

# CULTUREBUSINESSCANBERRA

## KEY LEARNINGS: FUNDRAISING MASTERCLASS

<p><u>Speaker</u></p> <p>Nick Mitzevich Director, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra</p>	<p><u>Notes</u></p> <p><b>Private and Corporate Giving – an Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving is the door opener and the fixer, the way you get over the rainbow; it's the way forward opening to so many opportunities</li> <li>• AGSA: Shrinking govt funding, a city that didn't have many corporate bases. An organisation was built on the bedrock of private individuals so private giving had to be a part of the future.</li> <li>• Despite funding reduction, board made the decision to grow rather than shrink. They asked people for help, made it clear what the financial shortcomings were, demonstrating the gaps they had.</li> <li>• Honesty with benefactors helps enormously, and the position you are at and where you want to go resonates with people.</li> <li>• Know your business inside out – embody every dimension of your business. Any credible funder is going to read your Annual Report, so you need to understand it fully. Helps you learn the art of the asking and the giving.</li> <li>• Know the role of giving in your organisation – the development arm directs the traffic. Private giving is everyone's responsibility, everyone on staff should assist with this. Have it embedded in to your organisation, so that everyone has a role in it. What does Security or cleaning have to do with it? When a security officer says "Good Morning Mrs Ramsay" – small details make a huge difference.</li> <li>• At the front desk, we have pictures of particular people and their names, so that each staff member knows who is in the building</li> <li>• Fundraising isn't considered to be onerous, it is the gate opener, the thing that solves problems and brings ideas to life.</li> <li>• As we transform to a self sustaining model, we need to move to self reliant models to help create a sustainable organization.</li> <li>• This bedrock helps with the ebbs and flows of Government Funding, and AGSA continued to grow as Govt was cut.</li> </ul> <p><b>Case Study 1: Art Gallery of South Australia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (See slide – Landed 2014)</li> <li>• The local council published a report that 500,000 people each month went down the major road where the gallery stands. How could we do something to pull people in? There was no money, but a sponsor wanted to give towards something significant - hard to meet expectations of a corporate sponsor and your own expectations (\$30,000-50,000).</li> <li>• Commissioning a major work by Ian Strange to work between Perth and New York: a house crashed landed on 45 degree angle, protruding out the front of the Gallery. This was pitched to the Corporate Sponsor (who was quite conservative – had supported bedrock/ traditional Australian art in the past)</li> <li>• Nick told them that 500,000 people go past this landmark every month – this example of opportunity sparked change. Started talking with partners to bring it to life – what they wanted was prominence to use this to elevate their own brand. It trended on</li> </ul>
<p><u>Key Learnings</u></p> <p>Embed an understanding of the role giving plays across your organisation</p> <p>Know your numbers</p> <p>Ask with strength, not with weakness</p> <p>Leaders give people jobs, purpose, clear goals</p> <p>Know your business, take on opportunities with respect to it</p>	

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social media.

## Case Study 2: Fundraising Campaign

- Work of French Impressionist artist, Camille Pissarro.
- Speaks to Historic Collection and a bridge to Modernist. A philanthropist wanted to buy an impressionist painting with \$1million, which does not buy one work – said philanthropist wanted it to be turned into \$4 million.
- Influence and honesty: told a generous patron the story, who pledged a million dollars. Then asked the Chairman who questioned the buy as it was not on their acquisitions strategy. But sometimes you need to respond to the things that are presented in front of you. By the end of the week they had \$2.5million on the table.
- They agreed that they would try to raise 75% of the funding quietly and consistently. \$3 million was raised by the end of the month. Once the artwork was identified, it was priced at \$4.5 million. The next 13 months was spent exciting the audience of the remaining funding, 384 individuals contributed.
- Over the course of the first month, 150,000 people visited to see the work. Everyone felt as if they had contributed to the campaign, felt involved. 70% was done quietly, but the last million dollars was what excited people. It was the largest individual funding campaign that was ever rolled out at AGSA.
- → Run with an opportunity, not being fixed. Ask for help, and go to friends with honesty. Feel the confidence: when confidence was in benefactors, it trickled through the whole organization. And stand by the logical arguments: narrative and necessity.

## Case Study 3: Transformative Project

- (See slide) Children and grandchildren of key donors. They needed to work with the families of the great givers.
- Diana Ramsay: a transformational donor, her and husband James Ramsay have donated \$80 million to the South Australian community.
- Important that the families of givers were involved with the gallery.
- Mrs Ramsay fell in love with art as a child through the AGSA and was driven for young people to enjoy this same love.
- Her idea to activate the “Treasure Ships” exhibition, in which children were asked to dress up as Pirates – and Nick as well – for the tour of the gallery.
- Mrs Ramsay brought \$5 million to the gallery after speaking to two young girls after they excitedly told her about their recent experience at the gallery during a pilot program.
- Nick presented Mrs Ramsay with a permanent plan and growth of children’s programs for a decade: before, 2% of the audience was under 18, in 2018 now over 20% is under 18.

## Case Study 4: Major Corporate Partnership

- The largest of its kind in Aus, between BHP and AGSA (\$17Mill over 5 years) supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander work across Australia.
- Partnership initiated by the Premier of SA, an advocate for Aboriginal art, and his offices were filled with Aboriginal art.

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- BHP approached the Gallery, they wanted a project that elevated Aboriginal art across Australia, that commissioned new works and helped mainstream Australia learn more about it. BHP was embedded in Aboriginal communities, and their Reconciliation Action Plan was in its 6<sup>th</sup> iteration – they wanted a collaborative project, they didn't want to be selfish with the money.
- They would bring together 20 organisations across the city for a festival across Adelaide. Which would meet funding requirements
- BHP increased their support and put \$17.5 million toward the project. 775 indigenous artists/collectives were brought together bringing 350,000 audience members.
- → If you can't achieve what the objectives are, bring a coalition together, make a reference group was used to help solve problems. If there is a problem or an impasse, always try to solve before speaking to your sponsor, but always have full disclosure. Asking for help is a sign of strength, not of weakness.

## Q&A

- Don't assume that people know where they fit. Nick uses a Monday morning briefing session to tell groups what is happening for the week in the building.
- It is important that leaders give jobs to people – people want to help, but may not know how to.
- There are 10 priorities for the next 5 years – 220 staff collectively brainstormed together and identified those 10 strategies – one is to make sure that our fundraising overlaps with the artistic program. Don't get your great ideas and then force a retrofitted funding model. Make sure that key elements are overlapped with a sustainable fundraising plan.
- Make sure your ecology of fundraising is varied in size, scope, intensity and breadth.
- It is important to honour the relationships that you've made. There will be some individuals who support both organisations (AGSA and NGA), but they see that as their own personal ideals.
- Respect and loyalty for the relationships built: Nick won't pillage his own legacy at the AGSA for his future at the NGA.

## 100 Days at the National Gallery

- The NGA's geographical gamut is immense, bigger than Europe. Our supporters are spread throughout the country. This is one of the youngest institutions of Australia.
- At the AGSA, supporters were less than 20 mins from the gallery, and would visit at least once a month or more. There was a great sensitivity. At the NGA, most of the donors are at least 400kms away (in Sydney), and some are in Perth. Many of the donors have galleries in their own states and cities, so donors have to be shared.
- The principles that underpin fundraising are still there – be confident, clear and communicative, understand your business.
- Making sure that there is a necessity to supporting the National Gallery and that it has a different role to the support of regional galleries etc without competing with that support. The NGA's mandate is to serve the nation and to make sure that art is

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accessible for everyone in Australia.

- You don't convince people to give money – you inspire the confidence that they should, and that it will, make a difference.
- Nearly 4 million people saw the NGA collection in 2017, many works were loaned to other galleries and many exhibitions were on tour. It is important that the NGA is mobile, to extend reach. They were used as leverage points for their giving campaigns.

## **Question to the Audience: How do you embed fundraising across your organization?**

- Table 1 – “Who makes the ask?” We want to move this question into the organization.
- Table 2 – Building a philanthropic culture within the organization, and building them in to the appeal, or the fundraising strategy and what they need money for, and being transparent about why you might not be choosing their idea.
- Table 3 – We want our Artistic Directors and General Managers to the next Culture Business conference – they need to “get” it. They need to appreciate what needs to be done.
- Table 4 – Nick should go on tour so that everyone can hear these case studies!

## **Critical Issues and Take Aways**

- Be confident about working in the fundraising area, give people a great sense of achievement and fun. Donors contribute because they want to make a difference and be a part of success
- Take advantage of opportunities as they come
- Be sure that you embody the philosophy of the institution and that you distinctively define what that is
- Bring people internally with you, have your team onside backing you, so that external people can come