

Annual Review 2020-2021





Elder Pamela Jeffries with Beth Jeffries visiting Country near Yulpu. This was the first time for Beth to visit this Country, her grandparent's Country. Image copyright: Kanyirrinpa Jukurrpa. Kanyirrinpa Jukurrpa (KJ) is a Martu not-for-profit organisation. This year, SVA Consulting worked with KJ to evaluate their impact over their last 10 years of operation, see page 34 for details.

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Cover: A parent and child from the Newpin program. SVA was instrumental in developing Australia's first social impact bond, which has funded the program for the past 7 years. See page 32 for details. Image provided by Uniting.

Social Ventures Australia acknowledges and pays respect to the past, present and future traditional custodians and elders of this Country on which we work. We also accept the invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart to walk together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

Thank you

The SVA team would like to offer heartfelt thanks to each of our incredibly generous supporters for making it possible for us to carry out this work.

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Alongside the generous funders listed and our donors who wish to remain anonymous, SVA's Leadership Team and Board members all provide contributions to our work.

From the Chair



"Helping people and communities thrive by building more effective systems is why SVA exists"

It's with a warm heart that I write my first letter as SVA Board Chair.

I want to thank the board and members for their confidence in electing me. It's wonderful to be back at SVA, working towards our shared vision of an Australia where all people and communities can thrive.

I also want to thank outgoing Chair Paul Robertson AO for his 10 years of dedicated service and stewardship on the SVA Board. Paul has made a monumental contribution to our organisation in that time, and I want to acknowledge the impact of his sound and thoughtful leadership.

It has been an unusual year; one that has underlined the resilience of the people of Australia, as well as the resilience of our organisation. I want to express my sincere thanks to all our supporters who stood by us this year and those who chose to support SVA for the first time. Our work is only possible thanks to your generosity.

I also want to acknowledge the exceptional leadership shown by Suzie, her leadership team, and my board colleagues. It has enabled SVA not only to weather the storm, but to seize opportunities to do things differently and support our communities when they most needed it.

In the following pages, we have shared stories of some of that work. From finding new ways to create stable, appropriate homes for people with disability in our Synergis Fund; to supporting teachers and school leaders through learning in lockdowns; to the successful maturation of Australia's first social impact bond that restored 391 children to the care of their families – helping people and communities thrive by building more effective systems is why SVA exists.

Our work has never been more vital than in this past year and we know that it will be important as we continue to rebuild from the impact of Covid-19. We have seen how important it is to have a strong and thriving social sector to meet the challenges in front of us.

It's with that knowledge that I am looking forward with hope. Next year will be SVA's 20th anniversary. The organisation that we are today reflects the learning and strength gained over those first two decades.

That strength is reflected throughout the organisation, including our experienced and talented board, which recently welcomed two new board directors. We were delighted that Cindy Reese Mitchell and Verity Lomax, two outstanding social impact leaders, stepped forward to contribute their expertise and passion for change to SVA.



Cindy Reese Mitchell

Cindy Reese Mitchell is the founding CEO of The Mill House Ventures, the Canberra region's first dedicated social enterprise business development consultancy. With a background in both commercial and government settings, she is currently working on her PhD in Kimberly Aboriginal women's entrepreneurship and leadership at the Centre for Social Impact at Swinburne University.



Verity Lomax

Verity Lomax is the Director of the Breaking Disadvantage unit in the NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet. She has an impressive career in social policy, working for both government and non-government organisations. In her current role, she leads the team advising the Premier on education, employment and skills with an emphasis on whole-of-government and whole-of-community approaches to breaking disadvantage.

Another great indication of SVA's maturity as an organisation is Suzie's selection to be part of the inaugural cohort of the Social Impact Leadership Australia program. It's a wonderful recognition of Suzie's contribution as a leader in the sector, and a solid endorsement of SVA's role. I am excited to see the change that Suzie and SVA will create thanks to this support.

To me, SVA's future is very bright, making a significant contribution to the people and communities of Australia. I invite you to join us next year on the occasion of our 20th anniversary as we reflect, celebrate and prepare for the future. We can't do the work we do without your support; we're looking forward to continuing our journey together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Koczkar'.

Rob Koczkar
SVA Board Chair

From the CEO



"Now is not the time to be timid, or to think small, or to do things because 'that's the way they've always been done'. Now is the time for us to aim high and think big."

This past year has been challenging for many people in our communities, and for our team at SVA too. Yet, reflecting now on the year that has passed, my main feeling is one of gratitude.

I am grateful to work with an amazing team of talented and passionate people who supported our clients and partners, riding the wave of unexpected twists and turns with such care for the people around them. Refreshing our organisational values, shared later in this report, allowed us all to maintain our focus on what is most important and provided a welcome point of connection.

I am grateful for the opportunities for impact that we have seized and the new and deeper partnerships we've forged because of them. For example, our work with the Centre for Social Impact on the financial viability of charities, our support of 80 organisations funded by the Paul Ramsay Foundation as they responded to the challenges brought by Covid-19, and our fostering of cross-sector collaboration with 13 sector leaders with the launch of the Early Childhood Development Field Catalyst – I firmly believe our sector is in a better place thanks to these joint initiatives.

I am especially grateful for our supporters who continue to see the value of our work. Without your backing SVA could not have achieved what we did with the Synergis Fund for disability housing or taken such leaps in our work in the early years sector. Philanthropy is the backbone behind SVA's innovation and impact. Your support has allowed us to continue delivering meaningful outcomes for the rising number of people in Australia facing disadvantage.

Over the past year, we've seen Covid-19 disproportionately affect those already experiencing disadvantage. While remote learning allowed many kids to continue with their education, for students in vulnerable communities it increased barriers to keeping up with their peers. And though official job market figures appear strong, they don't include people who have given up looking for work entirely.

It is this rising disadvantage that spurs me on to think about the future.

Next year is an important milestone for SVA, our 20th anniversary. It's also an important year for people and communities across Australia as we work together to rebuild. We need your support now more than ever. SVA will continue to influence systems to deliver better social outcomes for people by learning about what works in communities, helping organisations be more effective, sharing our perspectives and advocating for change.

Now is not the time to be timid, or to think small, or to do things because 'that's the way they've always been done'. Now is the time for us to aim high and think big. We need to use the evidence of what works, collaborate with partners across all sectors and keep people at the centre to seize opportunities to build a brighter future.

Next year we are planning an exciting agenda of work, celebration, reflection and preparation. We know the challenges are bigger than ever, but we have a strong legacy of two decades of innovation and collaboration, and I feel that we have the right tools to meet what is to come.

Already we are working on a range of initiatives to ensure that SVA as an organisation is ready to meet the challenges of tomorrow. We're looking to better align our work around people and communities. This means amplifying the voice of people with lived experience and connecting our work across the organisation to better serve them.

We're investing in improving SVA's capabilities by making it easier to share learning across the organisation and making sure our systems and infrastructure support our team to thrive. We're also looking forward and assessing the next big opportunities for impact: in particular, charting the next frontier for our impact investing team so we can meet the growing demand for capital that is tied to better social outcomes.

But this is just the beginning. I invite you to join us on this journey. Your support is what will enable us to respond creatively and effectively to the complex problems that lie ahead. We need your expertise, your passion, your partnership. Our history has shown us that we are strongest when we work together, and it's that collaboration that will push the limits of what we can achieve in our future.

We will be sharing details of our 20th anniversary plans throughout the year, so please make sure you are [subscribed](#) to our updates.

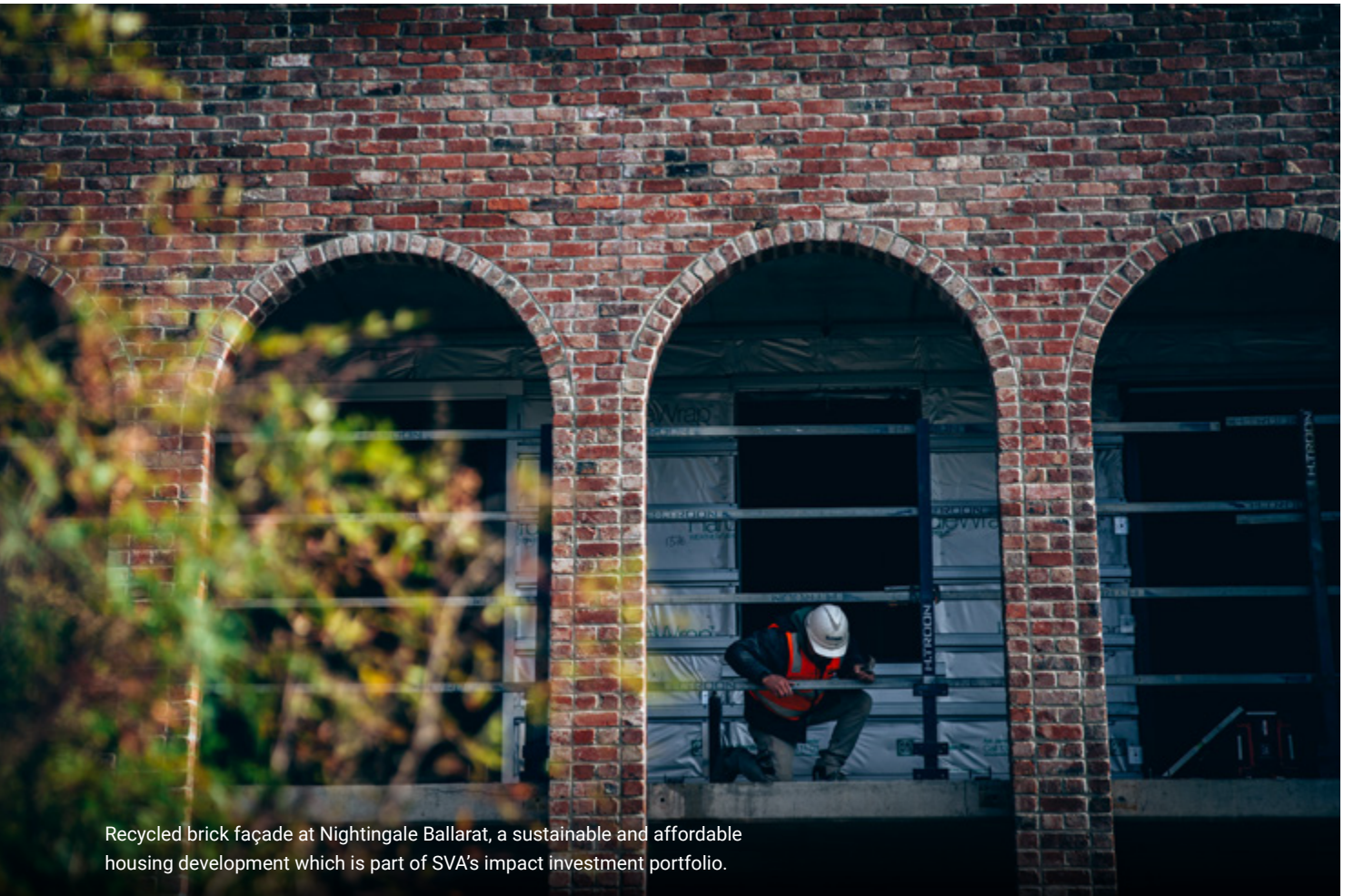
Come work towards an Australia where all people and communities thrive as we set an ambitious agenda for the next 20 years.



Suzie Riddell
SVA CEO



SVA's Impact Investing team doing problem solving at their off-site in April.



Recycled brick façade at Nightingale Ballarat, a sustainable and affordable housing development which is part of SVA's impact investment portfolio.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015 (A/RES/70/1) as a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity.

The centrepiece of the agenda is a set of 17 goals and 169 targets that are integrated and indivisible.

SVA's work is aligned across nine of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are shown below.

We are pleased to see increased momentum across the business, government and social sectors to report on contributions to the SDGs.



Understanding and improving our impact

In FY21 SVA*

Shared our perspectives at

148

events

Supported

150,000+

people with lived experience of disadvantage**

Assisted

211

unique investors

Helped

144

consulting clients be more effective

Reached

\$187.9m

impact investing funds under management

Lodged

10

government submissions advocating for change

* Our internal data collection in FY21 was impacted by Covid-19. These figures may vary in some instances.

** This is a considered estimate of people who have directly benefited from our Impact Investing and Ventures work in FY21. The many people served by our Consulting clients have not been included.



Anindilyakwa community members in Milyakburra (Bickerton Island) developing a model for a Community Justice Group in the Groote Archipelago.

SVA values

As a purpose-driven organisation, our values guide who we are, how we work and the decisions we make.

This year, we revisited our values to ensure they reflect the SVA of today. In a year that saw us physically disconnected from our colleagues, coming together virtually to talk about what truly matters brought us together as a team and was an energising antidote to the separation of lockdown.

We see our refreshed values as interconnected and complementary to each other – we hope they resonate with you.



People at the centre

Fairness and passion

We prioritise people and want everyone in Australia to have a fair opportunity to flourish. This is what gets us up in the morning and drives our purpose in the world. We care about the communities and people we work with and take the time to look after ourselves and each other.



Difference gives us strength

Respect and diversity

We are at our best when we work with others. SVA-ers respect difference and understand that everyone brings something unique to the table. We seek out diverse perspectives; challenge ideas, not intentions; and strive to be conscious of assumptions and prejudices.



Open and ready to learn

Humility and curiosity

We know we don't have all the answers, so we listen more than we talk. At SVA, we are ready to learn from others and challenge our thinking to find innovative solutions. We're prepared to take risks and do things differently, knowing that mistakes teach us just as much as successes.



Real change takes time

Tenacity and determination

Achieving real change is a marathon, not a sprint – and we go after it even when the road gets bumpy. Our vision for the future is big, so we set ambitious goals and celebrate the small wins along the way. We apply deep rigour to our thinking and use evidence to deliver a high standard of work.



A workshop run by the Centre for Muslim Wellbeing who were supported by SVA Consulting this year to develop their business case.



The topping out at the new Nightingale Ballart site, part of SVA's impact investing portfolio.



The launch of Newpin SA. From left to right: Elyse Sainty, Director, Impact Investing, SVA, Robyn Sutherland, Executive Manager, Community Services at Uniting Communities, and Cathy Taylor, Chief Executive of the Department for Child Protection.

Highlights from the year

SVA works to achieve better outcomes for people by learning what works in communities, helping organisations be more effective, sharing our perspectives, advocating for change and influencing systems.

Guided by our values, here are some of our work highlights from FY21.



People at the centre

SVA Upscaler

Capacity building services for social businesses

Having a stable and fulfilling job or role in the community is one of the key pillars for an individual's wellbeing. While the official unemployment rate indicates a return to pre-pandemic levels, emerging data is showing the jobseekers are dropping out of the job market and therefore aren't counted in official statistics. There has also been a significant step down in the number of hours worked.

Social enterprises play a key role in supporting people who face barriers to economic participation. As an initiative that supports these social businesses to build capacity and get investment ready, in FY21 SVA Upscaler helped multiple social enterprises weather the storm of Covid-19, plan for the future and maintain their vital support to communities.

Many of the organisations Upscaler worked with on Covid-19 crisis response projects rely on on-site operations to provide employment opportunities. Their business models, including laundries, waste recovery and retail, were heavily affected by lockdowns and restrictions. Upscaler supported these businesses to adapt their operations and lean into new opportunities. Keeping these social enterprises afloat preserved approximately 100 jobs and maintained the important services they deliver.

In January 2021, Upscaler was selected by Impact Investing Australia as a preferred supplier for their Resilience Grants. These grants were funded by the Department of Social Services' Sector Readiness Fund and allowed Upscaler to work with a further 3 social enterprises to advise them on investment strategies and support business continuity in the wake of Covid-19.



Soft Landing employees at their mattress recycling worksite. Image credit: Tomasz Machnik, Flashpoint Labs.



'We employ about 170 people across the country, and about 75% of them have faced challenges entering or re-entering the workforce. We might be the first job they've had for a long time, and that comes with many challenges. We really support them. We know it's not going to be an easy ride – we're there to help them.

It's not about the one person that gets a job, it's about the next 80 people and the next 80 people after that. The effect of someone getting a stable job has a huge flow-on for our whole community, not just their families but the people around them.

We want to be able to handle any of the challenges that get thrown at us. That way our participants know that they have secure and stable employment, and our partners and customers know that they have a sustainable partner that's with them for the long haul.'

Kylie Roberts-Frost

Manager, Soft Landing, a social enterprise that received support from SVA Upscaler in FY21

Hear more about Soft Landing's work with Upscaler in [this video](#).

SVA Upscaler is supported by SVA's generous funders, with particular thanks to Gandel Foundation as well as Jack Brockhoff Foundation, Buildcorp and earlier seed support from Equity Trustees.





People at
the centre

Foyer Central

Developing and managing a social impact bond to support young people at risk of homelessness

Every year in Australia 35% of the young people who leave out-of-home care are homeless within 12 months.

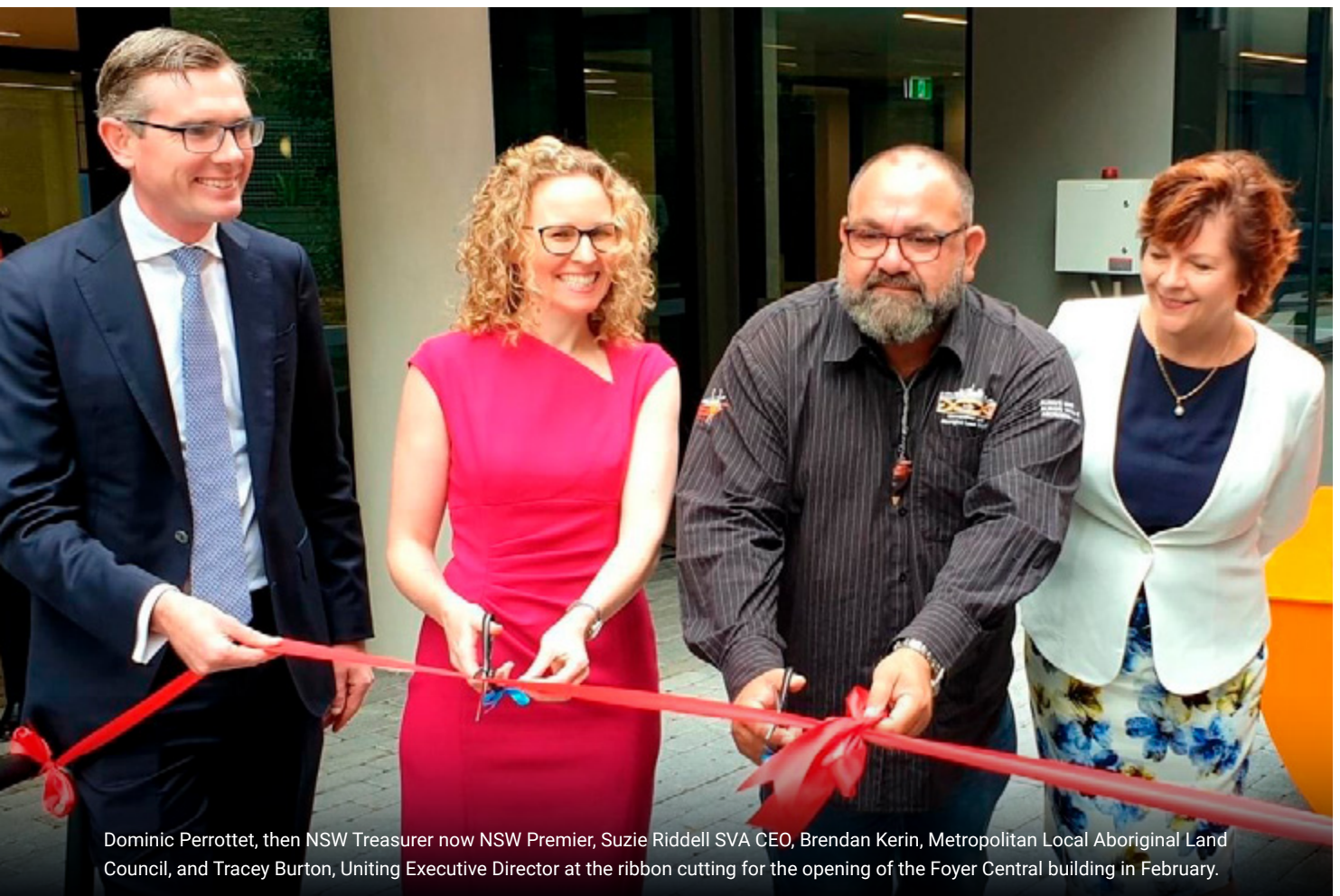
The Foyer Central program seeks to set these young people on a different path. It is an integrated learning and accommodation centre that supports young people who have been in out-of-home care on the path to independence. The program builds their capacity to access resources and opportunities, connect with education, training and employment, and make positive decisions.

In February 2021, SVA launched The Foyer Central Social Impact Bond (SIB) with Uniting and St George Community Housing, in partnership with the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, to support the delivery of this innovative program.

Uniting and St George Community Housing deliver the program, drawing on their collective experience supporting vulnerable young people and providing social and affordable housing. It is based on a model of support that has been successfully deployed both across Australia and globally.

The program operates in purpose-built accommodation located in Chippendale, close to the Sydney CBD, universities and training centres. In FY21, there were 22 motivated young people who called Foyer Central home, in line with anticipated enrolment figures that project the program will serve 272 young people in total.

The Foyer Central SIB is underpinned by the close partnership between Uniting, NSW Government and SVA formed over the 7-year term of the Newpin Social Benefit Bond.



Dominic Perrottet, then NSW Treasurer now NSW Premier, Suzie Riddell SVA CEO, Brendan Kerin, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, and Tracey Burton, Uniting Executive Director at the ribbon cutting for the opening of the Foyer Central building in February.

AB's start to life at Foyer Central

AB moved into Foyer Central in April after sleeping rough on the streets and on trains for almost 3 years. Initially AB was challenged by his hygiene and ability to engage in routine, but his youth development coach has now helped him address these.

AB has settled into the program well and is a standout participant in the life skills course. AB has engaged enthusiastically and has completed all required assessments with great results.

AB has said that he enjoys participating in coaching sessions as he learns more about himself each time. AB's enthusiasm and engagement with the program has led to an opportunity to perform a leadership role for students at Foyer Central.

AB's goals include learning how to budget, building social connections, learning to cook and undertaking further training in labouring or traffic control. AB's end goal is to be living independently in a house where he is able to pay his rent each week without any worries.

SVA's work on Foyer Central SIB has been possible thanks to the generous support of our funders, with particular thanks to Lendlease and the Macquarie Group Foundation, which has contributed as a cornerstone, multi-year supporter of our social impact bond work.



Some of the young people who call Foyer Central home using the communal facilities.



People at
the centre

Synergis

Specialist Disability Accommodation Fund

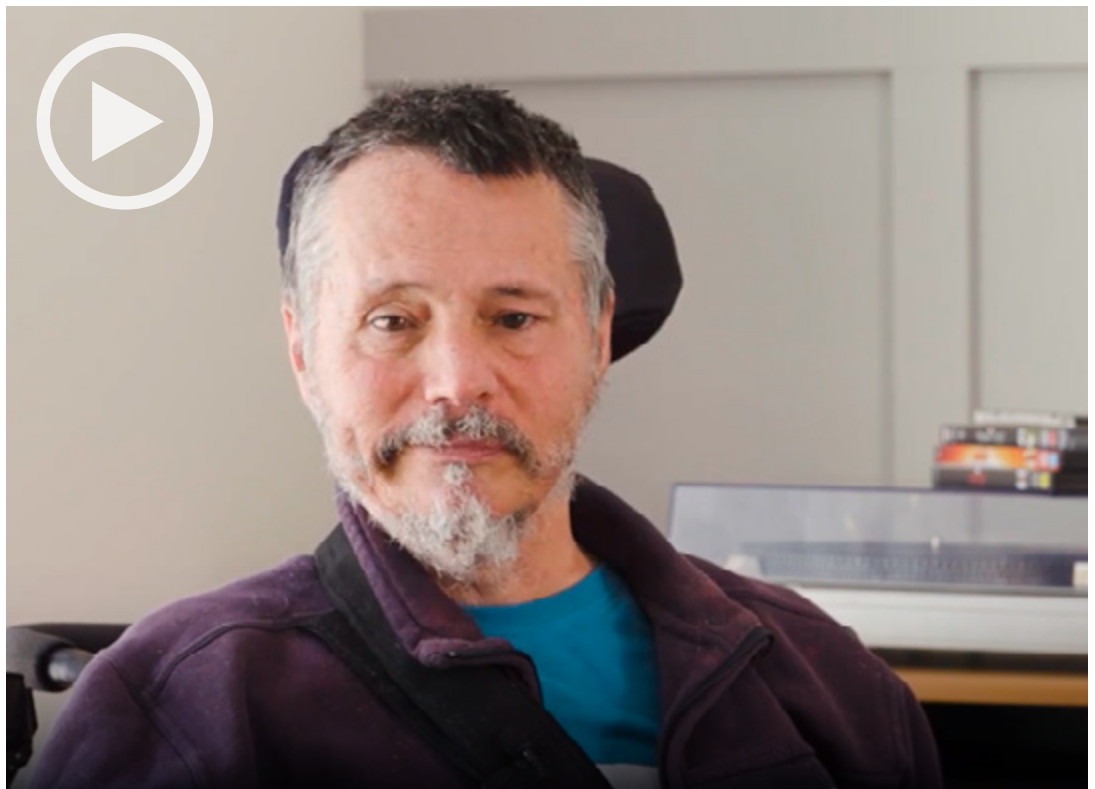
In partnership with Federation Asset Management, SVA launched the Synergis Fund to help deliver much-needed housing for people with disability.

With the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) almost fully operational at a national scale, we believe now is the time to ensure more individuals have an appropriate place to live. As an example of this challenge, there are many young people with disability who still reside with their ageing parents or live in nursing homes or hospitals.

Synergis' vision is that every person living with disability in Australia has access to high quality, safe, stable and appropriate homes. The fund is targeting \$1 billion in investments over the next 5 years to contribute to a housing solution for the approximately 12,000 people with disability who don't have access to specialist disability homes.

The fund's model focuses on the individuals and families who need access to disability housing. It's a collaborative approach that brings together Supported Independent Living providers, who have a deep understanding of the requirements for their tenants, and Specialist Disability Accommodation developers, who build quality homes in appropriate areas.

By the end of FY21, Synergis had enabled 10 houses to be completed, with another 38 under construction. This means 19 people with disability have a purpose-built safe place to call home. The properties under construction will mean a further 150 Australians with disability will soon have the same.



After experiencing a stroke, Kevin was living in a hospital for two years. After many failed attempts at finding a suitable and sustainable place to live, he finally moved into his new home: a Synergis-funded property in Mount Colah, NSW, built by NSW SDA development partner, Good Housing.

This is his story.

Synergis was made possible thanks to the generous support of our funders.



Surveying the construction of a Synergis-funded home in NSW.



Difference gives us strength

Partners in Recovery project

Centre for Social Impact and SVA working together to advocate for charities

Charities employ one in 10 of Australia's workforce and play a crucial role in providing services. They can be a vital part of Australia's economic and social recovery, if they are appropriately supported to do so.

In the context of the Covid-19 crisis, there has been great concern about the future of the Australian charity sector and the people it supports.

Charities' capacity to respond to financial and operational shocks varies drastically. It will be some time yet before there is sufficient data to determine the full impact of Covid-19. However, decisions made now will strongly affect whether charities are Covid-19 casualties or partners in recovery, and those decisions need to be based on the best available information.

To foster public and sector discussion and underpin advocacy to governments for policies that will help charities thrive beyond Covid-19, SVA and the Centre for Social Impact have been undertaking the Partners in Recovery project. So far, we have jointly published 4 reports that investigated and analysed various aspects of charity sector recovery. These reports have been the cornerstone of our agenda, delivered alongside webinars, discussions, submissions and meetings with decision-makers.

We have been pleased to see several of the recommendations made in our reports adopted by both Commonwealth and state governments in FY21. One such recommendation was the gradual ramp-down of JobKeeper payments for eligible charities as opposed to a sudden removal. Another adopted recommendation was the creation of the \$50 million NSW Social Sector Transformation Fund to support charities to adapt to the new operating environment. This has been followed up in August this year by a further \$200 million not-for-profit support package.

The Partners in Recovery project will continue into 2022 as the sector persists in managing the fallout of Covid-19 and its impact on our communities. Please [subscribe](#) to our updates if you would like to be notified of further Partners in Recovery work.



'SVA's Partners in Recovery collaboration has provided critical information to philanthropy during the COVID pandemic. It has been a very challenging time for the charitable sector. Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation has relied on the Partners in Recovery data, insights and consultations as part of key information to feed into decision making about where our support is most needed. The role and value of the charitable sector is often underappreciated, both as employers and as providers of all kinds of community and health services. During the COVID pandemic, some people experienced unemployment or housing instability for the first time and found services they never anticipated they would need. Partners to Recovery has shone a light on these issues and opportunities.

We are looking forward to a strong recovery where we address some of the weaknesses that have been revealed during COVID. A climate-resilient and inclusive economy supported by a robust charitable sector will give Australia the best chance of success.'

Dr Catherine Brown OAM
CEO, Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation





Difference
gives us
strength

Early Years Catalyst

Cross-sector alliance to ensure system-wide support to enable young children to thrive

In Australia, 22% of children start school developmentally vulnerable, increasing to 33% for children living in communities experiencing disadvantage, and to 44% for First Nations children.

One of the key drivers in ensuring all children in Australia have the best chance in life is enabling an effective ecosystem around children so that they and their families can access the supports and conditions they need to thrive. This includes things like infant maternal health supports, strong community networks, safe and adequate housing, counselling, family support services and sufficient income. SVA has a growing portfolio of work working on many of these challenges to support better outcomes for vulnerable kids. This includes work with First Nations communities and researchers scaling innovative and tested models for early learning centres.

In FY21, SVA was pleased to join a new initiative, the Early Childhood Development Field Catalyst (Early Years Catalyst™), designed to reengineer and help connect the current fragmented early years system so that it can better support children to thrive.

The Early Years Catalyst brings together leaders and researchers from across child and family services, who will work to foster a system-wide approach to address the root causes of disadvantage for young children from birth to 5 years. This will include the development, adoption and implementation of a National Early Years Blueprint to overhaul the way the system operates, along with how services are funded regulated and delivered.

Funded initially by the BHP Foundation, the initiative will pioneer and test this field-catalyst approach over an 18-month period. The alliance leaders come from across the spectrum of sectors that interact with children, including early childhood education and care, child and maternal health, mental health, family support, housing, social services, and child protection. During the test period, SVA will provide the backbone for the initiative and manage the project on behalf of the alliance.

The founding members of the alliance are The Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY), The Centre for Community Child Health at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Centre for Policy Development, Every Child Campaign (led by The Benevolent Society), Families Australia, The Front Project, Goodstart Early Learning, Logan Together, Parent-Infant Research Institute, SNAICC – National Voice for our Children, Social Ventures Australia and Thriving Queensland Kids Partnership (with Queensland University of Technology).

'I believe that this approach will be crucial to developing a system that works for children and for driving change across the system. We need a circuit breaker. We have excellent and growing evidence of what children need to be able to thrive, but the system is not set up to allow us to work together across the different services to ensure supports are available to families before they hit crisis point.'

Penny Dakin

Project co-Chair and CEO of Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth

'We know that 90% of a child's brain is grown by age 5. This makes early childhood a critical period in a child's development that has consequences for the rest of their life.'

Jane Hunt

Project co-Chair and CEO of The Front Project

The Australian Early Years Catalyst is supported by the BHP Foundation.





Difference gives us strength

Philanthropy Australia

A Blueprint to Grow Structured Giving

Australia is a generous nation – we rank fifth in the World Giving Index – but on financial measures of generosity, we are slipping. However, there are opportunities to turn that trend around.

Philanthropy Australia is the peak body for Australia’s philanthropic community with a mission to represent, grow and inspire an effective and robust philanthropic sector.

Throughout FY21, SVA worked with Philanthropy Australia on an ambitious project to grow structured giving in Australia. Philanthropy Australia wanted to create a roadmap for how they and leaders across the philanthropic, not-for-profit, business and government sectors can work together to grow structured giving in Australia.

‘Structured giving’ is a term used to describe a more planned and structured form of philanthropy. It involves using a vehicle designed to enable giving, such as private or public ancillary funds, sub-funds and giving circles, testamentary or other legacy trusts.

SVA Consulting® conducted research and data analysis to develop high potential initiatives to grow giving. The findings were published in A Blueprint to Grow Structured Giving report by Philanthropy Australia. The Blueprint was launched at Philanthropy Australia’s 2021 national conference, by former prime minister the Hon John Howard OM AC and David Gonski AC. The report aims to double structured giving in Australia by 2030 and is currently being implemented, with project oversight being provided by Philanthropy Australia.



‘I just want to acknowledge the incredible and quality effort SVA has made to develop our Blueprint to Grow Structured Giving. You have gone over and above in terms of your commitment to delivering a clear and actionable plan as well as ensuring key stakeholders were brought along on the journey. Here’s to our bringing home something special with the Blueprint.’

Jack Heath
Chief Executive Officer, Philanthropy Australia



For School.

Listening

Listening +
Supporting

Parent - A
them, their
work and
really hear
they have
Student -
them and
interest

* acknowledge:
- Good morning
* Talk about them
how are you?
what did you
do last night/
over the weekend!

- Greet every student
- Happy positive attitude

Parent
- Listen

PARENTS / TEACHERS / LEADERS
STUDENT
GREET WITH
A SMILE
↓
ASK A FRIENDLY

humour
taking an interest

Post-it notes from a workshop session at a Thought Leadership gathering in Sydney, one of the flagship annual events at the heart of SVA's pioneering leadership development network program, The Connection.



Open and ready to learn

The Connection™

A collaborative leadership network supporting better education outcomes

At SVA, we believe that all children should have access to a quality education, no matter their background or postcode. Yet by the age of 15, students in disadvantaged communities can be almost 3 years behind their more privileged peers.

Strong networks supporting collaboration and innovation give school leaders the opportunity to address common challenges, drive evidence-informed action and affect change in their communities and across the system.

The Connection is a collaborative leadership development network for school leaders designed, created and convened by SVA. It brings together high-performing and developing school leaders from across Australia who are delivering exceptional education outcomes in communities experiencing disadvantage. Together, they share best practice expertise and explore innovative thinking from all over the world.

FY21 was a year like no other for The Connection. School leaders have a very important role to play in the lives of their students and communities, which were underscored this year by the impact of Covid-19.

While the shift to remote learning allowed many children to continue with their education, it also increased the risk of falling behind their peers for children experiencing disadvantage. School leaders in these communities were faced with the task not only of moving teaching online, but also of overcoming the barriers to education presented by remote learning.

The Connection ran digital Collaboration and Reflection Energisers (CaRE) sessions for the network to support school leaders facing these challenges and allow them to connect, debrief and learn from each other during challenging periods of lockdown. In addition to these vital sessions, The Connection also launched its new online collaboration platform to improve efficiencies and increase sharing across the network, especially for those in regional, rural and remote settings.

The Connection also inducted 18 new rural, remote and regional (RRR) schools into the network as it began to scale. The RRR hub of schools are committed to growing evidence and insights for developing education excellence and equity in these communities. From the York Peninsula in South Australia and across to Mudgee in western NSW, school leaders are connecting to collaborate and share expertise to grow education opportunities for rural young people to thrive.

The Connection is made possible with the generous support of the Day Family Foundation, Graham Lennon and Family, the Ian Potter Foundation, the JAAM Foundation, Rebecca Gorman and John Sevier, Teachers Mutual Bank, along with prior support from Samsung Australia.



Members of The Connection team at a Thought Leadership Gathering in May, 2021.



John Goh, Principal at Merrylands East Public School and John Carters, Principal at Mudgee Public School at The Connection's Thought Leadership Gathering in May.



Open and ready to learn

SVA Thought Leadership

Sector development and learning

One of the ways in which SVA drives better outcomes for our communities is by sharing our perspectives and creating space for the exchange of ideas and evidence with others.

We do this in a range of ways, some casual meetings or gatherings, others more formal events and activities. Over the course of FY21, and with multiple and varied partners, SVA held numerous webinars on topics varying from:

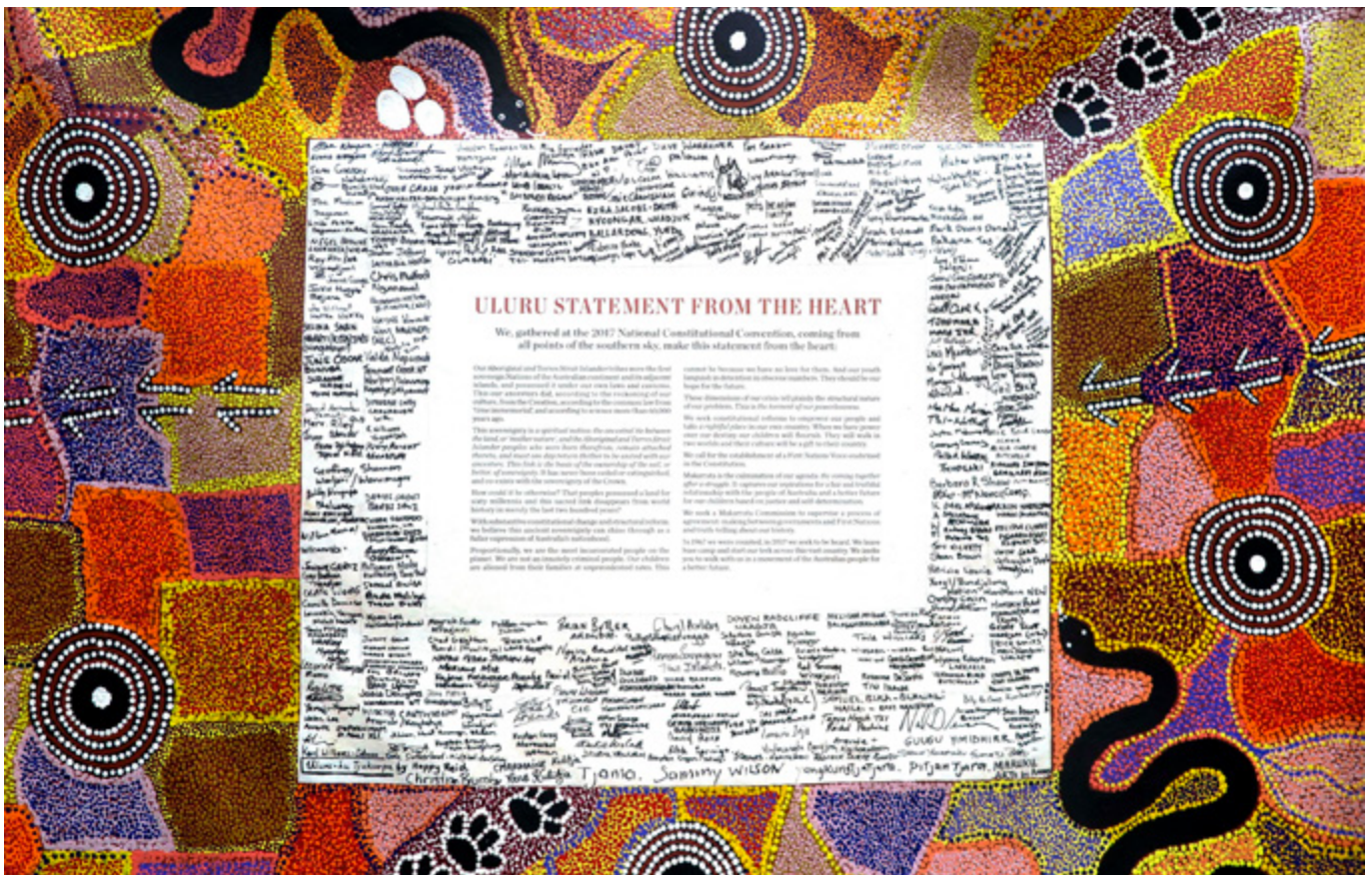
- [The role of income support in ending child poverty](#)
- [Building a shared outcomes framework for disability housing](#)
- [How to build resilient charities to support Australia's wellbeing.](#)

In the context of the Covid-19 impact on the labour market, our employment team held a series of discussions with leading experts that looked at:

- [Inclusive economic recovery](#)
- [The question of a jobs guarantee](#)
- [First Nations and the economic crisis](#)
- [The role of social enterprise.](#)

We published 15 SVA Quarterly articles to share the findings of our work with the sector, including:

- [Vulnerability and resilience in the social sector: what we learnt through Covid-19](#), which details our work with the Paul Ramsay Foundation supporting 80 of their social purpose organisations grant recipients
- [Scenario planning for times of great uncertainty](#)
- [A Step towards First Nations justice in child protection](#)



Uluru Statement from the Heart.



Speakers for SVA’s webinar on ending child poverty, top left to lower right: Angela Finch, social worker-in-training and parent to three children; Emma Sydenham, Director of Early Childhood, Social Ventures Australia; Dr Emily Porter, ANZ Tony Nicholson Research Fellow Work and Economic Security, Brotherhood of St. Laurence; Associate Professor Ben Phillips, Principal Research Fellow, Centre for Social Research and Methods, ANU; Anne Hollonds, National Children’s Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission.

We invited experts from various fields to share their knowledge or collaborate with us, such as:

- [Professor Megan Davis](#), Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous and Professor of Law at the University of NSW, the primary architect of the regional dialogues behind the Uluru Statement from the Heart
- [Angela Finch](#), social worker-in-training and parent to 3 children, who has seen firsthand the difference that sufficient parenting payment support makes to families
- [Adam Davids](#), Aboriginal not-for-profit leader, Fulbright scholar and SVA Board member, who offered his insights for Indigenous not-for-profits by drawing on the experience of successful racial minority-serving institutions in the USA.

We also shared our views with government in 10 submissions on topics such as:

- [Response to the inquiry into economic equity for Victorian women](#)
- [Letter in response to Indigenous Voice Interim Report](#)
- [Submission to the consultation on Victoria’s Social Enterprise Strategy 2021+](#)

SVA has a long history of convening, and we see it as a core part of our mission to share the evidence of what works and the lessons we’ve gleaned from our failures, so that the sector can move forward together.



Illustration from the SVA Quarterly article *Scenario planning for times of great uncertainty*.



Open and ready to learn

Aboriginal Resource Development Services

Providing an interim CEO to support a First Nations organisation

Aboriginal Resource Development Services (ARDS) Aboriginal Corporation is a Yolŋu organisation operating across two offices in Nhulunbuy, North-East Arnhem Land, and Darwin in the Northern Territory.

ARDS has a vision that First Nations people – particularly Yolŋu – are able to engage on equal terms with the wider Australian society and its organisations and systems. To achieve that vision, ARDS works through creative media, research and policy development to span the gap that often exists between the information that mainstream services typically share, and the information First Nations communities want and need.

Like many non-profits across Australia, ARDS' ability to deliver several government-funded projects was compromised by the Covid-19 pandemic. This had a material impact on its financial health. The disruption happened to occur at a time when ARDS was between CEOs.

To support ARDS during this period, SVA's Consulting Director, Brendan Ferguson, took on the role of Interim CEO until a permanent CEO was identified and appointed. In this time, he worked closely with the Chair, Gawura Wanambi, to strengthen the organisation.

During SVA's involvement with the organisation, ARDS' Board and staff made significant progress in strengthening their organisation, with a stronger cash position, capital investment secured and the launch of its Cultural Competence Training package by the NT Chief Minister. The ARDS Board also improved its governance arrangements and strengthened Yolŋu control of the organisation.

Since then, we have watched the progress that the new CEO, Ben Grimes, has made in partnership with the ARDS Board and staff across many of the areas identified for improvement. A critical focus for Ben and Gawura has been creating meaningful pathways for Yolŋu staff development in the organisation.



'There were learning opportunities both ways, but I undoubtedly benefited most from the experience and in particular, the relationship with Gawura (Gamarran), a connection for which I will be forever grateful.'

Brendan Ferguson,
Director, SVA Consulting



Brendan Ferguson, Director, SVA Consulting, Gawura Wanambi, Chair, ARDS, and the Hon. Michael Gunner, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, at an announcement of Northern Territory Government funding for a new training room at ARDS' Nhulunbuy facility.



Gawura Wanambi, Chair, ARDS and Brendan Ferguson, Director, SVA Consulting with Brendan's youngest Eliza.



Real change takes time

Newpin Social Benefit Bond (SBB)

Australia's first social impact bond

This year marked an important milestone, not only for SVA and Uniting, but also for Australia's impact investing sector as the nation's first social impact bond, the Newpin SBB, matured.

The bond was a resounding success, with significant positive impact for children and families experiencing disadvantage and excellent results as an innovative social finance model. It restored 391 children to the care of their families with an overall restoration rate of 61% and delivered a financial return of 10% p.a. to investors. It was estimated that in the absence of the Newpin program, only 21% of these children would have been restored to the care of their families.

The program also supported 65 families to prevent their children from entering the out-of-home care system in the first place. These results highlight the program's effectiveness and add to the evidence base of interventions in the out-of-home care system.

The Newpin program has been operated by Uniting in Australia since 1998, but the commencement of the Newpin SBB marked a new era for the program. The social impact bond arrangement brought a sharper focus to measuring the impact of the program, whilst also providing flexibility to better respond to the needs of families. Since 2013, the Newpin SBB has positively influenced the direction of the child protection system in NSW, which has begun to place a much greater focus on early intervention, restoration and outcomes measurement.

The social impact bond financing arrangement for the Newpin program concluded at the end of June 2020. Uniting continues to deliver the Newpin program under an outcomes-based contract with NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

The success of the Newpin SBB demonstrates how private capital can be used to support and share risk with service providers entering into outcomes-based contracts with government, helping to alleviate disadvantage in Australia. The Newpin SBB paved the way for further outcomes-based contracting and social impact bond pilots across Australia, with many learnings being applied to more recent transactions.

The Newpin SIB model was first replicated in Queensland in 2017. However, this bond was terminated in June 2020, 3 years into the planned 7-year term. This was due to a number of critical challenges in Queensland, including insufficient enrolments in the program, greater than anticipated complexity in the enrolled families' challenges, and a shifting policy landscape.



Newpin staff celebrating the program's 20th anniversary. Image credit: Nicola Bailey.

While the early termination of the Newpin Qld SBB was a disappointing outcome, it did demonstrate that the SIB mechanism worked, by bringing transparency and accountability to decision-making. It also taught us crucial lessons about implementing a well-structured program in a new context, which you can read about in our SVA Quarterly article [Social impact bonds: a tale of three Newpins](#).

With these learnings on board, we launched the Newpin SA Social Impact Bond in early 2021. Uniting Communities, the SA Government and SVA had the benefit of integrating learnings from the Newpin program in NSW and Qld into the South Australian context. With over 4,000 children in South Australia living away from their parents in out-of-home care, there is a strong need for investment in reunification services. Uniting Communities opened the first Newpin Centre in Smithfield, SA in July 2021, and the South Australia Department for Child Protection is now referring families to the Newpin program, which aims to support 314 children from 224 families over the life of the bond.



'The Newpin Social Benefit Bond was the first of its kind in Australia when it started 7 years ago. Since then, the program has demonstrated how these bonds can work for the greater good of the community while delivering a strong financial return for investors. Almost 400 children have now safely returned to their families, which is not only a great social outcome, but also a positive financial outcome for NSW. More encouragingly, through this unique financing model, Newpin has proven itself to be an effective program and is now able to operate independently without the need for a bond. The NSW Government is pleased to be able to support social impact investing.'

The Hon Dominic Perrottet MP
Former NSW Treasurer, current NSW Premier



Mural at the Newpin centre in Smithfield, Adelaide.



Real change
takes time

Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa

10-year evaluation of a First Nation organisation's impact

Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ) was created by Martu 15 years ago to preserve Martu culture, build a viable, sustainable economy in Martu communities, and build realistic pathways for young Martu to a healthy and prosperous future. Among the most traditional Aboriginal groups in Australia, Martu are the traditional custodians of a vast area of the Great Sandy, Little Sandy and Gibson deserts in the Western Desert of the Pilbara.

SVA Consulting@ have worked with KJ for the past decade on over 10 projects. In FY21, KJ engaged SVA to conduct a 10-year evaluation of their work. The guiding philosophy underlying this evaluation was that it must be a Martu story by Martu, speaking both to Martu and the Western world. The process was co-designed with Martu and involved Martu in the co-facilitation of consultation sessions.



'The evaluation gave Martu the opportunity to tell mainstream Australia what is important to them and for future programs to be measured against that standard. We have been impressed with SVA's skill to balance the need for robust and rigorous evaluation with the empathy required to be reactive to the rhythms of remote communities.'

Zan King,
General Manager, External Affairs, Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa

In the evaluation, Martu described a set of outcomes that were important to them and KJ's impact was measured against those outcomes. In this way, the evaluation focused on what was most important to Martu and not on criteria set by others.

The evaluation had 3 purposes:

1. create an opportunity for Martu to articulate the outcomes that matter to them and for the impact of programs involving Martu to be measured against those outcomes
2. understand the extent to which KJ has contributed to outcomes that are important to Martu communities over the past 10 years
3. reflect on KJ's organisational values and how KJ works with Martu.

The evaluation found that over the past 10 years, KJ has made a substantial impact on outcomes that are important to Martu. It told a very clear story of the vision that Martu have for their work with KJ and the future they want for their community. Martu were also able to build their evaluation capabilities through the evaluation process having co-facilitated community workshops and informed consultation approaches.



'SVA's 10 year evaluation of KJ's impact on Martu communities has been a seminal piece of work not only for us as a Martu organisation, but also for Indigenous policy, evaluation and program design at a sector level. The evaluation demonstrated a genuinely Indigenous-led approach that truly put the Martu voice at the centre. A great example of an evaluation done in line with the Productivity Commission's recent Indigenous Evaluation Strategy 2020.'

Peter Johnson
Co-founder, Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa



Over 60 Martu taking part in a Kalyuku Ninti (Return to Country) trip visiting Country where their families walked during pujiman (pre contact) times.



Gladys Bidu out on Country teaching students from RAWA school (Punmu and Kunawarritji) as part of the High School Ranger Program.

Welcome to new team members



Arani Duggan
National Director, Fundraising and Partnerships

'I am driven every day to work towards a more equitable Australia, one where every person can thrive. I am motivated knowing that our work in Partnerships at SVA brings collaborators together to create positive lasting change.'

Arani Duggan is the National Director, Fundraising and Partnerships at Social Ventures Australia (SVA). Over an extensive career, Arani has used her collaborative, consultative and creative approach to inspire confidence and deliver meaningful multi-year partnerships with philanthropists, governments and corporates. Arani has an exemplary record of increasing revenue for both large and small organisations and assisting them to deliver on their vision. Prior to joining SVA, Arani was the Head of Marketing and Fundraising at Ronald McDonald House Charities.

Arani holds a Bachelor of Design from the University of New South Wales, Sydney. She is the Senior Vice President of the Western Sydney Business Connection and a Non-Executive Director of SoundWest. She was the winner of CEO Magazine's Not-for-Profit Executive of the Year 2020.



Solly Fahiz
Consultant

'SVA works with organisations providing compassion and care for those who need it most across Australia. The expertise and advice SVA provides to clients ensures those clients are in the best position to deliver the crucial work they undertake in the community. To know that the work I do each day is making life a little easier for vulnerable members of our community is a fantastic feeling.'

Solly started as a consultant at SVA this year. Prior to joining SVA, he spent nearly a decade in government, having worked as an adviser to federal and state ministers, a media adviser for the Premier of Victoria, and a chief of staff to a Victorian minister. More recently, he worked in an executive management role in the TAFE sector. Solly also serves as a board director at the Nick Kyrgios Foundation.

Solly holds an Executive MBA from Melbourne Business School, and a Masters of Middle Eastern and Central Asian Studies and Bachelor of Arts (International Relations), both from the Australian National University.



Bernadette Favis
Director, Legal, Risk & Compliance

'I am truly passionate about making a difference in this world for the better. SVA is the perfect platform for me to use my experience and skills to make a positive impact and enrich the lives of people and communities in need. It is a privilege to be surrounded by like-minded and driven individuals who share the same passion.'

Bernadette is the Director Legal, Risk & Compliance at SVA. She works with teams to help meet their legal, compliance and risk management needs. She also acts as Company Secretary for SVA and its subsidiaries.

Bernadette has over 10 years' experience as a corporate and commercial lawyer and 15 years as a compliance and governance professional. She has held general counsel roles in the financial services industry, advising on a broad range of general corporate, intellectual property, commercial contract, compliance and regulatory affairs, and also worked for the State Government restructuring and advising on commercialisation of its education divisions.

Bernadette holds a Bachelor of Commerce and Juris Doctor (specialising in corporate and commercial law) from Bond University and a Certificate IV in Compliance Management. She is an accredited Prince II Project Management Practitioner. Bernadette is also an experienced board director and company secretary and currently serves on the boards of a health food company and Australian Organic Limited, a not-for-profit and Australia's peak body for the organic industry.



Geoff Sharp
Systems Lead, Early Years Catalyst

'For all my years of experience in the not-for-profit sector I have always been left with a nagging question: why, despite the resources available and the amazing work that people do, is it that deeply entrenched poverty and vulnerability remain such a potent and life-changing issue in our communities? This is what attracted me to working at a systemic level, trying to address not just the symptoms, but the root causes that lie at the heart of the problem.'

Geoff is the systems lead for the Early Years Catalyst in SVA's Early Childhood Development team. The Early Years Catalyst brings together leaders from across children and family services, seeking to maximise impact and bridge gaps within the current early years system to allow more young children in Australia to thrive. The Catalyst came about from the 2019 Early Years Summit with nearly 500 leaders from across the Early Childhood Field who together agreed that they need to work together and take a whole of system approach to generating long-term, sustainable change.

Geoff comes to SVA with many years of experience in senior leadership roles in the not-for-profit community and philanthropic sectors. He has also worked in consulting and as an associate with Collaboration for Impact, an organisation aimed at building an influential movement of people to build capacity in others and shift the conditions that hold complex challenges in place.

A growing network of alumni

While it is hard to bid farewell to beloved colleagues, we are always excited to see former staff taking what they have learned at SVA and pursuing new ways to make positive social impact.



Prebhjot Kaur

Now: pursuing a Master of Public Administration at the London School of Economics & Political Science

At SVA: Consultant

"I joined SVA at the end of 2018 and it exposed me to a whole new world. I came from an accounting background and the work we did at SVA along with our unique approach helped me think through wicked problems in a completely new way. I learnt so much from my friends and colleagues and I am so proud to have been part of the SVA community! I tell everyone about the work we did and the impact SVA has in Australia to make it a better place for all, and it never fails to impress.

I'm now pursuing a Master of Public Administration at the London School of Economics & Political Science. I wouldn't be where I am today if it hadn't been for the support I received from my SVA team and the opportunities I had access to. I look forward to following SVA's journey closely for many years to come."



Katie Maskiell

Now: Program and Advocacy Lead, Youth - UNICEF Australia

At SVA: Associate Director, Policy and Advocacy

"I have recently started at UNICEF Australia in the Australian Programs team. Here I lead UNICEF's response on the impacts of Covid-19 for Australian children and youth, including mental health advocacy, and am working to develop a children's platform for the upcoming Commonwealth election.

Having worked in government health departments prior to joining SVA in 2016, my time at SVA really helped broaden my social policy skills and knowledge. It also shaped and enhanced my understanding of how policy and advocacy can work to bring about positive change and has given me the skills to implement advocacy strategies with confidence.

I'm incredibly grateful to have worked with such an intelligent and committed team full of personality and purpose, who were all interested in creating consequential change at scale to improve the lives of Australians. I'm very lucky to have been part of the SVA team for over 5 years; it certainly gave me the skills, expertise and opportunities to be able to now focus on the rights and futures of Australia's children and young people."



Jon Myer

Now: Associate Director, Orygen Digital

At SVA: Principal, Consulting

"I am currently laser-focused on bringing evidence-based, digital mental support to young people. We are in the middle of a mental health 'shadow pandemic' and at Orygen Digital we develop, trial and deliver online solutions in Australia and beyond.

In my role, I lead the team's strategy, operations, communications and business development functions. It is a pleasure and a privilege to be doing this sort of work at a time like this and I would not be doing so without the springboard and intellectual boot-camp of SVA Consulting. Over nearly 7 years, I learnt so much from all of my incredible SVA colleagues. SVA truly is a wonderful place to hone problem-solving skills, build networks and get a hands-on understanding of social change making."



Dr Tanya Vaughan

Now: Senior Research Fellow, Education Policy and Practice: Educational Monitoring and Research, Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)

At SVA: Associate Director, Evidence for Learning

"SVA is a place where every voice is heard and valued. I had come to SVA with wide experience within the education sector, with an ever passionate focus on overcoming disadvantage through education. I thrived within the flat structure of SVA through excellent leadership and partnership as led by Matthew Deeble within my team. His leadership grew my ability to have a confident voice and deepened my stakeholder engagement skills. I can see this growth now as I receive feedback from working in an in-depth manner across many stakeholder groups in complex evaluations to ensure that all voices are heard, especially those surrounded by disadvantage to create an Australia where all people and communities thrive. I feel so privileged to have spent so long within SVA and I now consider it to be embedded within my DNA so that it will always influence my leadership at ACER. "

Board and governance



Rob Koczkar
(Chair)



Adam Davids



Robert Fitzgerald AM



Tanya Gilerman



Chris Harrop



Verity Lomax^



Daisy Mallett



Cindy Reese
Mitchell^



Suzie Riddell



Paul Robertson AO+



Lisa Paul AO PSM+



Adrian Appo OAM++

Legend:

^New appointment

+ Retired at November 2020 AGM

++ Retired in August 2020

SVA's governance is augmented by its members.

SVA members are the guardians of the underlying mission and values of SVA. Thank you to everyone involved in ensuring SVA is well governed and effectively delivering its mission.



Financials

SVA's operating income comes from generous philanthropic support provided by a variety of trusts, foundations, corporate and individual funders, combined with government grants as well as cost recovery and fee-based income from our consulting and impact investing work.

As a not-for-profit organisation, any surpluses we make in a given year are used to further our social mission in future years. There is no distribution to shareholders and all funds are used in a way that is consistent with our purpose.

SVA's projects and initiatives span multiple years. Much of the funds we raise in a given year will be used for future year's activities, or are tied to milestones that will be achieved in coming years. However, statutory reporting requires us to recognise donations and some grants in the year in which the funds are received.

In FY21, SVA continued to work towards our vision by engaging in a range of activities that contribute towards more effective systems for a fairer society whilst adapting to the challenges and opportunities presented by Covid-19.

In the last quarter of FY20 and the first two quarters of FY21, SVA claimed and received the Federal Government JobKeeper subsidy. SVA met all the requirements to receive JobKeeper based on the drop in revenues we experienced during that time. JobKeeper achieved its intended aims to encourage us to retain our staff and continue our activities and planning despite high uncertainty about our operating environment. We are grateful for this government support, which helped ensure that we could continue to employ our staff despite the volatile operating environment and allow us to bounce back quickly to continue supporting the organisations and people we seek to serve.

This year saw the conclusion of some multi-year projects, such as maturing social impact bonds providing one-off revenue. It also saw us make some changes to our business model, such as exiting support for external ventures which reduced our cost base this year. The recovery of financial markets in late FY21 also resulted in a stronger than anticipated surplus from investments. SVA also experienced a reduction in staff costs due to lower staff numbers, and lower travel and marketing costs than normal.

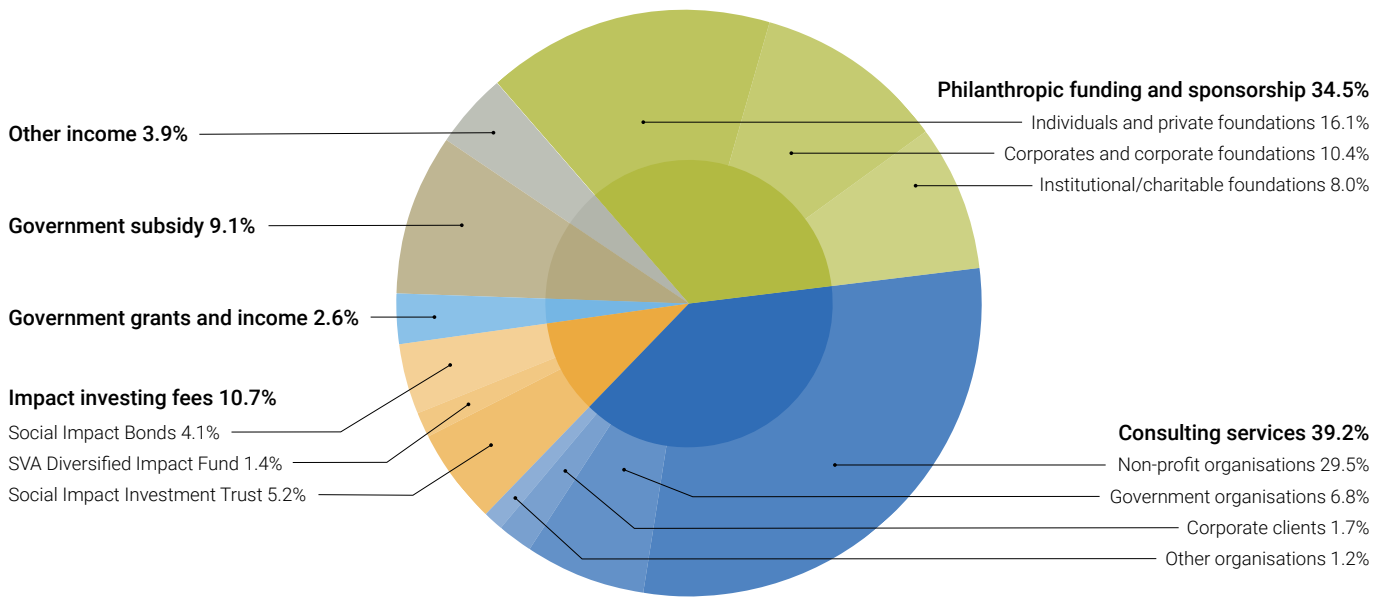
Due to these factors, SVA's consolidated group activity in FY21 delivered a surplus for the year of \$4,336k compared with a net loss of \$147k in the prior year and a net loss of \$1,061k in FY19. SVA's audited financial statements are available at <https://www.socialventures.com.au/about-sva/financial-information/>.

Income Sources

SVA's total operating income for FY21 of \$19,100k was sourced from:	\$'000	%
Consulting services	7,481	39.2%
Donations	5,520	28.9%
Other grants	1,070	5.6%
Impact investing fees	2,039	10.7%
Government grants and income	497	2.6%
Government subsidy	1,745	9.1%
Other income	748	3.9%
Total SVA operating income	19,100	100.0%

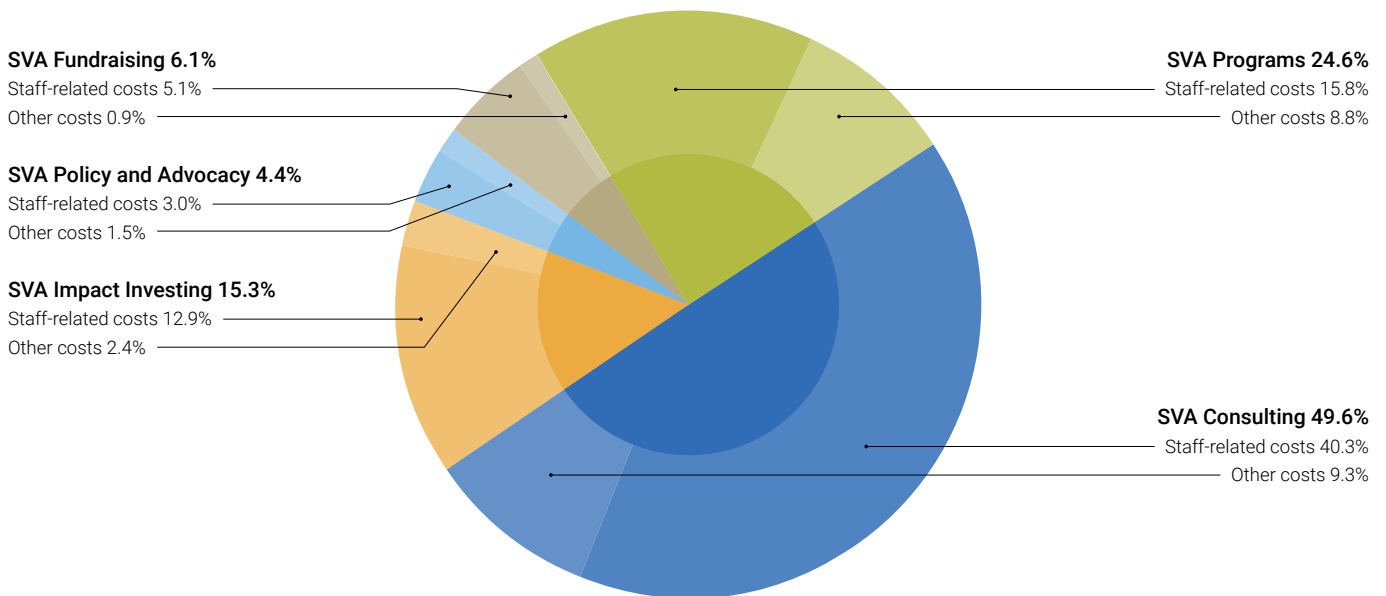
SVA income in FY21

In FY21, SVA's income came from the following sources:



Where we applied income in FY21

SVA income is directed to our program work, activity-based services, operating costs, the development of new programs of work, and to support our future sustainability.



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