (74%).
- Improving the 'resilience' (87%), 'personal and social competence' (83%), closely followed by 'functional literacy and numeracy' (78%) were the student capabilities of greatest interest to schools.
- Schools do not venture too far afield from traditional sources of additional education-related funding sources – government (41% state and 29% federal) and school-based events (26%) are the major avenues pursued.
- Ninety percent (90%) of schools are new or inexperienced when it comes to engaging with philanthropy via traditional avenues of seeking and applying for grants.
- Australian Taxation Office approved funds (building, library or scholarship funds) provide pathways for philanthropic giving. However, about 30% of schools have no fund set up and 8% were unsure whether they had such a fund. The LLEAP Survey itself has raised the awareness about funds. Government schools are the least likely to have these set up, with the most frequent reason being that they 'don't believe our local community could contribute financially to the fund'.

## Not-for-profits

- Not-for-profits are ‘bridge builders’ crossing the boundaries of different spaces within the community. The most frequently selected ‘target’ for their work was ‘whole of community’ (38%).
- Their commitment to a whole of community approach is also reflected in their top three areas of focus: ‘Community engagement’ (52%), ‘Student engagement’ (50%) and ‘Parent engagement’ (42%).
- When it comes to sourcing additional education-related funding, not-for-profits relied more on ‘business’ (29%) and ‘philanthropy’ (27%) than respondent schools and less on ‘state or territory governments’ (26%).
- In contrast to schools, most not-for-profits (75%) are experienced or expert when it comes to engaging with philanthropy.

## Philanthropy

- In broad terms, philanthropic organisations showed a slightly greater emphasis on giving to ‘groups’ (34%) and ‘whole of community’ (32%), then to ‘individuals’ (26%) or the ‘whole of organisation’ (18%).
- Areas of focus are spread, with no one outcome area a significantly stronger focus than another. About one third have a focus on ‘student engagement’ (37%); one-third on ‘social and emotional wellbeing’ (34%); and another on ‘student retention’ (32%).
- Within a philanthropic’s tax and guideline eligibility requirements, in broad terms, they are more likely to give to organisations (62%). Twenty-five percent (25%) indicated they could give both to individuals and organisations.
- Sixty-four percent (64%) of philanthropic respondents have tax eligibility requirements that need to be met by potential recipients. The most common of these being ‘Tax Concession Charity’ status (TCC) (58%) and/or ‘Deductible Gift Recipient’ status (DGR) (52%).
- In the last financial year, a total overall amount of **\$391,292,918** was distributed by philanthropic respondents. There was a wide range of overall amounts, from less than \$15,000 through to more than \$250 million in a financial year.
- A total of **\$23,635,977** was distributed specifically to education in the last financial year by the seventy-four percent (74%) of philanthropic respondents who provided this information. This represents approximately six percent (6%) of the total overall amount.

## Types of support sought to address student outcomes

- There is a degree of disconnect between what is sought and what can be given. Schools (42%) were especially seeking support for ‘professional learning’ (e.g. to build individual or organisational capacity). This was also the greatest type of support sought by not-for-profits (46%). For philanthropic respondents, however, ‘professional learning’ was the *sixth* most frequently selected area of support.
- Philanthropic respondents could support discrete ‘programs’ (44%) or potentially ‘one-off’ types of support that may help overcome a barrier for particular individuals or groups, including: ‘experiences’ (e.g. excursions, incursions, tours, camps, exchanges: country/city, international) (43%); access to ‘expertise’ (e.g. tutors, mentors, Elders, artists) (40%); and ‘materials or resources’ (e.g. books, uniforms, school fees, computers/ipads, assistive technologies) (40%).
- The greatest synergy across the three groups was around ‘expertise’ as a type of support (36% schools; 42% not-for-profits and 40% philanthropy). Of these, the stand out type of expertise sought was ‘mentors or coaches’ (75% schools; 71% not-for-profits; 66% philanthropics).

## Barriers to engaging with philanthropic donors

Philanthropic and school respondents were aligned in their thinking about the top issues that prevent schools effectively engaging, believing that schools:

1. Do not have a culture of seeking this type of support
2. Do not have or know whether they have the right eligibility status
3. Do not know how to collaborate with organisations who can access this support
4. Do not know how to devote resources to these relationships
5. Do not know their [philanthropic] eligibility requirements

Not-for-profit responses were similar, but their top issue was not knowing ‘how to devote resources to these relationships’.

From the other perspective, philanthropics thought the top issues preventing *them* from engaging with schools was ‘their eligibility requirements’ and issues to do with ‘prioritising’ (i.e. the capacity for schools to commit among their competing demands or a philanthropic’s capacity to respond to further requests for funding).

## CALLS TO ACTION

To advance the education and life opportunities of school students, especially those experiencing disadvantage, is more difficult to achieve when you don't know what schools need or what prevents them from accessing and maximising the impact of additional support from philanthropy. The implication of this is two-fold: It inhibits attunement and, in turn, sound decision making for putting the needs of students first. So how can we become more attuned?

The structures and tools at our disposal are vast. Depending on which report you refer to, there may be anywhere from about 600,000 not-for-profit organisations in Australia<sup>1</sup>. In addition, there are estimated to be about 5,000 philanthropic foundations<sup>2</sup>, with the number of private ancillary funds (e.g. private charitable foundations that might be established by High Net Worth individuals, families or business) currently at 1,116 and growing annually by 100 in the last three years<sup>3</sup>. Add to this, about 9,500 schools in Australia and the opportunities to collectively address the needs of students is there in front of us; but so too are the challenges. These challenges are not unique to Australia<sup>4</sup>.

The good news is that philanthropy and schools agree on what the barriers are to effective engagement. The bad news is that these barriers are yet to be overcome. LLEAP points to, in particular, two areas where changes could be made. *The quality and degree of attunement between philanthropy and education is being affected by communication and coordination issues.*

### *Communication*

There are too many schools without the knowledge and capacity to attract additional philanthropic funding, whether this is directly (to the school) or indirectly (via an eligible partner). Confusion over what can and cannot be done in terms of either accessing or allocating funds to schools is unnecessarily hampering potential creativity and innovation. Moreover, most schools are unaware that philanthropic foundations are also sources of information and can bring groups together. These sorts of basic knowledge and

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<sup>1</sup> Productivity Commission. (2010). 'Contribution of the Not-for-Profit Sector', Research Report, Canberra.

<sup>2</sup> Anderson, G. (2013). 'Where the Money Goes: Private wealth for public good'. Centre for Social Impact, New South Wales.

<sup>3</sup> McCleod, J. (2013). 'The PAF Report – Private Ancillary Funds after 12 years'. JBWere Ltd, Australia and New Zealand.

<sup>4</sup> See for example, McKinsey & Company. (2013). 'Designing Indian philanthropy for impact'. Accessed from <http://voices.mckinseysociety.com/india-philanthropy-impact/> accessed on 3/02/14.

understanding gaps could be overcome, without putting the burden on individual schools to find this out for themselves.

### *Coordination*

There are interventions that are being explicitly sought to improve specific student outcomes. LLEAP respondents identified two hundred and thirty-eight (238) programs. This raises a number of questions that improved coordination could help address: Who knows about these programs? What student outcomes do they set out to address and how is this evaluated? Some of these programs involve groups across the philanthropic/not-for-profit/school 'space'; others are unique to a specific group (e.g. initiated and run by a school without philanthropic or not-for-profit involvement). This could be a productive arena to start exploring. Such exploration could help accelerate and focus change efforts, without stifling the responsiveness of communities and organisations to address locally identified student needs. Doing so could assist with issues such as the potential for scaling-up, sharing of the learnings and pooling or maximising existing resourcing. In turn, this may lead to greater efficiencies or, at the very least, greater understanding in our shared commitment to better student outcomes.

The LLEAP results also point to opportunities to rethink relationships; to better understand relationships across national-local, or local-local interfaces. There was, for example, no difference in the potential pathways for philanthropic giving to schools by sector 'via an eligible not-for-profit partner'. Schools noted, however, that they do not know how to collaborate with organisations that can access philanthropic support. How students learn, with whom and to what effect can be enhanced through effective school-community/business relationships. This was one of the areas that most of the school respondents wanted more professional learning in. This, along with the other LLEAP findings, isn't simply a structural or financial issue. It's an ethical issue. Typically, those least equipped are those most in need.