C4CE COALITION FOR COMMUNITY ENERGY

A Collective Impact and Collaborative Governance Approach

C4CE has been set up as an action based coalition, to facilitate interested stakeholders to collaborate to most effectively and efficiently grow a vibrant community energy sector in Australia. To do this, C4CE has been established applying collective impact and collaborative governance frameworks.

Collective impact and collaborative governance are major innovations in change management and governance practices. This approach recognises that the biggest challenges faced by society are complex and cannot be solved by a single organisation working in isolation. Instead, a range of government, community sector and commercial organisations working collaboratively towards a shared vision is needed.

Collective Impact is an approach to creating change, while collaborative governance refers to the governance processes that enable a collective impact approach.

The strength of the Collective Impact approach is its ability to engage hundreds of organisations and participants in a drive towards shared goals. This model allows a backbone organisation with a modest budget (e.g. the C4CE Secretariat) to magnify the impacts of existing and future funding across the participating sector.

Fay Hanleybrown, John Kania & Mark Kramer in their seminal paper on Collective Impact (published in the Stanford Social Innovation Review) developed a framework for developing a collective impact effort. They suggest there are three key phases and four key components for success. This framework has guided the development of C4CE since mid-2012. We have adapted their framework (Table 1) to show the different initiatives and activities that have been or are being undertaken to establish and grow C4CE and thus the impact and multiple benefits of community energy in Australia.

Features of collaborative impact include:

1. Commitment to a common agenda
2. Shared measurement
3. Mutual reinforcing activities (strategic initiatives)
4. Continuous communication
5. A backbone organisation

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Table 1: C4CE – developing a collective impact approach

Components for Success	Phase 1: Initiate Action	Phase 2: Organise for Impact	Phase 3: Sustain Action and Impact
Governance and Infrastructure			
Theory	Identify champions and form cross sector group	Create infrastructure (backbone and processes)	Facilitate and refine
Practice	From the Total Environment Centre Community Energy Forum (mid 2012) a cross-community energy sector group emerged	C4CE Establishment Initiative funded by five philanthropics	Role of the C4CE Secretariat, Auspice and Steering Group
Strategic Planning			
Theory	Map the landscape and use data to make case	Create common agenda (goals and strategy)	Support implementation (alignment to goals and strategies)
Practice	Community Renewable Energy: Challenges and Opportunities Research funded by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage	Community Energy Advocacy Strategy funded by the Consumer Advocacy Panel and the National Community Energy Strategy funded by ARENA	C4CE Strategic Initiatives supported where needed by the Secretariat
Community Involvement			
Theory	Facilitate community outreach	Engage community and build public will	Continue engagement and conduct advocacy
Practice	Community Energy Congress Fund Community Energy Campaign funded by three philanthropics	Community Energy Congress funded by ARENA, the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, Bendigo Bank, Infigen Energy, Zhenfa, City of Sydney and the ACT Government	C4CE Stakeholder engagement, Policy and Advocacy Initiatives e.g. Defend the RET Campaign, 2016 Community Energy Congress.
Evaluation and Improvement			
Theory	Analyse baseline data to identify key issues and gaps	Establish shared metrics (indicators, measurement and approach)	Collect, track and report progress (process to learn and improve)
Practice	Community Renewable Energy: Challenges and Opportunities Research funded by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage	National Community Energy Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (in development) funded by ARENA	Proposal to develop a shared measurement system for the community energy sector.

Growing the Australian community energy sector

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