

THE FIRST FIVE YEARS

Our Impact 2013-2018 Summary Report

An independent evaluation undertaken by

 **MUTUAL TRUST**

Visit australianfutures.org to
download the complete report

Government-Focussed Initiatives



2 new public-sector institutions

25 federal departments and agencies have taken part in our 21st Century Service courses

91% of 21st Century Service Level 2 participants (6-day course) ranked it excellent or good

80% of 21st Century Service Level 1 participants (3-day course) ranked it excellent or good

100% of 21st Century Service participants have applied the behaviours and skills to their work

90% of 21st Century Service participants found the course had a medium to large positive impact on their ability to navigate complex challenges

1,000 federal public servants from almost all departments have — through 21st Century Service — built the capability and networks to solve complex problems

90% of 21st Century Service participants built new relationships or contacts

5% of Federal, South Australian, Tasmanian, and Victorian politicians have participated in our Parliamentary Leaders Program — a total of 23 individuals from 6 parties from 5 jurisdictions

96% of Parliamentary Leaders Program participants stated that they would recommend the course to their fellow politicians

100% of Parliamentary Leaders Program participants stated that the course has had a positive influence on their ability to govern

Support Through Bespoke Solutions



60 participants in Actions for NSW Agriculture

12 unique consulting projects to support changemakers

3 projects supported with \$10,000 seed funding

3 unique processes to solve complex societal challenges

86% of participants Actions for NSW Agriculture feel more confident as leaders; 67% got involved in new projects; 95% formed important new relationships

8 stand-alone solutions to complex societal challenges supported

Visit australianfutures.org to download the complete independent evaluation of our first five years undertaken by Mutual Trust

Citizen-Focussed Initiatives



2 new platforms to engage Australian citizens (My Big Idea and What's the Future, Australia?)

4 citizen-led initiatives supported from What's the Future, Australia?

12 new citizen-led solutions to complex societal challenges in My Big Idea

12,000 Australians' knowledge expanded on 14 challenges and opportunities for Australia's future

58,000 unique visitors to mybigidea.org.au and 9,150 registered members of My Big Idea

84% of My Big Idea participants thought it was excellent or good

15 million Australians knew about My Big Idea

30 experts participated in What's the Future, Australia?

\$4m value of media coverage of My Big Idea by News Corp Australia

1,175 ideas submitted to My Big Idea

1,100 participants in the Australian National Values Assessment

189 stories on My Big Idea in News Corp Australia mastheads

Explaining The Context: Thought Leadership



Anchor of 4 Boss/Optus 'True Leaders Game Changers' podcasts

Multiple appearances in the media

12 white papers on discrete topics as diverse as affordable housing and food systems, and on system-level issues that investigate how the system works, where the levers for change lie, and how to activate them

3 major cross-sector roundtables convened, leading to new initiatives

2 national polls conducted and disseminated through summary analysis

2,000 subscribers to the AFP newsletter



Citizen-Focussed Initiatives



Overview

We create and run bold initiatives to engage the public in creating our future, providing citizens with mechanisms to contribute to change and to hold leaders accountable. We have kindled a national conversation on topics Australians say they most care about – and supported the public to act.

- **My Big Idea:** a world-first national ideas competition to stimulate discussion and action on the most important topics for the future of the country – based on a statistically valid national poll on the issues Australians most care about.
- **What's the Future, Australia?:** a nationwide initiative to engage Australians with decision makers and experts to create positive change in four big topics: the Energy Crisis, the Future of Work, Housing Affordability, and Thriving Kids.

AFP's citizen-focussed initiatives had greater reach than we dreamed of – we are incredibly proud to have raised the awareness of 15 million Australians about our nation's future. Our challenge: Are initiatives like this scalable? How do we maintain momentum?

Government-Focussed Initiatives



Overview

We designed two programs (both are social enterprises) to address the increasing challenge of governance in the face of complexity. The best ways to solve yesterday's societal challenges are not appropriate for tomorrow's wicked problems, which are significantly more complex – and yet our democratic system has lower tolerance for innovation, experimentation, and risk-taking than ever before.

- **21st Century Service:** In 2016, we co-designed 21st Century Service with 6 Federal Government Departments. It comprises specialised courses for building culture and capability in the public service. The courses range from ½-day workshops, to 6-day intensives, to a train-the-trainer program and bespoke 6-week coaching and training solutions on live department projects. We also offer specialised courses for the Senior Executive Service, and a post-graduate accreditation is available through La Trobe University.
- **Parliamentary Leaders Program:** Politicians know how to get elected – but that is only a small part of the job. The Parliamentary Leaders Program is Australia's first and only leadership program dedicated to federal and state parliamentarians from all parties. It was designed in 2014 with input from politicians and political parties and offers participants an intellectually challenging experience using small group discussions, scenario building, workshops, case studies and high-profile guest speakers.

We have had a lot of success with our 21st Century Service courses, but the challenge is to address the barrier that most departments are not geared to easily adopt new ways of working into business-as-usual. The next step is to work with department teams on live projects to embed the skills and behaviours into everyday work, and to make it broadly visible.

Support Through Bespoke Solutions



Overview

We work as ‘consultants’, advising clients on how to address complex, systemic problems. We have developed a reputation for matching technical and intellectual horsepower with an intimate, people-first approach.

Project highlights include:

- Developing a 10-month social innovation lab, ‘Actions for NSW Agriculture’ (with the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation), in which 60 people developed new solutions to complex societal challenges. It culminated in a pitch event, Flourish, with \$30,000 of seed funding and 9 months of coaching in prizes going to the teams behind three of the ideas.
- Ensuring Australia’s biosecurity system meets its future needs
- Undertaking a strategic analysis of Australia’s future transport needs
- Improving the equity of access to employment for injured workers
- Shifting long-term outcomes for vulnerable children and communities

An essential element of these bespoke solutions is our success in supporting clients to reconnect with disengaged stakeholders, and to engage with new ones. Our challenge is to grow the volume of our work to grow our impact: we’ve made a strong start but, as one supporter puts it, we need to move past the ‘cottage industry’ stage to reach our potential.

Explaining the Context: Thought Leadership



Overview

We analyse themes of critical relevance to Australia’s future, and have shared our findings through a range of channels. We have published many thought-provoking papers; conducted interviews with over 600 decision-makers about our mission and shared the findings; held many high-level convenings on solutions for our mission; and conducted two national polls.

Popular publications include:

- A New Era for Australia’s Decision-Making System? In-depth Conversations with 400 Leaders
- Welcome to the Future: Drivers and Trends that will Shape Australia’s Future
- Complex Adaptive Systems: Implications for Leaders, Organisations, Government, and Citizens
- A Wayfinder’s Guide to System Transformation: 18 Insights for Catalysts and Convenors
- Megatrends and Australia’s Future: Older and Wiser?

Our thought leadership work has been used by government, non-government and business organisations to trigger new approaches to complex challenges. But we could do more with our IP to grow our profile and increase the power of our voice.

An aerial photograph of several surfers in the ocean, viewed from above. The water is a deep teal color with white foam from the waves. The surfers are scattered across the frame, some lying on their surfboards, others standing. In the top left corner, there is a logo consisting of two overlapping white circles. Below the logo, the text 'Australian Futures Project' is written in a white, sans-serif font.

Australian
Futures Project

Is this audacious journey for you?

We're on an audacious, mission-focussed journey. We commit to being big-picture, catalytic, bold, agile, constructive, and honest. If we are to create the future Australians want, there is no room for cynicism or waiting. And every bold journey begins with a single courageous step. It is not for everyone.

Will you join us as we fix short-termism in Australia?

Australian Futures Project
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