

Making Change Happen

A Professional Development Program for NGO Executives and Senior Managers involved in programs, advocacy and campaigns

Information Pack Course 1

September 2016 to May 2017

1. Introduction

ACFID and the Institute of Human Security and Social Change at La Trobe University are working together to deliver Making Change Happen - a professional development program for leaders and senior managers from development NGOs.

The program focuses on the challenges that NGOs will need to address if they are to remain relevant and effective in 10-15 years' time. NGOs operate in complex and dynamic environments where disruptive changes are the norm. Yet conventional approaches to development and ways of working are not always well-aligned with the need to innovate, reflect and adapt.

Making Change Happen is a unique, intensive and challenging leadership program for experienced development professionals who want to drive change in their organisations and across the sector. The program will engage participants in an experiential, applied learning program run over an eleven-month period which combines knowledge-sharing, discussion, practical application, reflection, and learning.

The program is made possible with the generous support of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

2. Program Objectives

Making Change Happen aims to enhance the relevance, sustainability and effectiveness of NGOs by building and supporting a cohort of developmental leaders who can drive change both in their organisations and across the sector. In particular, the program aims to develop leaders who:

- will act as champions for development effectiveness in their organisations and across the sector;
- have the knowledge and skills to design, implement and review effective inclusive development programs in complex settings; and
- have the knowledge and skills to develop organisations in ways which are consistent with promoting transformational and inclusive change.

More specifically, participants will develop their capacity to:

- apply systems thinking and complexity theory;
- think and work politically;
- lead adaptive programming and organisational development;
- support social movements and women's movements;
- convene and broker multi-stakeholder initiatives focused on complex social problems;
- experiment, learn and speed up cycles of iterative adaptation; and
- gather and use evidence to provide feedback and adjust action.

3. Program Content

The Making Change Program consists of three units. All participants are encouraged to enrol in the first unit “Foundational Issues in Making Change Happen”. Participants can then choose to enrol in either the second or third units depending on their areas of employment/expertise.

Program managers are encouraged to enrol in Unit 2 “Program Management in a Complex World”. Senior managers from across all organisational functions – including program management – are encouraged to enrol in Unit 3 “Organisational Development in an Uncertain World”. Each unit is described in more detail below.

3.1 Fundamentals in Making Change Happen explores different way of thinking about how social change happens and uses case studies and actual work from agencies, and beyond. ***This unit explores and tests the fundamental assumptions that agencies have about their role in promoting transformational social change in a dynamic and changing world.*** It targets senior managers working both overseas and in Australia who are involved in strategy, program, and influencing work.

The unit is four days long run and over a two -month period with support between sessions to individual agencies. The initial two days look at different perspectives and examples of social change, with set readings, and sets up ongoing work to be done, tailoring the reading and support to participants/organisations. The third day (after four weeks) is a check in with participants on their progress on cases, an offering of further advice and input. The fourth and final day draws broader lessons from the cases, and locates them in a broader context of research and changes in the sector.

Upon successful completion of this unit, participants are expected to:

- develop a deeper understanding of different perspectives on transformational change and how it occurs;
- deepen their understanding of the challenges of, and obstacles to, promoting transformational change and sustainable development and how it might be resisted; and
- have confidence in the practical application of this understanding to a specific example of developmental change, and in the exploration of creative and innovative ways of making change happen, following targeted support.

3.2 Program Management in a Complex world. This builds off the Field Methods in Development subject run by La Trobe as part of the Master of International Development, and Developmental Leadership Program’s research. ***This unit focuses on the practice of designing, implementing and evaluating programs in ways that are consistent with an understanding of complexity and transformation.*** It targets staff involved in program management, influencing, and monitoring and evaluation.

The unit is five days long and run over a two-month period with support offered between sessions. The initial two days looks at different ways of designing, implementing and evaluating social change programs based on participants’ experience and real work case studies with appropriate readings, and sets up ongoing work to be done, with readings and support to participants/organisations. The third and fourth days (after five weeks) is a check-in with participants on their progress on cases, offering further advice. The final day draws broader lessons from the cases, test the applicability of ideas presented to international NGOs, and locates this work in a broader context of research and changes in the sector. This includes discussion about how donors can best support these ways of working.

Upon successful completion of this unit participants will have engaged with a specific project or program example relevant to their agency, and explored how it might be improved. In so doing, participants are expected to be better able to:

- identify entry points for promoting development, appreciate different theories of change, and work from a politically informed perspective;
- understand how to contribute to positive and transformational change processes in a deliberate way;
- identify how to work with and through coalitions and politically informed processes to achieve change;
- utilise inclusion as a way to strengthen and broaden strategies for change;
- utilise or manage appropriate processes of monitoring and evaluation to promote innovation and improvement; and.
- articulate to donors how their support can best enable transformational change processes.

3.3 Organisational Development in an Uncertain World. This is a new unit which *explores the institutional implications of a greater understanding of complexity and social change*. It targets senior management staff and leaders from across all functional areas in agencies. The unit includes an exploration of: organisational structure and strategy; culture and ways of working; managing multiple accountabilities; learning and innovation; fundraising and communication; and performance management and measurement.

The unit is two days long and run over a four-week period with support offered between sessions.

The initial day looks at different perspectives and examples of organisational development, and sets up ongoing work to be done, including tailored reading and support to participants. The final day draws broader lessons from the cases, tests the applicability of ideas presented to international NGOs, and locates them in a broader context of change and changes in the sector. This includes discussion about how donors can best support these ways of working.

Upon successful completion of this unit, participants are expected to have:

- a developed understanding of how different agencies are addressing the organisational implications of working in ways that are consistent with promoting transformational and inclusive change;
- a greater understanding of the challenges of, and obstacles to, promoting organisational development of this nature, and shared strategies to manage these tensions;
- engaged with a specific example of organisational change relevant to their agency and explored creative and innovative ways of making this happen; and
- improved their critical and analytical skills on the links between organisational development, transformational change and the role of international NGOs, and their ability to express and advocate their ideas in written and verbal form.

4. Schedule and Venue

The entire program will run full days (9am-5pm) over a period of eight months starting in September 2016 and finishing in May 2017. The delivery dates for the face-to-face sessions in each unit are shown below.

All of the face-to-face elements of the program will be delivered in Melbourne, at the La Trobe University City Campus at 360 Collins St Melbourne, or at Karstens Conference Venue, 123 Queen Street around the corner from the La Trobe City Campus. More information including room numbers and locations, will be provided prior to the start of each unit.

Unit 1 Foundational Issues in Making Change Happen

- Wednesday 14 September 2016
- Thursday 15 September 2016
- Wednesday 19 October 2016
- Tuesday 15 November 2016

Unit 2 Program Management in a Complex World

- Tuesday 7 February 2017
- Wednesday 8 February 2017
- Tuesday 7 March 2017 - *Karstens*
- Wednesday 8 March 2017 - *Karstens*
- 30 March 2017 - *Karstens*

Unit 3 Organisational Development in an Uncertain World

- Wednesday 19 April 2017
- Wednesday 31 May 2017

5. Course Fees

Financial support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade allows us to offer the course at a heavily discounted rate of AU\$1,500 per person per unit. This discount will only be available for the first year of the course. In second and subsequent years, the course fee is likely to be at least \$3,000 per person per unit.

Agencies sending more than one person will receive a discount of 20 per cent on the course fees.

In order to ensure that as many as agencies as possible can participate in the program, we have capped the number of participants at three per agency.

Participants or their organisation will be invoiced for course fees in the month before each unit starts.

Course fees include all face-to-face sessions, all reading materials, catering and up to half a day mentoring/coaching between sessions per person with this capped at one day per agency. Course fees do not cover the cost of accommodation or flights or transport to and from the venue.

6. Assessment and Certification

Participants will receive a certificate of participation on completion of the course. Participants can apply to receive advanced standing of 15 points for each unit they take if they apply to do a Master of International Development or Graduate Diploma of International Development at La Trobe University.

The application for advanced standing will involve submitting a piece of assessable work that demonstrates their knowledge of a particular subject is commensurate with that of a La Trobe University student who has successfully completed the subject that the applicant is seeking advanced standing for. We are exploring whether other universities can make similar offers.

7.Registration

Places in the program are strictly limited. At this point in time, we are able to offer up to 35 places in Unit 1, 25 places in Unit 2, and 20 places in Unit 3. Places will be filled on a first come, first served basis. We expect places to fill fast.

The course represents a significant investment in terms of time, energy and money. Participants must be willing to make the necessary commitment to complete the course and contribute to change in their organisation and the sector.

More specifically, participants will be expected to:

- undertake pre-reading of selected papers;
- participate actively in class discussions;
- apply the learning to a specific project relevant to their organisation with the support of mentors/coaches provided by the program; and
- contribute to collective learning processes during and between face-to-face sessions.

Participant eligibility

- at least five years' experience working in the aid and development sector;
- a minimum of three years in a managerial/supervisory role in the aid and development sector;
- a desire to develop their leadership skills;
- a commitment to driving change in their organisation and contributing to change in the wider sector; and
- support from their employer.

Registrations must be made via the ACFID website by Friday 19 August 2016

Participants who register before 8 August receive a five per cent early bird discount.

Agencies sending more than one person receive a further discount of 20 per cent on course fees.

An agency can register up to three people for each unit.

Enquiries about Making Change Happen can be directed to Stephanie Koorey at ACFID, skoorey@acfid.asn.au, 02 6281 9229.