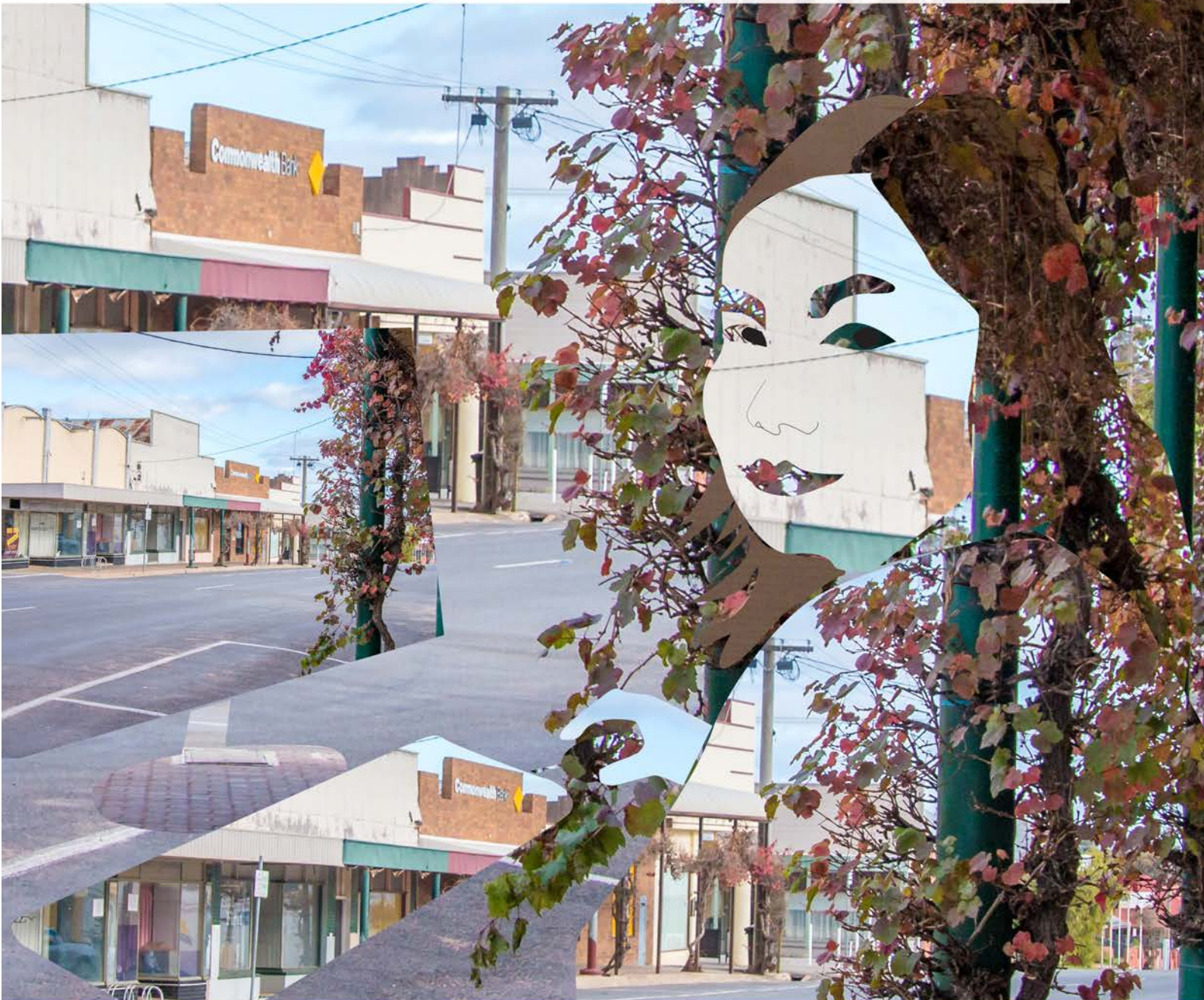


Wimmera Southern Mallee

COMMUNITY LEARNING STRATEGY 2016-2021



Shaping a Sustainable, Responsive and Effective Community Learning Sector





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1. STRATEGY OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to guide the Wimmera Southern Mallee community in developing a more sustainable community learning sector that is responsive to local community need and that is effective in engaging learners and supporting their achievement of meaningful learning outcomes.

1.2 Who this Strategy is Intended For

This strategy is targeted at organisations that deliver both 'Learn Local' funded and other forms of community learning across the Wimmera Southern Mallee and at those organisations that can contribute to shaping a more sustainable, responsive and effective community learning sector for the benefit of the entire region. These include:

- Learn Local funded community learning centres
- Neighbourhood houses
- Local libraries
- Local Government
- Schools and further education and training providers
- Job services providers
- Business and industry
- Health and community service organisations
- Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board
- Grampians ACFE Regional Council
- Department of Education and Training (DET)
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- Department of Justice (DoJ)
- Wimmera Development Association (WDA)
- Regional Development Victoria (RDV)

1.3 What Community Learning Is

Adult community learning (referred to as 'community learning' in this strategy) provides opportunities for individuals in the community who have previously experienced barriers to learning. It is delivered in the form of pre-accredited training to those who are above compulsory school-age and who would find it difficult to undertake accredited programs as their first step in commencing or reconnecting with education and training. There are nine community learning centres located across our region that are funded by the Department of Education and Training via the ACFE Board to deliver community learning through 'Learn Local' courses. Other organisations that do not receive 'Learn Local' funding also deliver community learning in our region but are funded in other ways to do so.

1.4 Why this Strategy is Needed

A vibrant and effective community learning sector will play a critical role in driving the educational, economic and social future of the Wimmera Southern Mallee and will be pivotal in creating more educated, productive, socially-connected and thriving local communities. However, there is work to be done

in the sector if it is to realise its full potential.

Despite our region's existing community learning infrastructure, the 'Learning for Opportunity'¹ research report which examines opportunities to strengthen the Wimmera Southern Mallee community learning sector, identifies that community learning provision in the region is currently heavily constrained and is not effectively delivering on its intended purpose.

This means that our region and the individuals that live, work and participate within it, are not currently reaping the greatest possible benefits that community learning can deliver. Among the constraints identified as impacting upon the effectiveness of our community learning sector are: funding and business models that do not adequately acknowledge the complex learning barriers faced by disadvantaged learners; viability challenges associated with low student numbers in rural areas; limited community awareness of the 'Learn Local' brand; and limited connectivity between community learning centres themselves and with community partners that can support responsive course delivery.

An opportunity exists to reshape and reconnect community learning within the Wimmera Southern Mallee and to strengthen the sector's effectiveness in supporting learners to achieve meaningful outcomes that positively shape their life trajectories. This strategy will guide our region in capitalising on this opportunity.

1.5 How this Strategy was Developed

Between August 2015 and October 2016, the ACFE Board funded Wimmera HUB, Stawell Neighbourhood House and St Arnaud Community Resource Centre to undertake the Wimmera Community Learning Strategy Project through its Capacity and Innovation Fund (CAIF). This project sought to prepare a strategy that could guide progress towards a strengthened community learning sector and engaged broadly with learners, community learning centres, and other stakeholders in the region to prepare an independent, in-depth research report that examined opportunities for strengthening community learning in the Wimmera Southern Mallee. The following two documents were produced through the project and have each informed the development of this strategy:

'Shaping a Sustainable, Responsive and Effective Community Learning Sector – An Advocacy Document'

'Learning for Opportunity - Research Report for the Wimmera Community Learning Strategy'

¹Think Impact, 2016. 'Learning for Opportunity – Research Report for the Wimmera Community Learning Strategy'.

"There is no doubt that there are many success stories to be found in the sector. There are many people who have found new directions in life, new sense of purpose and new ways to participate in the economy and the community thanks to the pre-accredited training sector. But this appears to be the exception rather than the norm... the sector is struggling to deliver outcomes for many of its learners".¹





2. COMMUNITY LEARNING OVERVIEW

2.1 STATE CONTEXT

2.1.1 ACFE Board

In Victoria, the community learning sector is governed and funded through the ACFE Board which advises the Minister for Training and Skills on matters relating to adult education. Through the ACFE Board, the Victorian Government provides funding to community-based organisations to deliver “*Learn Local*” courses. These organisations are known as “*Learn Local*” (funded) organisations.

2.1.2 ACFE Regional Councils

The ACFE Board has eight Regional Councils across Victoria, each focused on “increasing the educational participation and attainment of adults to improve social cohesion and to boost the human and social capital of Victoria².” The Wimmera Southern Mallee sits within the Grampians ACFE Regional Council Area.

2.1.3 ‘*Learn Local*’

‘*Learn Local*’ is a brand used to identify community education providers that are registered with the ACFE Board. A ‘*Learn Local*’ funded organisation is paid to deliver pre-accredited training courses on behalf of the ACFE Board to a broad range of Victorians over compulsory school-leaving age, with a special focus on people who have had limited prior access to education. Pre-accredited training typically consists of short courses designed to meet learners’ needs and to support them onto a ‘pathway’ including further education, training or employment.



"For the sector to live up to its potential – and to meaningfully address the need – you would need to have better resourced, and skilled teachers."
Quote from Learning Sector

2.2 Community Learning in the Wimmera Southern Mallee

2.2.1 'Learn Local' Funded Community Learning Provision

At the time that this strategy was prepared, nine organisations in the Wimmera Southern Mallee received funding from ACFE to deliver 'Learn Local' courses.



In 2015, these providers delivered a combined total of 730 'Learn Local' funder places across the region in the following areas of learning:

Adult Literacy and Numeracy (193)

Digital Literacy (418)

Employment Skills (79)

Vocational (40)

An additional four community organisations have also previously delivered 'Learn Local' courses locally, but in recent years have ceased this delivery. These include:

- Murtoa and District Neighbourhood House - Shared Learning Activities at Murtoa (SLAMM Inc.)
- Rainbow Learning Group and Neighbourhood House Inc.
- Rupanyup Education Activities Community House
- St Arnaud Community Resource Centre

2.2.2 Informal Community Learning Provision

Other organisations providing community learning as part of their core business, include Neighbourhood Houses who are funded by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services. Some receive funding to deliver 'Learn Local' courses by the Department of Education and Training, while others do not.

3

A VISION FOR COMMUNITY LEARNING IN THE WIMMERA SOUTHERN MALLEE

3.1 Vision

This strategy sets a vision for developing a more sustainable, responsive and effective community learning sector for the Wimmera Southern Mallee and envisions that by 2021, the sector will be characterised by the following:

A sustainable sector where:

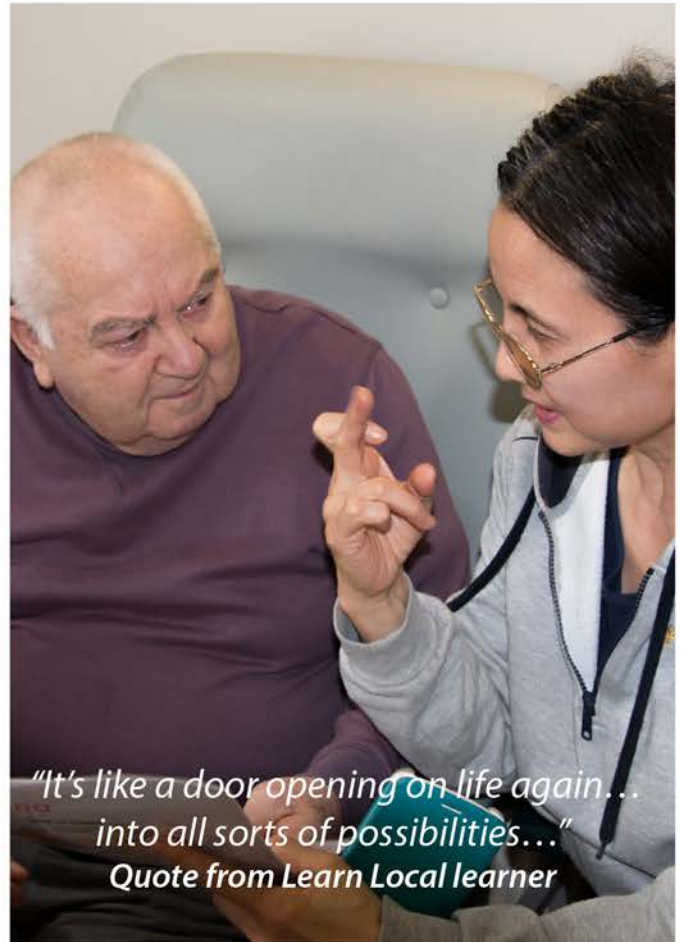
- Pre-accredited learning is valued and recognised by the community
- There are strong organisations delivering pre-accredited training
- Sustainable business models are widely evident in 'Learn Local' funded organisations; and
- The value of pre-accredited learning is recognised by other sectors and opportunities exist for cross-government funded programs.

A responsive sector where:

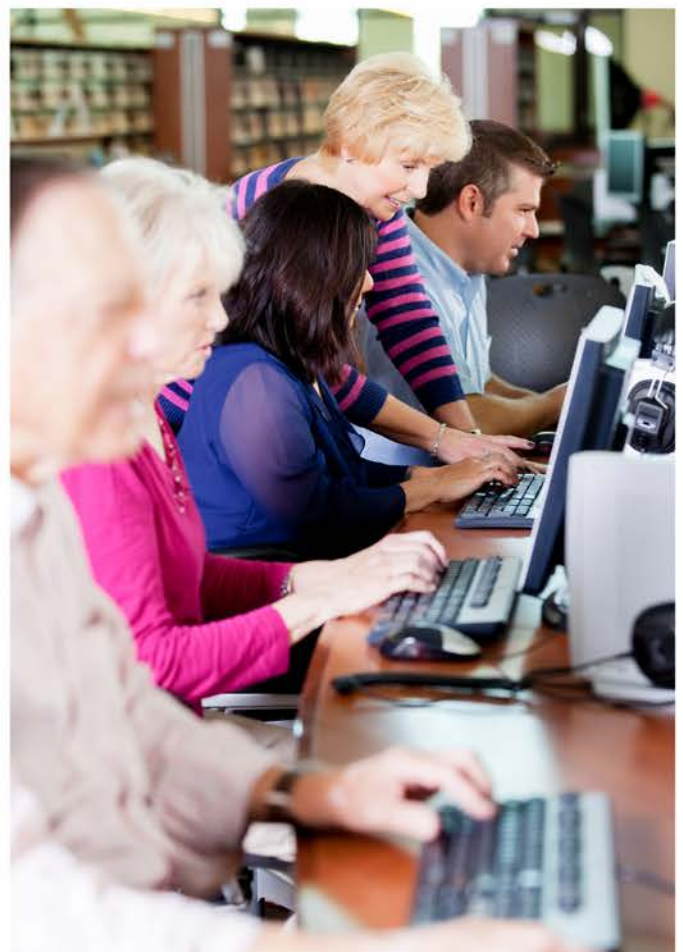
- Community learner needs are well understood and responded to
- Employment and skills needs are well understood and responded to
- Community relevant learning programs are collaboratively developed
- Effective partnerships flourish between community learning centres and other sectors of the community.

An effective sector where:

- Community learning centres are focused on and enabled to provide meaningful outcomes for their learners
- Active outreach is used to engage targeted learners
- Learning pathways are well defined both into 'Learn Local' courses and beyond to further education, training and employment.



"It's like a door opening on life again... into all sorts of possibilities..."
Quote from Learn Local learner





"I didn't even know how to turn the computer on...didn't know how to type... know how to open files,"



Before studying at the Wimmera HUB, Bina struggled with the basic things most of us take for granted, such as speaking English and reading and writing it. She was feeling isolated from the community.

“The Hub helped me a lot because I didn’t even know how to write my name... but now I can read and write and spell the words,” Bina said.

Learning to read and write created employment opportunities, greatly aided Bina’s ability to meet new friends and, importantly, she can now engage in general conversation.

“The best thing is that to come here and learn English is how I got a job,” she said. “It has helped me to talk to people... before I didn’t even talk to anybody. But now I can talk to people, even just to say hello.”

Improved confidence and communication skills have led to further study, with Bina also learning how to use computers. “I didn’t even know how to turn the computer on...didn’t know how to type...know how to open files,” she said.

Since learning how to read and write and to use computers, Bina has successfully attained her Learner’s permit. “I did my test at VicRoads to get my permit... I did it through the computer.”



3.2 Strategy Goals

In order to work toward achieving the vision for community learning in our region, the following goals have been set:

Goal 1:

Establish and Resource a Sustainable Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance.

Goal 2:

Strengthen Collaboration and Resource Sharing Between Community Learning Centres.

Goal 3:

Better Understand and Connect with Community Learners.

Goal 4:

Build a Valued Community Learning Sector and Effectively Market the 'Learn Local' brand.

Goal 5:

Enhance Partnerships and Connectivity between Community Learning Centres and Local Communities.

Goal 6:

Advocate for Systemic Change that Strengthens the Community Learning Sector.




Goal 7:

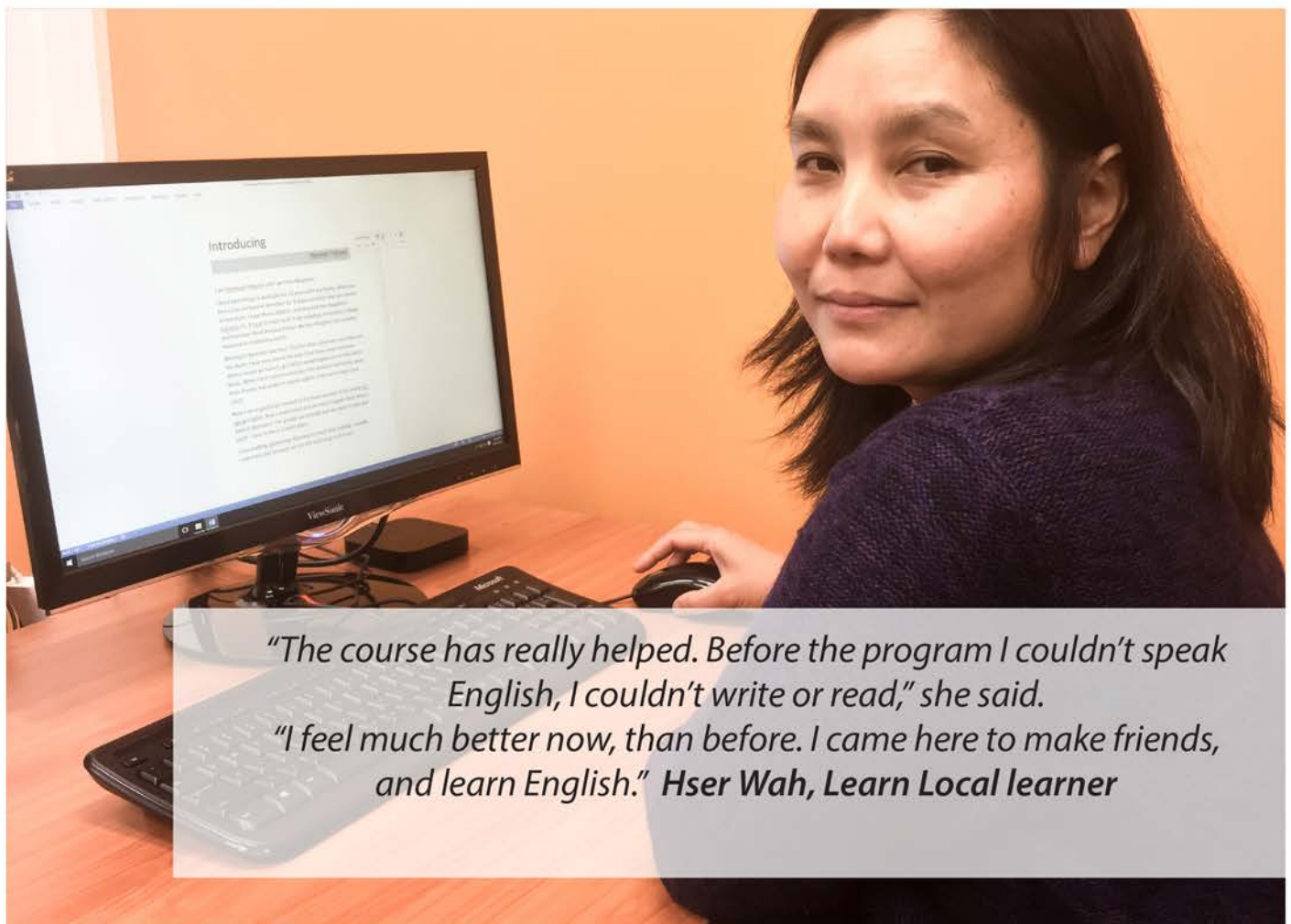
Strengthen Leadership and Capabilities within the Community Learning Sector.



3.3 Categorised Actions

Actions that will support the achievement of goals included within this Strategy have been categorised according to their readiness for implementation, as shown below.

Action Category	Identifying Symbol	Description of Priority Level
Implement with Existing Resources		The action can be implemented using existing resources within the region.
Seek Additional Funding or Resourcing to Implement		The action requires additional funding or resources to be obtained before it can be implemented
Advocate for Systemic and/or Policy Level Change to Implement		The action requires systemic or policy level changes to be made before it can be implemented



*“The course has really helped. Before the program I couldn’t speak English, I couldn’t write or read,” she said.
 “I feel much better now, than before. I came here to make friends, and learn English.” Hser Wah, Learn Local learner*

“For a lot of people who come to us as a learn local, this is their very first experience of an education arena. So it’s very important that they have a positive experience.”
Annette Creek, Nhill LLO.



GOAL 1

**Establish and Resource a Sustainable Wimmera Southern Mallee
Community Learning Alliance.**

Goal Statement







To establish a resourced Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance that enables community learning centres to network, share resources and to collectively advocate for systemic, policy and funding changes that will improve community learning provision in the Wimmera Southern Mallee.




Why this is Important

Our region's community learning centres have been largely operating in isolation from one another. They have had limited opportunities to come together to network, share resources and to exchange knowledge and experiences that could lead to more responsive and effective delivery of community learning in the region.

It is important that our local providers (both funded and non-funded) have access to a formal mechanism to bring them together to discuss strengthening community learning provision in the region and to address the many challenges and opportunities that face the Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Sector.

Forming the Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance will create collective local power that can play an important role in advocating for the systemic, policy and funding level changes that are needed to truly reshape our region's community learning sector.

What We Are Going to Achieve	Who Will Lead	Who Else Needs to be Involved	Action Category
Confirm membership of an Alliance that brings together community learning centres from across the Wimmera Southern Mallee to: network, share resources, undertake collaborative program design and to collectively advocate for systemic, policy and funding changes that will improve community learning provision in the region.	Wimmera Hub Stawell Neighbourhood House	Community Learning Centres	
Appoint an Alliance Chair and interim secretariat support.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance		
Endorse a Terms of Reference that articulates the purpose, membership, functions and format of the Alliance.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance Chair	Alliance Members	
Agree upon and document a set of key focusses/action areas for the Alliance on an annual basis.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance Chair	Alliance Members	
Collectively seek funding to resource a Secretariat or Executive Officer for a period for at least two years that can co-ordinate and convene the Alliance and its activities.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance Chair	Alliance Members ACFE Regional Council DET	
Seek support to sustain the Alliance on an on-going basis.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance ACFE Regional Council	Alliance Members DET	

 Implement with Existing Resources  Seek Additional Funding or Resourcing to Implement  Advocate for Systemic and/or Policy Level Change to Implement



GOAL 2

Strengthen Collaboration and Resource Sharing Between Community Learning Centres

Goal Statement

To strengthen collaboration between community learning centres for the purpose of providing peer to peer support; shared development of course materials, learner and trainer resources; and collectively identifying and participating in shared professional development.


Why this is Important

The community learning centres operating across our region each have their own skills, strengths and resources in course design and delivery. For many of them, the learning needs of their local communities have similarities and require similar courses to be delivered.

Opportunity exists to develop more effective working partnerships between these providers that will enable better sharing of information and resources and enhanced peer to peer support in the development and delivery of courses. For those centres that deliver 'Learn Local' courses, this opportunity specifically relates to the sharing and collaborative development of Course A-Frames, learner and trainer support materials and in some cases the sharing of trainers.

Improved collaboration will also create opportunities for shared identification of community learning needs and identification of shared professional development needs for community learning centres themselves.

What We Are Going to Achieve	Who Will Lead	Who Else Needs to be Involved	Action Category
Develop and distribute a shared contact list for community learning centres across the Wimmera Southern Mallee.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance		
Establish a secure electronic information sharing platform for Wimmera Southern Mallee community learning centres to share course materials, learner and trainer resources and useful forms and templates. The platform should also connect community learning centres with resources and reports that have resulted from CAIF funded projects.	ACFE Regional Council DET	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	
Working through the Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance, refine and confirm a list of known community learning needs for which collaborative program design could be undertaken by multiple community learning centres.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance Chair		
Progress the collaborative design of at least one community learning program annually.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance Chair		
Investigate opportunities to develop a pool of volunteer trainers that can be shared between community learning centres to support broadened course delivery.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	Volunteering Western Victoria	
Investigate and implement the use of information community technology to enable cross-region course delivery.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	DET Local schools and further education and training providers	

 Implement with Existing Resources  Seek Additional Funding or Resourcing to Implement  Advocate for Systemic and/or Policy Level Change to Implement



GOAL 3

Better Understand and Connect with Community Learners









Goal Statement: To develop a comprehensive understanding of the demographic and pedagogy of community learners in the Wimmera Southern Mallee and to implement models of engagement that effectively target and connect all relevant learner groups with community learning.

Why this is Important

Little evidence exists of any kind of systematic or targeted approach implemented by community learning centres in identifying and understanding the needs of learners in the region. Moreover, the learning needs of 'disadvantaged' learners are being addressed only as far as the capability and resources of each organisation allows. Whilst there are many people doing a great deal to assist, there is substantial variability across the region's organisations.

Disadvantaged learners typically face a number of barriers that prevent them from effectively engaging in learning of any kind. This in turn creates barriers to pathways to employment, further education, training and positive social participation. These barriers include low aspirations, life circumstances (such as family commitments), disability, health, self-esteem, prior learning experiences, low levels of literacy and numeracy, substance misuse and offending behaviour to mention just a few.

To be responsive to these learners, community learning centres must have an appropriate understanding of learner needs and life circumstances and must have skills to engage them in an appropriate way. They must also be enabled to provide the intensity of support that these learners need to effectively engage in community learning and to achieve meaningful learning outcomes.

What We Are Going to Achieve	Who Will Lead	Who Else Needs to be Involved	Action Category
Prepare a demographic profile of target community learners in the Wimmera Southern Mallee region.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance		
Source and exchange information on successful models for engaging with target learner groups.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance		
Prepare a list of existing agencies within the region who can support referrals of 'hard to reach' learners into community learning.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance DET	Job Services Providers Health and Community Services DHHS, DOJ	
Document and illustrate referral pathways into community learning for agencies that work with 'hard to reach' learners.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	Job Services Providers Health and Community Services DHHS, DOJ	
Co-ordinate professional development at a regional level that increases the capacity of community learning centres to engage with 'hard to reach' learners and to understand the pedagogy of adult learners.	DET	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	
Advocate for regional funding that ensures all community learning centres are accessible, and 'culturally safe' for target learner groups.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	ACFE Board DET	
Advocate for policy level change to 'Learn Local' which recognises the steps towards readiness for education, training and employment and the distance travelled by disadvantaged learners.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	ACFE Board DET	
Advocate for systemic, policy and funding changes that resource community learning providers to undertake outreach to engage 'hard to reach' learners.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	ACFE Board DET	

 Implement with Existing Resources  Seek Additional Funding or Resourcing to Implement  Advocate for Systemic and/or Policy Level Change to Implement



GOAL 4

Build a Valued Community Learning Sector and Effectively Market the 'Learn Local' brand.








Goal Statement: To build a valued community learning sector that is recognised and utilised by all sectors of the community.


Why this is Important

The *'Learning for Opportunity'* research report found a general lack of awareness across the community of the *'Learn Local'* brand. There was confusion about what *'Learn Local'* offered and the marketing of the brand presented "mixed messages" to potential employers and the community. If the stakeholder was aware of the brand and offering, the perception of what the *'Learn Local'* courses and the organisations provided was often "lifestyle courses". Many of the learners interviewed through the research did not know they had completed a *'Learn Local'* course, and were drawn to the training because of the place-based brand (e.g. Stawell Neighbourhood House, or The Hub Horsham) or frequently, because of connections with individuals within those organisations.

Building improved awareness of community learning and of the *'Learn Local'* brand has scope to enhance engagement with the sector and to strengthen the value that community learning creates, both for learners and community and industry partners.

There is also scope to better promote the value that *'Learn Local'* provides within the community and to develop an Impact Framework that articulates what change the sector seeks to create, how they intend to create that change through their training activity and for whom.

What We Are Going to Achieve	Who Will Lead	Who Else Needs to be Involved	Action Category
Review the value and effectiveness of the <i>'Learn Local'</i> brand and develop and implement strategies that provide brand clarity for the community learning sector.	ACFE Board DET	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	
Develop a dedicated Wimmera Community Learning webpage that provides information on community learning centres in the Wimmera Southern Mallee and that provides links to useful information, resources and community learning case studies.	Wimmera HUB	Alliance Members	
Conduct presentations that promote Community Learning to all Shire Councils within the Wimmera Southern Mallee.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	Local Government	
Develop marketing materials and strategies that clearly articulate what the sector does, what its value proposition is and how the community can engage.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance ACFE Regional Council	Community Learning Stakeholders	
Provide professional development in marketing and promotion to Community Learning providers across the region.	ACFE Regional Council	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	
Host a Biennial Community Learning Forum that brings stakeholders together from all sectors of the Wimmera Southern Mallee and that promotes successes and workshops the challenges for community learning.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	ACFE Regional Council DET RDV WDA	
Develop and promote an Impact Framework for <i>'Learn Local'</i> that articulates what change the sector seeks to create, how they intend to create that change through their training activity and for whom.	ACFE Board DET	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	

 Implement with Existing Resources  Seek Additional Funding or Resourcing to Implement  Advocate for Systemic and/or Policy Level Change to Implement

GOAL 5

Enhance Partnerships and Connectivity
between Community Learning Centres
and Local Communities



"If you treat someone as they are, that's how they remain. If you treat someone as what they ought to be and could be, then they will become what they ought to be and could be" Brendan Murray, LL trainer

Goal Statement

To enhance connectivity and partnerships between community learning centres and community partners that lead to course delivery that effectively responds to community learning needs and which offers meaningful pathways for learners.






Why this is Important

Establishing and sustaining productive partnerships is fundamental to community learning centres being able to maintain course offerings that are responsive to the community's learning needs. It is also important in ensuring that learners can be connected with meaningful pathways to further education, training and employment.

While there are some exceptions, most partnerships that exist within Wimmera Southern Mallee community learning sector are currently reported to be informal arrangements based on localised and personal linkages. While these informal linkages are important, if relied upon too heavily, they present organisational risk for providers and may not always be targeted toward the areas of greatest need.

Whilst the 'Learn Local' model is reliant on community learning centres developing effective partnerships, many centres report to have limited capacity for developing formal partnerships due to funding and resourcing constraints which do not allow them to actively go out into the community to undertake this work.

Building formalised and sustainable partnerships with partners across multiple community sectors will be important in building a more connected community learning ecosystem that is able to effectively identify and respond to local community learning needs.

What We Are Going to Achieve	Who Will Lead	Who Else Needs to be Involved	Action Category
Identify and engage key sectors/partners within the region in order to identify local learning needs and learner pathways. Progressively convene structured conversations with these sectors at Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance meetings.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	Alliance Members Education and Training Sector Business and industry Health and Community Services Local Government	
Place tools and resources on the Wimmera Community Learning webpage that can guide community learning centres in local partnership development.	Wimmera HUB	ACFE Regional Council Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	
Co-ordinate professional development at a regional level that increases the capacity of community learning centres to develop and formalise local partnerships.	ACFE Regional Council DET	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	
Advocate for resourcing for a Partnership Broker who can work with community learning centres across the region to identify specific partnership needs and to support community learning centres in brokering local partnership arrangements.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	ACFE Board ACFE Regional Council DET	
Advocate for changes to the 'Learn Local' funding model that better enable community learning centres to undertake work in building enhanced connectivity and partnerships within their local communities.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	ACFE Board ACFE Regional Council DET	

 Implement with Existing Resources  Seek Additional Funding or Resourcing to Implement  Advocate for Systemic and/or Policy Level Change to Implement



GOAL 6

Advocate for Systemic Change that Strengthens the Community Learning Sector






Goal Statement: To collectively advocate as a region for systematic funding and policy level change that is required in order to reshape a more sustainable, responsive and effective community learning sector for the Wimmera Southern Mallee.

Why this is Important

Despite the best intentions and hard work of the region's nine 'Learn Local' community learning centres, the effectiveness of many of them is constrained heavily by systemic failings of the funding and business models under which they operate. These models which are stipulated by the Department of Education and Training are reported to constrain community learning centres as follows:

- They do not adequately acknowledge the complex learning barriers faced by disadvantaged learners or learner progress towards a readiness for further education, training and employment.
- 'Learn Local' funding is provided for delivery only on an hourly rate per student and does not sufficiently resource community learning centres to undertake important partnership, outreach and marketing work to attract and cater for the learners that ACFE targets.
- The funding model limits financially viable course delivery in rural settings where student numbers are low.

Overtime, these constraints have culminated in the community learning sector becoming under-valued and to some extent disconnected from other sectors in the Wimmera Southern Mallee community. Systemic, policy and funding model changes are required in-order to truly re-shape the sector.

What We Are Going to Achieve	Who Will Lead	Who Else Needs to be Involved	Action Category
Strengthen connections between community learning centres and the ACFE Grampians Regional Council by ensuring regular Council representation at Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance meetings.	ACFE Regional Council Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance Chair	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	
Use the 'Shaping a Sustainable, Responsive and Effective Community Learning Sector – An Advocacy Document' to prioritise key areas in which Wimmera Southern Mallee community learning centres will advocate for systemic, funding and policy change to strengthen the Community Learning Sector.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	ACFE Board ACFE Regional Council DET	
Advocate for reformed funding and business models for 'Learn Local' community learning centres that provide capacity for staff to undertake partnership development and outreach work.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	ACFE Board ACFE Regional Council DET	
Identify referral pathways by demonstrating mutually beneficial outcomes for other Government Departments e.g. reduced recidivism and improved mental health supporting DHHS and DoJ program).	ACFE Board ACFE Regional Council	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	
Advocate for policy changes that better acknowledge the learning barriers faced by disadvantaged learners and recognise progress towards readiness for further education, training and employment.	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	ACFE Board	

 Implement with Existing Resources  Seek Additional Funding or Resourcing to Implement  Advocate for Systemic and/or Policy Level Change to Implement



GOAL 7

Strengthen Leadership and Capabilities within the Community Learning Sector.

Goal Statement

To strengthen leadership capacity within the Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Sector and to drive a culture of continuous improvement amongst community learning centre Staff, Management, and Committees of Management.




Why this is Important

Strengthening leadership and creating a culture of continuous improvement in community learning centres has the potential to strengthen both the effectiveness and sustainability of community learning provision across the Wimmera Southern Mallee region.

Few professional development or capacity building opportunities are currently made available to improve the skills of staff in the sector due to limited finances, time and resourcing. Despite this lack of support, high expectations are placed on the individuals and organisations to engage vulnerable learners and to achieve positive outcomes linked to employment, further education and training.

For the most part, within the region, nearly all organisations are taking steps towards good governance through attending workshops and other governance development opportunities. The sector reports to be fatigued with an over-emphasis on governance strengthening activities promoted by the Department of Education Training. Rather, an increased focus on enhancing leadership and professional capabilities within community learning centres would likely be more effective in embedding a culture of continuous improvement and in leading a shift towards a more sustainable, responsive and effective community learning sector in the Wimmera Southern Mallee.

What We Are Going to Achieve	Who Will Lead	Who Else Needs to be Involved	Action Category
Co-ordinate and resource a regular program of professional development opportunities for community learning centres that targets enhancing the leadership and capabilities of Management and Committees of Management.	ACFE Regional Council DET	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	
Co-ordinate an Annual Committee of Management workshop for community learning centres across the Wimmera Southern Mallee that creates opportunities for workshopping shared leadership challenges.	ACFE Regional Council DET	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	
Co-ordinate on-going access to professional development and support in relation to volunteer governance for community learning centres.	Volunteer Western Victoria	Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance	

 Implement with Existing Resources  Seek Additional Funding or Resourcing to Implement  Advocate for Systemic and/or Policy Level Change to Implement

“The Learn Local organisations are not operating from a position of strength”
Quote from external stakeholder



3.4

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the strategy will occur between September 2016 and December 2021. Wimmera HUB, Stawell Neighbourhood House and St Arnaud Community Resource Centre as the lead organisations of the Wimmera Community Learning Strategy Project will seek to formalise a Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance by September 2016. The Alliance will be tasked with prioritising and driving the actions included within this strategy and with engaging relevant community partners to support the strategy's implementation.



*"... we were all pretty much shut down in many ways, so now through each other, we've started a journey and we'll take our own branches out on that journey... the sky's the limit." **Women's Journey participant***



“being ready for work is much more than actually having a skill, it’s about being able to communicate, it’s having confidence to deal with other people, it takes confidence to deal with yourself... It takes a very long term view”
Quote from Learn Local provider





SOLD
Kerridge Real Estate
5398 2219

SKIN