

## Funding & Resources for Community Legal Education

The funding and resources for community legal education (CLE) activities designed and delivered by CLCs are drawn from both internal and external sources.

### Internal Sources

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The core funding of the centre is the main internal source. Centres include CLE work in the position descriptions of staff. Ideally, each centre will have a dedicated CLE worker. Funds may be allocated for CLE related expenses within the normal operating budget of the centre. Volunteers can also be specifically recruited and retained for CLE purposes, for example, as peer educators or volunteer lawyers who are trained to deliver CLE sessions.

### External Sources

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There are a wide range of external sources to which centres may apply for funding or in-kind resources for CLE activities. Usually funding from external sources is provided on a project or once-off basis. Often the funding does not cover core/general set-up, staffing and administrative costs – although centres can often include general administrative costs in project funding. The projects are essentially piggy-backing on the funded organisation's structure and core operations and funding.

This information sheet explores these funding sources.

### Internal Sources

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CLE is a core function of community legal centres. As such, it should be recognised in the core funding budget allocations for expenses such as staffing, equipment, printing, promotion and administration. However, with many competing financial demands on a limited budget, this is not always automatically the case. It often falls on the CLE worker(s) to prepare budget proposals and to make the case for the budget allocation. Forward planning is critical. Knowing what you are planning to do in the next budget period, realistically estimating costs and taking a timely and proactive approach to ensuring that decision-makers are aware of this information is important.

Centres may be able to self generate some income through CLE activities such as the sale of publications and charging speaker and consultancy fees. Before charging for publications or to provide speakers, it is important to check funding agreements and arrangements. If a centre is funded to provide CLE, then charging for services may be viewed as “double-dipping” and potentially be considered to be in breach of funding guidelines.

CLCs may also be able access non-financial internal resources to assist with CLE work. Volunteers are the obvious example.

## External Sources

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The *Community Legal Centre Project Funding Kit* (Teakle, 2002, p3) identifies a range of external funding sources and in-kind resource opportunities including:

### Government

- federal;
- state; and
- local

### Philanthropic Trusts

- private foundations;
- family foundations;
- community foundations;
- corporate foundations;
- government initiated foundations; and
- trustee companies.

### Pro Bono – assistance from law firms and other corporate organisations

#### Other/Private

- individuals (donations, bequests, etc);
- sponsorships;
- tenders;
- service clubs;
- Et cetera.

### Tips!

All funding sources have guidelines/criteria and priorities for the allocation of funds. Read these carefully and ensure that these are addressed in the funding application.

At any given time there will be key generally understood policy agendas and approaches, for example, “social inclusion” and “community engagement”. Considered use of the current “language” and demonstrating how the proposed CLE activity supports the policy agenda, even if has not been specifically referred to by the funding body, may enhance the funding proposal. Brief your potential funders and get their feedback before you write the funding submission.

## Finding Out About External Funding & In-Kind Resource Opportunities

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The *Federation Toolkit* (Managing the Organisation – Funding & Grants – CLC Funding Kit) provides up to date links and information about organisations that regularly provide funding to CLCs and those which provide other forms of support or in-kind resource opportunities.

In relation to CLE, consider the following opportunities:

### Government

- commonwealth Government – Grants Link website – [www.grantslink.gov.au](http://www.grantslink.gov.au) - provides information about funding available from a variety of state and federal government sources;
- Victorian Government – Victoria Online website – [www.vic.gov.au](http://www.vic.gov.au) - enter ‘grants’ into the search engine;
- individual department websites;
- advertisements in newspapers; and
- local government – community grants schemes are usually advertised in council newsletters and

websites and in local newspapers. Local government is an excellent source of in-kind assistance such as subsidised rent, free use of meeting spaces, assistance with printing and with promotion of activities

### **Victoria Law Foundation**

The Victoria Law Foundation is a major source of CLE funding. The Foundation's website, [www.victorialawfoundation.org.au](http://www.victorialawfoundation.org.au), provides comprehensive information about its grants programs and application process.

### **Philanthropic Trusts & Foundations**

- Philanthropy Australia - [www.philanthropy.org.au](http://www.philanthropy.org.au) - is the peak body for philanthropic organisations in Australia. In addition to information available on its website, Philanthropy Australia publishes *The Australian Directory of Philanthropy* (updated each two years) and hosts the PhilanthropyWiki – [www.philanthropywiki.org.au](http://www.philanthropywiki.org.au) - an “online encyclopaedia and achieved knowledge on philanthropy in Australia”; and
- Websites of individual trusts and foundations.

### **Legal Services Board**

The Legal Services Board is a legal regulatory body in Victoria. The Board offers a grants program that provides funding for legal education. The Legal Services Board can be a source of relatively substantial grants. Information about the Grants Program is available on the Board's website, [www.lsb.org.au](http://www.lsb.org.au).

### **Pro Bono**

- The Public Interest Law Clearing House (PILCH) co-ordinates a number of pro bono schemes and acts as an integral link between CLCs and the pro bono services offered by a number of private law firms – [www.pilch.org.au](http://www.pilch.org.au)
- The National Pro Bono Resource Centre provides a range of information and resources. Check out their website [www.nationalprobono.org.au](http://www.nationalprobono.org.au) and subscribe to the e-newsletter;
- Some larger firms have in-house pro bono co-ordinators/schemes that can be contacted directly. These schemes do not usually provide direct funding, but a CLC may be able to negotiate legal and paralegal placements, assistance with legal issues, help with design of publications, etc. ; and
- The Federation of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc is a great source of information on how to build pro bono partnerships. The Federation assists in the organisation of the Attorney-General's Community Law Partnerships Round Table. This is a regular forum aimed at giving CLCs, law firms and private lawyers the chance to meet and discuss innovative community law partnership opportunities.

### **Other/Private**

- advertisements in newspapers;
- websites;
- word of mouth/contacts/liaison;
- [www.goodcompany.com.au](http://www.goodcompany.com.au) - provides information about a whole range of great in kind support – particularly graphic designers;
- Our Community Pty Ltd, [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au), produces the *Easy Grants Newsletter* and provides information about grants writing on its website;
- local service organisations – for example, the local Rotary Club provided the food and equipment for free and ran a sausage sizzle at an event hosted by a CLC.

### **General**

- Community Development & Legal Education Working Group, Victoria;
- Federation of Community Legal Centres (Vic), National Association of Community Legal Centres and other networks; and
- your colleagues in other CLCs.

## Tip!

Keep an eye on the CLCs Bulletin Board Services (BBS). Information about new grants programs, funding and resource opportunities is often posted there by CLCs and the state and national associations.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Federation of Community Legal Centres Vic Inc., *Federation Toolkit*, (Managing the Organisation – Funding & Grants – CLC Funding Kit, June 2009), Victoria, [www.communitylaw.org.au](http://www.communitylaw.org.au)
- Teakle, A., (2002) *Community Legal Centre Project Funding Kit*, Federation of Community Legal Centres, Victoria

## FURTHER READING & RESOURCES

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- Rich, N. (2009) *Reclaiming Community Legal Centres: Maximising our potential so we can help our clients realise theirs*, Victoria Law Foundation/Consumer Action Law Centre, Victoria - <http://www.consumeraction.org.au/publications/policy-reports.php>