



UTS Centre for Local Government and
Australian Centre of Excellence
for Local Government
Annual Report 2015



UTS Centre for Local Government

The University of Technology Sydney Centre for Local Government (UTS:CLG) is the leading university-based centre in Australia delivering an extensive program of local government research, teaching and specialist consulting services.

It is an independent, cross-faculty centre within UTS, and commenced operation in 1991 to support the advancement of Australian local government. It is now the largest centre of its kind in Australia.

UTS:CLG promotes a cooperative approach and maintains close ties with a large number of local government associations, professional institutes and academic bodies in Australia, the Asia-Pacific and globally. The Centre also works closely with local, state and federal government organisations.



Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government

The Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG), which was hosted by UTS:CLG from 2009, formally concluded operations at the end of 2015. A unique consortium of universities and professional bodies, ACELG had a strong commitment to the advancement of local government. The consortium included UTS:CLG, the University of Canberra (UC), the Australia and New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG), Local Government Professionals Australia (LGProAus), and the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA).

In its six and a half years of operation the Centre had an enormous impact on the Australian local government sector. ACELG produced over one hundred original research reports and online resources covering a broad spectrum of local government activities and operations. Many of these publications included practical guides, tools and templates which are being utilised by Australian councils to develop internal capacity and apply research findings in day-to-day operations. Some ACELG-funded projects are being concluded during 2016. These projects are being delivered by their respective program partners under existing arrangements and made available to the public via the ACELG online archive <https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/41944>.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Associate Professor Roberta Ryan

Director UTS Institute for Public Policy and Governance
Director UTS Centre for Local Government
Director Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government

It is my pleasure to present the 2015 Annual Report for both the UTS Centre for Local Government (UTS:CLG) and the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG).

2015 was another busy and successful year for our team.

Our work has taken us with our partners across metropolitan, regional and remote Australia – from Hobart to Cairns – and internationally – from the United States to Nepal and Pakistan, to name a few.

This annual reports provides highlights of some exciting and sector defining research projects – it reflects the diversity of the work we undertake and our commitment to sector development and capacity building. Like the *Why Local Government Matters* research – a first of its kind – providing a strong national evidence-base of the significant value communities place on local government.

The impact of research like this has considerably increased our media profile during 2015 with over 500 media mentions in Australian and international media across online platforms, print, radio, and TV (compared with 167 in 2014).

Our academic team has gone from strength to strength with a number of new appointments and a substantial increase in publications and conferences (a total of 187 in 2015).

Reflecting on 2015 I want to acknowledge that this was a busy year for many of our

government and sector partners – with state government elections in New South Wales and Queensland, local government elections in Western Australia, and the 'Fit for the Future' local government reforms in New South Wales. I would like to thank all our partners for their continued engagement with our work.


2016 will be an equally exciting year, with lots of change on the horizon.


On 1 January 2016 UTS will launch its new UTS Institute for Public Policy and Governance (UTS:IPPG). IPPG will bring together our expertise across social research, evaluation, public policy and leadership. The Institute will work across the government and non-government sectors, including but not exclusive to local government. UTS:CLG will be part of IPPG and continue to be a leader in the local government sector. This report outlines just some of the highlights from 2015.


While there are a small number of projects that will be completed throughout 2016, the ACELG program formally concluded at the end of 2015. In its six and a half years of operation, ACELG has informed national local government policy debate, and created a legacy of research and resources that will remain accessible on the UTS website. I am grateful to all our ACELG partners for their support and participation.


I look forward to collaborating with you throughout 2016.


2015 HIGHLIGHTS


- 


500+ mentions in Australian and international media
- 


108 industry and conference presentations
- 


122 postgraduate subject enrolments
- 

2 professors - 1 new appointment and 1 promotion
- 

6 PhD students - 2 new in 2015
- 

2 books and 48 academic journal articles and book chapters
- 

551 attendees in 29 short courses and seminars
- 

35 external research projects completed
- 

Nominated for VC's (Research) Medal for Research Impact

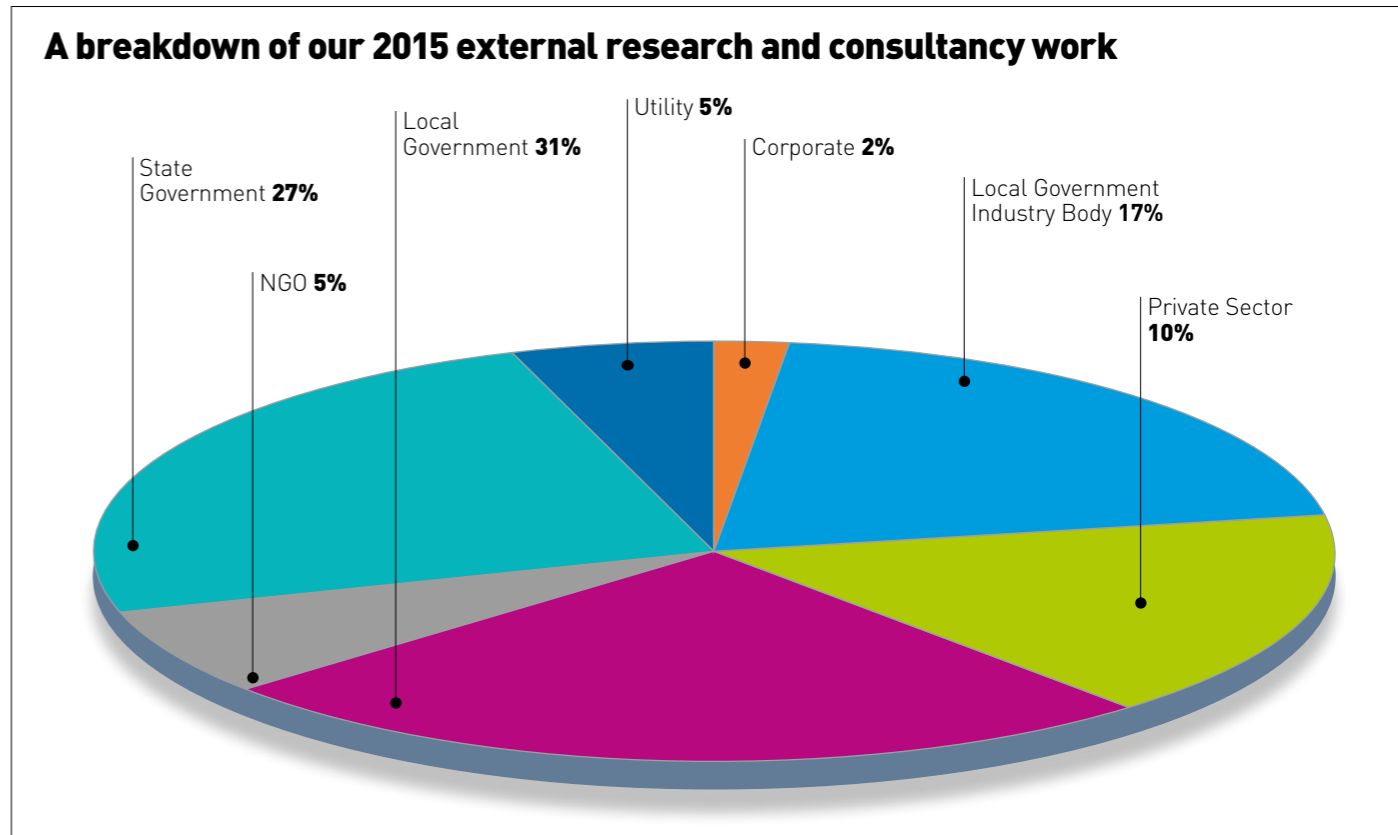
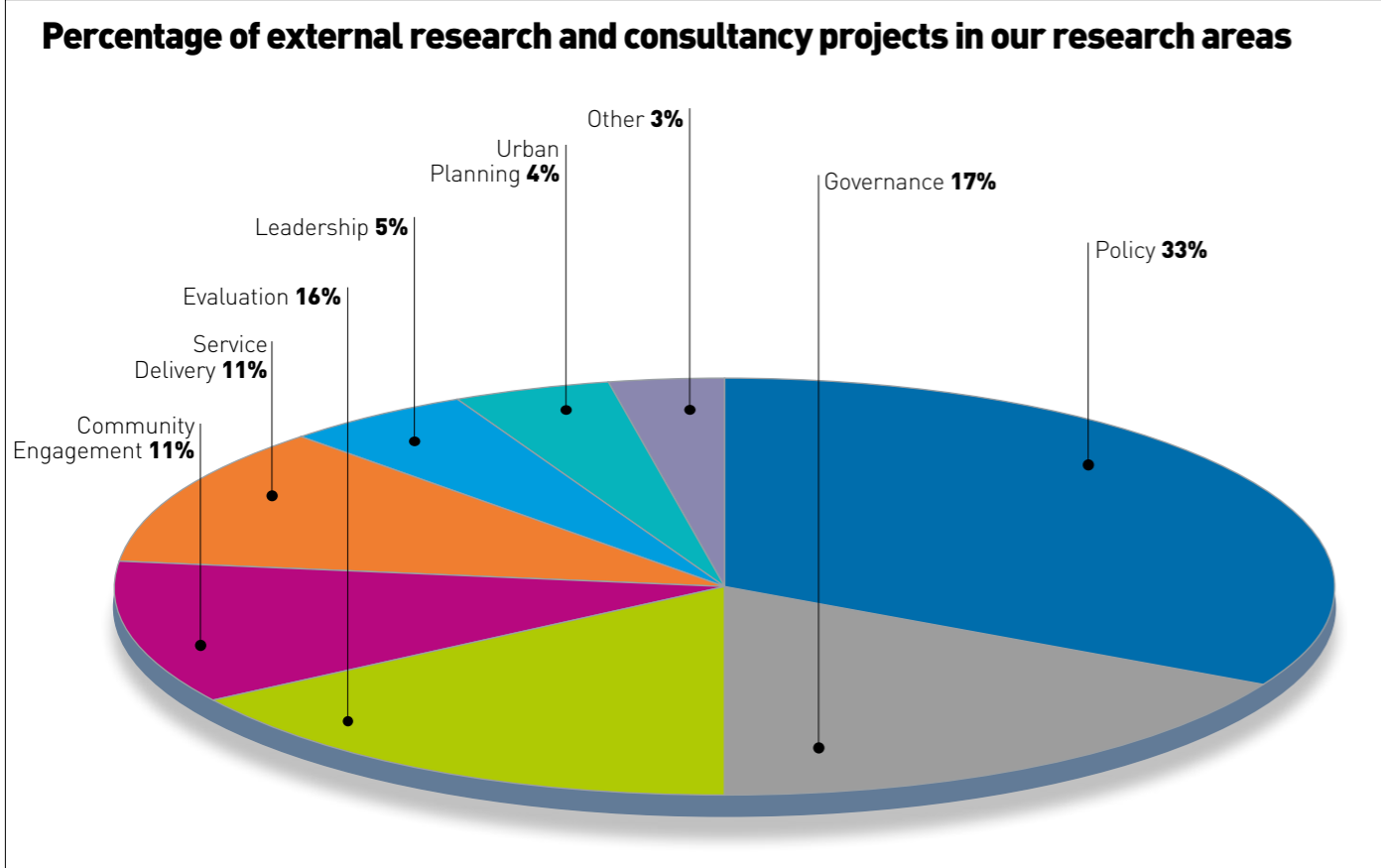
EXTERNAL RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY OVERVIEW

In 2015 we partnered with all levels of government both in Australia and internationally, peak bodies, international agencies, other universities and experts to produce high impact applied research addressing a broad range of subject areas and needs.

Some of our clients in 2015 included:

- > We worked with 15 local government councils across Australia

- > Australian Attorney General's Department
- > Australia Council for the Arts
- > Australian Human Rights Commission
- > Canberra Regional Joint Organisation
- > City of Sydney, New South Wales
- > Gwydir Shire Council, New South Wales
- > Kentish, Latrobe, Waratah-Wynyard, and Circular Head Councils, Tasmania
- > National Disability Insurance Agency
- > New South Wales Department of Premier and Cabinet
- > New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage
- > Rural Councils Victoria
- > Sydney Water
- > Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- > Forum of Federations (Nepal)
- > The Urban Unit (Pakistan)



Federation out of step with local government's changing role

Local government: Big effort to combat racism at grassroots level

Local government: Australia's real economic workhorse?

Social cohesion the aim of new online resource

Local government matters most, new Australian research finds

Women still under-represented in local government

Communities love local councils but not private service delivery

Council amalgamation: How do two become one?

NSW councils shake-up: is the endgame near?

COMMUNICATING OUR WORK

Our work has practical application and impact in the sector, and we actively share our findings through media and social media, presenting at conferences and publishing in academic and popular journals. In 2015 we continued to produce a range of important outputs including research reports, practitioner resources and sector information. Our landmark research, *Why Local Government Matters* (featured on pages 12-13), sparked significant attention both in the sector and the media, and we made numerous presentations throughout the year to conferences, seminars and other events. *The Building Social Cohesion in our Communities* online toolkit (featured on pages 18-19) prepared with the Australian Human Rights Commission was also well received by the sector and media alike, as were a number of other key projects, reports and resources.

MEDIA

Media interest in CLG and ACELG continued to grow in 2015, with our researchers and thought leaders featured over 500 times in Australian and international media.

70 print news stories in outlets including:

- > Sydney Morning Herald
- > The Mandarin
- > The Daily Telegraph
- > Brisbane Times
- > ABC Rural

Our researchers gave 14 radio interviews on stations including:

- > 702 ABC
- > 2SER
- > 3AW
- > ABC News Tasmania
- > Five television news and current affairs programs featured us including:
 - > "Council to fight forced mergers" Ten News, 27 July 2015
 - > Roberta Ryan appearing before the New South Wales Parliamentary Inquiry into Local Government, ABC Lateline
 - > Sydney Water's pricing submission to the New South Wales Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART), featured on Channel 10's The Project

Articles written for media outlets include:

- > 4 for The Conversation
- > 3 for the Mandarin
- > 1 for the New Planner
- > 1 for Govnews

PUBLICATIONS

In 2015 we achieved a significant increase in the number of publications and conference presentations. We went from a total of 69 in 2014 to a total of 187 publications and presentations in 2015.

- > 57 industry presentations
- > 51 academic conference presentations
- > 48 academic journal articles and book chapters
- > 21 published reports
- > 6 published proceedings
- > 2 books
- > 2 sector symposia

DIGITAL

Four editions of the ACELG newsletter 'In Brief' were sent to our 2,000 subscribers in 2015. To receive the latest research findings, news, events and other updates, sign up for our newsletter at ippg.uts.edu.au.

OUR POSTGRADUATE COURSES AND SHORT COURSES

CLG is the only university centre in Australia that designs and develops courses that are tailor-made to the education, training and development needs of professionals and elected representatives in local government. We offer a range of postgraduate programs including Masters, Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate coursework degrees as well as a PhD program. Our offering also includes an extensive professional development program with seminars and short courses delivered both in-house as well as externally throughout the year.

In 2015 we delivered a number of bespoke short courses externally including two Enhanced Service Delivery training programs in Victoria and several courses in New South Wales.

Our courses are taught by lecturers and guest presenters who are recognised within the sector as content experts, and offer a combination of practitioner experience and local government expertise. The depth and range of experience of teaching staff enables research and theory to be taught alongside case studies, and practical tools and content that can be individualised to suit the particular needs of our students.

Our 2015 figures:

- > 122 postgraduate subject enrolments
- > A total of six PhD students
- > Two new students joined the PhD program in 2015
- > 29 short courses and seminars with 551 attendees were delivered in 2015

Our postgraduate awards:

- > Doctor of Philosophy
- > Master of Local Government
- > Graduate Diploma in Local Government Management
- > Graduate Certificate in Local Government Leadership
- > Graduate Certificate in Development Assessment

"Having started as a Graduate Diploma student, I found the progression to the Master program as a natural step in the process, and a great opportunity to further expand my research skills and my knowledge of Local Government systems both in Australia and overseas. The program offers good flexibility and a vast range of subjects to choose from, but the main value of the courses comes from hearing from expert speakers and networking with your fellow classmates who could be directors, general managers or councillors. The Master has certainly sharpened my focus on Local Government and added further appreciation on how important the sector is in the delivery of essential services to the community."

TOMMASO BRISCESE
Executive Manager/Internal Ombudsman,
Burwood Council,
Master of Local Government

'... straight shooting, tell it as it is, is so refreshing and reassuring... I feel the Executive Certificate is a great idea, not only for training but councillors actually get something out of it plus can link it to other courses. I really just wanted to say again Roberta how refreshing it was to hear you speak and that you have had a positive influence on me as far as continuing on with my political career and even looking further down the track.'

BRAD CHRISTENSEN
Councillor, Greater Taree City Council
Elected Members' Executive Certificate



BENJAMIN HANCKEL
PhD candidate

"The Centre's focus on social research and policy, as well as the expertise within the Centre, has been crucial for my PhD work. It has provided me with an important space for collaboration and idea sharing with a diverse group of researchers, whose knowledge has been incredibly important to the research work I have undertaken."

Benjamin's research topic is focused on international development, new technologies (ICTs) and marginalised populations. **Thesis: "An Examination of the Design, Implementation and Impact of ICTs developed in the Asian Region for Queer Youth and HIV Advocates"**

"I found the courses rounded and well targeted to the stages of progression of my studies. That is to say that the Development Assessment Grad Cert was great to inform a technical practitioner in that field.

Further the Grad Dip expanded into more managerial areas which is appropriate and fills a huge void in current practice in local Government both at Management and Councillor levels. Finally the Masters brings in the research element which, in the current climate of reform, I found instructional. The great strength of all of the programs was in their practical application back at the workplace. That coupled with the inspiration of many of the speakers and fellow students (including a few beers during) made the experience very rewarding and I would recommend these courses to any practitioner in Local Government."

GRANTLEY INGRAM
Director of Regulatory Services,
Bombala Council, Grad Cert in Development
Assessment, Grad Dip in Local Government
Management and Master of Local Government

EVENTS, CONFERENCES AND DELEGATIONS

We have a strong commitment to bringing the sector together to discuss the important issues. We hosted a number of events and workshops, and presented at approximately 50 academic conferences throughout 2015.

HIGHLIGHTS IN 2015 INCLUDED:

The Government to Governance Seminar Series

We hosted five seminars and a book launch event in the 'Government to Governance' series in 2015. The popular seminar series examines current thinking on the role of local government. 2015 seminars:

- > Why Local Government Matters
- > 'Building Social Cohesion in our Communities' with Australian Human Rights Commission
- > 'Building Genuine Partnerships for Major Transformation' with Urban Growth
- > 'Empowering Women in Local Government' with Australian Local Government Women's Association
- > 'The Sustainable Global City' with Australia New Zealand Regional Science Association International Inc
- > Book Launch: *A Practical Introduction to In-depth Interviewing* by Dr Alan Morris.

Local Government Research Symposium

ACELG in partnership with the Local Government Association of Tasmania organised a research symposium for local government practitioners, academics and elected members. The symposium included formal and informal sessions and

workshops that showcased examples of local government research and practice, and provided opportunities to share information and research outcomes.

National conference highlights

- > CLG hosted the '39th Annual Conference of the Australia and New Zealand Regional Science Association International' at the University of Technology Sydney. Seven members of ACELG and CLG presented papers.
- > Members of CLG presented at the Panel Session 'Heterodox Perspectives on Local Government' convened at the 14th Annual Society for Heterodox Economics Annual Conference at the University of New South Wales.
- > Other national conferences attended included: the 'Australian Political Studies Association Annual Conference', the 'Australian Association of Professional and Applied Ethics Annual Conference', the 'Australian Sociological Association Annual Conference' and the 'Activist Planning for a Democratic Sydney Symposium'.

International conference highlights

- > A/Prof Roberta Ryan and Senior Lecturer Dr Bligh Grant co-chaired the Panel Session 'Diversity in Local Government: Where are we up to?' at the '18th Annual Research Society for Public Sector Management' at University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. The panel attracted presenters from across the globe, including from Estonia, United States of America and Australia.
- > A/Prof Roberta Ryan delivered a



EVENTS, CONFERENCES AND DELEGATIONS



plenary presentation, 'Building Strategic Capacity for Delivery: Lessons from Australia and Asia', at the '2015 International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration Conference' in Paris, France.

- > Five members of CLG presented papers for the Panel Session 'Sydney Global City' at the '45th Annual Urban Affairs Association Conference' in Miami, Florida, United States of America.
- > Dr Bligh Grant and Deputy Director Melissa Gibbs continued their long-standing association with the International Association of Local Government and presented papers at the '6th Annual International Conference of Local Government' in Khon Kaen, Thailand.

International delegations and partnerships

CLG and ACELG continued to build their international reach and networks in 2015. We hosted several international delegations including delegates from Bangladesh, Canada, China and Japan. We are also developing strong international partnerships including:

- > Forum of Federations: We contributed to projects in Nepal and Pakistan, and published a major Occasional Paper 'Decentralisation and Subsidiarity: Concepts and Frameworks for Emerging Economies' by A/Prof Roberta Ryan and Lecturer Ron Woods.
- > Japan Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR): Information exchange and networking; we hosted and participated in study

tours in Australia and Japan, and co-hosted an annual seminar.

- > Korea Local Government Centre, Korea Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Study tours of Korean government delegates and regular information exchange.

ACELG Research Partnerships

The ACELG Research Partnerships Scheme provided opportunities for local government researchers within councils and tertiary institutions to work with ACELG in undertaking research that benefits local government and builds research capacity in the sector. Projects completed in 2015 include:

- > An online toolkit for Toowoomba Regional Council that seeks to identify the ways that local government practitioner researchers might come to an understanding of the communities they work with <http://socialresearchtoolkit.net/>
- > University of South Australia: Surveys carried out of residents and businesses in the City of Prospect demonstrated more people are taking up NBN connections but there are things the Council can do to help promote the uptake further.
- > Yarra Ranges Council: the *Connections to Urban Indigenous Culture* project was conducted on Wurundjeri Country in the Yarra Ranges, Victoria. The research documents new knowledge about the meaning of urban Indigenous culture, the importance of identity and of Country, and the connections of these to health and wellbeing in a contemporary Indigenous urban context.

WHY LOCAL GOVERNMENT MATTERS

ACELG and CLG have been undertaking ground breaking national research to determine community attitudes to local government since 2015. The *Why Local Government Matters* landmark research is Australia's first comprehensive survey of community attitudes to local government in Australia. The project aims to support broader discussions and research on local government reform, intergovernmental relations, and the roles and responsibilities of Australia's three tiers of government in the context of the federation.

Based on a survey of 2,500 Australians and numerous focus groups around Australia, the project significantly bolstered the quality and depth of existing empirical research about how and to what extent local government is valued by individuals and communities. The research covers a range of areas including community views about what they value about where they live, how they want to engage in decision-making, service delivery preferences, what role they would like to see local government play and what they think about local government amalgamations.

The research highlighted that Australians feel a strong emotional connection to the local areas in which they live, providing them improved emotional wellbeing and a stronger sense of personal identity. The respondents said that decisions are best made by involving communities, experts and government together in the process, and that local government is the best level of government to make decisions about the local area.

It is important that local government delivers a diverse range of activities, with planning for the future being amongst the most important. There is strong support for the role of government in service delivery, particularly in health and education, and Australians do not necessarily agree that the private sector or the market deliver the best or most efficient services. There is enormous support for government to provide services that deliver a healthier and fairer society, and that decisions about services should not be made just on value for money.

The research also shows Australian communities want to be involved with government in making decisions about how and what services should be delivered in their local area.

Key findings of the research have gone on to influence local government reform in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia. Findings have been picked up by State Governments as rationales for local government reform agendas, and been presented at Parliamentary Inquiries, industry and academic conferences. The research findings have been profiled prominently by both commercial and industry media outlets.

The full and summary reports '*Why Local Government Matters*' are available to download at <https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/42087>

Ryan, R., Hastings, C., Woods, R., Lawrie, A., Grant, B., '*Why Local Government Matters: Report 2015*', Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, University of Technology Sydney, June 2015, pp 1-194.



REPORT PRODUCED BY:





PROFILE OF THE AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT WORKFORCE

Local government is a significant employer in Australia with almost 200,000 people employed in local government nationally—particularly in regional areas—offering opportunities for employment across a wide range of occupations. In 2015, ACELG compiled Australia’s first, extensive profile of the local government workforce. The report was prepared as part of the *National Local Government Workforce Strategy* prepared by Local Government Managers Australia (Local Government Professionals Australia since late 2015), and confirmed that local government is an Australian powerhouse, punching above its weight in terms of its contribution to the nation’s economy and social fabric. It examined a range of workforce attributes and topical issues including employee age, gender, employment type, education and occupation, spatial distribution, Indigenous employment, as well as gender diversity of candidates and elected representatives.

The report shone a light on the importance of local government as a place-based employer, particularly in regional and rural areas, and the sector outpacing other levels of government in meeting Council of Australian Government targets for Indigenous public sector employment.

Other important findings include a large cohort of women middle managers poised to take the reins of the sector as the current crop of senior leaders retire over the next decade, and impending challenges for the sector as a large cohort of asset and infrastructure employees approach retirement.

The report has generated substantial interest and been warmly received by the sector. Findings have been presented at conferences, roundtables and Parliamentary Inquiries across the country and we have responded to numerous requests for further information. We are currently working with councils and jurisdictions across Australia to provide tailored workforce snapshots as part of workforce planning initiatives and processes. Further work is being undertaken to update the Profile to provide new insights and respond to other issues of interest identified by the sector including gender pay gap, place-based employment, and workforce implications of structural reform.

The full report *‘Profile of the Local Government Workforce 2015 Report’* is available to download at <https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/42142>

Hastings, C., Ryan, R., Gibbs, M & Lawrie, A., *‘Profile of the Australian Local Government Workforce 2015 Report’*, Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, University of Technology Sydney, February 2015, pp 1-130, ISSN: 1838-2525.

‘National Workforce Strategy 2013-2000’ is available to download at <https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/42140>

Prepared by the Local Government Practice Unit of Local Government Managers Australia (LGMA) on behalf of the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government (ACELG), Workforce Development Program. Published April 2013.

REPORT PRODUCED BY:



SERVICE DELIVERY REVIEWS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

In both Australia and overseas service delivery reviews are vital processes to ensure local government services are appropriate, effective and efficient. Australian councils have moved beyond the traditional narrow emphasis on 'roads, rates and rubbish' towards broader objectives to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of communities. Community expectations of local government have increased while other levels of government have devolved various functions.

Service delivery reviews should be seen as part of 'business as usual' - a continuous improvement process - which is integrated with local government corporate and strategic planning, asset management and community engagement. An ongoing program of service delivery review ensures that services meet current and future community needs and wants, that those services are high quality and that they are delivered efficiently in order to redirect savings to finance new or improved services.

We have assisted a range of local governments across Australia with service delivery reviews. Our clients have realised numerous benefits from their reviews such as alignment of services with community needs; a higher quality service provision; a better understanding about the net cost

of services and the resources and assets needed to deliver them; cost savings and sometimes income generation; increased efficiency of often limited resources; partnerships and networks with other local governments and service providers; and increased capacity of staff to respond to the changing needs of the community.

CLG's and ACELG's 'how to guide', *Service Delivery Review - A How To Manual for Local Government* provides a framework to apply a consistent and robust approach to service delivery reviews. After an initial research project to investigate service review approaches in 2012, the first edition of the Manual was published in 2014. The Manual was updated in 2015 to further support councils undertake service delivery reviews and train staff about this important process. The second edition builds on the initial structure of the Manual and has been informed by its application by councils in New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia.

The updated edition provides further detail in relation to the collection and analysis of data associated with a service delivery review, and there is an increased focus on climate change adaptation as a significant variable that needs to be considered in the context of service delivery planning.

The manual outlines a clear seven-step methodology and includes advice, tools

and templates to help local governments, regardless of their size, with this critical task.

One of our most popular and downloaded resources, the Manual meets an increasing need from within the sector for practical guidance in undertaking service delivery reviews that are consistent with current local governance practice and processes, particularly since local government service delivery reviews are mandatory in some jurisdictions, or are driven by local or sector reform processes. The framework and tools in the Manual are flexible and have been adapted by a range of local governments to suit their particular needs.

CLG offers service delivery review training courses and workshops which can be tailored to meet individual needs, and draw on a wealth of background research and provide an opportunity for local government staff to share their experiences and develop good practice approaches to service delivery.

'Service Delivery Review: A How to Manual for Local Government' is available to download at <https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/42111>

Hunting, S.A., Ryan, R. & Robinson, T. *'Service Delivery Review: a How to Manual for Local Government, 2nd edition, Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, 2015 University of Technology Sydney, 2015, pp. 1-80.*



REPORT PRODUCED BY:





BUILDING SOCIAL COHESION IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Australia has a high degree of social cohesion given its diversity; however, maintaining this cohesion can be a challenge and local governments face continuing pressure to respond to issues of diversity and inclusion in their communities.

ACELG and CLG were appointed by the Australian Human Rights Commission to develop an online resource for local government as part of the National Anti-Racism Strategy to build social cohesion in diverse communities. The *'Building Social Cohesion in our Communities'* resource aims to build local capacity to include social cohesion in strategic direction setting, and to support local government prevent and respond to racism and inter-community conflict.

The project involved the development of an evidence-based online resource for drawing on examples in Australia and overseas. The online resource focuses on the effective prevention of, and responses to, racism and inter-community conflict; partnerships and community governance models; and youth engagement and leadership.

The project also included the development of an evaluation framework to measure how capacity was built within local government to build social cohesion, engage with diverse communities and develop positive working relationships between a range of stakeholders and the communities in which they operate.

The resource is structured around five elements of building social cohesion based on national and international best practice. It features over 40 case studies from local governments around Australia, tips for implementing good practice at the local level and links to useful resources.

The methodology included a detailed desktop review of existing tools and best practice; a Reference Group workshop with local governments from around Australia and multicultural/Indigenous peak bodies; the development of an online resource; and a communications strategy to launch the resource in each state and territory.

Since its launch in 2015, the online resource has been accessed over 4,000 times (unique views) and an online survey embedded within the resource reported high levels of satisfaction in terms of being

easy to use and helping to increase levels of knowledge about how to build social cohesion. Most users would recommend this resource to others who work within and with local government.

CLG offers social cohesion training courses and workshops that can be tailored to meet individual needs.

'Building Social Cohesion in our Communities' online resource can be accessed at acelg.org.au/socialcohesion

Hunting, S., Gibbs, M. & Ryan, R. *Building Social Cohesion in our Communities: Summary Document*, Australian Human Rights Commission, University of Technology, Sydney, June 2015, pp1-8.

REPORT PRODUCED BY:



LOCAL GOVERNMENT GROWING REGIONAL AUSTRALIA

The *Local government growing regional Australia* research was an exploratory study completed by CLG for Regional Capitals Australia and ACELG for the purpose of investigating the impact of good governance and effective leadership by local government in Australia in building strong sustainable regional capitals and regions. The report brings new understanding to the role of local government in growing regional capitals and regions through enhanced governance and leadership.

While local government operates within constantly shifting policy and funding structures, its role in growing regional capitals and regions is crucial to future regional development. Enhanced local governance and leadership is key to its involvement, particularly in view of a new approach to regional economic development reported by the research. This new paradigm focuses on tapping under-utilised potential in all regions to enhance competitiveness, and working in a cross-sectoral integrated approach. This contrasts with top-down, centralised approaches that emphasise subsidies and compensation for regional disadvantage.

The project set out to describe the leadership and governance roles of five regional capital councils (Geelong, Victoria; Geraldton, Western Australia; Mackay, Queensland; Wagga Wagga, New South Wales; and Launceston, Tasmania) and the processes of interaction between these councils and other key stakeholders in building regional competitiveness, resilience and sustainability. It also sought to define what was meant by a strong regional capital and region, the key drivers and inhibitors involved in their creation, and key governance and leadership ingredients that would support these drivers and minimise the impact of the inhibitors.

The report finds that a new way of thinking about regional economic development focuses on tapping under-utilised potential in all regions to enhance competitiveness. Regional economic development can also be more effective when the approach works closely with other sectors and governments.

A new approach to regional economic development can recognise the key ingredients for ongoing positive growth of regional capitals and their surrounding regions such as the environment, community capital, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, governance and leadership, institutional factors, and economic and market conditions. The fundamental on-the-ground knowledge and flexibility of local government, the report argues, is essential for adapting to changing economic conditions. An important factor in achieving these successes was an innovative approach to local level governance and leadership.

The '*Local Government Growing Regional Australia, Volume 1 and Volume 2*' reports are available to download at <https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/42131>

Morris, R., Gooding, A. & Molloy, L., '*Local Government Growing Regional Australia, Volume 1*', Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, University of Technology Sydney, March 2015, pp 1-68.

Morris, R., Gooding, A. & Molloy, L., '*Local Government Growing Regional Australia, Volume 2*', Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, University of Technology Sydney, March 2015, pp 1-294.





COUNCIL APPROACHES TO LEADERSHIP

Council Approaches to Leadership: Research Into Good Practice research was prepared by CLG for ACELG and reviews a number of council approaches to leadership development identified as 'good practice'. Using examples from eight Australian councils, the study outlines how to build the leadership capacity of local government managers and provides practical guidance for developing in-house council leadership programs.

Participating councils in the research included Fairfield City Council and Randwick City Council from New South Wales; Knox City Council and Maroondah City Council from Victoria; Logan City Council from Queensland; City of Marion and City of Salisbury from South Australia; City of Melville from Western Australia. Senior representatives from each council's learning and development areas provided substantial input on local government leadership.

The research identified three main areas for councils to consider when designing and implementing a leadership initiative:

- > A leadership ethos that is 'values-based' influences the culture of the organisation. It is fundamental to guiding behaviours, staff wellbeing and

organisational potential, and needs championing by senior management to be sustainable and reflect local and sector contexts.

- > A successful leadership program will have robust support structures with tailored content and methods of learning that is bespoke to the organisational context.
- > Measuring the progress of a leadership program helps understand and assess its organisational impact and return on investment. This area of evaluation is identified as a particular challenge to further develop and improve.

In addition to these examples of innovation and ideas for leadership programs for local government are outlined within the report. These include the total in-house design of a customised leadership methodology by one council; ways to connect staff wellbeing with quality of service to the community; the exploration of partnerships and exchanges across councils and utilising and investing in existing staff capital. Interviewees also placed an emphasis on building leadership capability across local government as whole – a focus on councils and the sector as a whole.

The report received almost 1,400 downloads from the ACELG website in 2015, and was picked up by national media and international sites including "a useful insight into local government leadership" (localgovernmentutopia.com blog), and featured in the UK Local Government Association's Improvement and Innovation bulletin.

CLG offers a range of postgraduate and short courses in local government leadership, tailored to the education and professional development needs of professionals and elected representatives in local government.

The report '*Council Approaches to Leadership: Research into Good Practice*' is available to download at <https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/42136>

Bruce, S., '*Council Approaches to Leadership: Research into Good Practice*', Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, University of Technology Sydney, April 2015, pp 1-44.

REPORT PRODUCED BY:



WATER BILL SAVINGS THROUGH RESEARCH

In 2015, CLG partnered with Sydney Water to trial new ways of putting customers at the heart of organisational decision-making. The partnership engaged Sydney Water customers in participatory decision-making on water tariff structure and stormwater charging arrangements.

CLG developed an innovative choice modelling and willingness to pay online study that provided Sydney Water customers with choice and voice in deciding their preferred water tariff structure. The study empowered customers to understand how their choices relate to household water use, and demonstrate the financial impact of these choices on their own situation.

The research included focus groups and deliberative panels. A key innovation within the study was a novel tool called the "slider" which was embedded within an online survey. Using information from a recent water bill, the slider allowed the 1,750 survey respondents to compare costs between the two basic ways to pay for water, such as would they prefer to pay a higher connection cost and lower price per litre or vice versa.

The slider recalculated costs whenever it was moved and gave respondents the opportunity to choose where on the sliding scale they were comfortable.

By collecting detailed water usage information sourced from actual water bills combined with an array of other data points it was possible to determine the extent to which water usage behaviour, customer values and situational factors influenced preferred water price and charging structure scenarios. This provided Sydney Water with behavioural insights into what is driving customer preferences.

Following a national and international search, we understand this is the first time a study has provided respondents with information on the real dollar financial impact of water tariff choices linked to household water use.

Along with other information, Sydney Water used the study findings to inform its recommendation to the New South Wales Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal to reduce retail water prices across Metropolitan Sydney by 10%. IPART directly referenced study findings

in its decision to accept Sydney Water's recommendation, which will generate water bill savings in excess of \$700million over four years. The study was a finalist for the Deputy Vice-Chancellor's (Research) Medal for Research Impact in the 2015 UTS Research Awards.

Ryan, R. & Lawrie, A. 'Customer Engagement for 2015 IPART Pricing Submission', Sydney Water, Centre for Local Government, University of Technology Sydney, April 2015, pp 1-35.





NATIONAL EVALUATION METHODOLOGY FOR ASSESSING POST DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAMS

CLG was engaged by the Australian Attorney General's Department Recovery Sub-Committee Secretariat to conduct research to inform the future development of a national outcomes evaluation methodology for assessing Post-Disaster Recovery Programs. The project was developed in two stages.

Stage One involved a review of existing evaluation practice materials and provided a matrix for assessing evaluative methodologies applied to 30 national and international post disaster events. From this review, case studies were identified to inform the development of a nationally consistent post-disaster recovery evaluation framework.

Stage Two involved analysis of three case studies of post disaster recovery events; Christchurch earthquake New Zealand; Victoria bushfires; and Queensland floods. The methodology included an analysis of policy documents and existing research, interviews with stakeholders and a half-day workshop with representatives from the RSC.

A conceptual framework for disaster management and a program logic evaluation model for post-disaster recovery was developed from the case studies.

This project delivered an innovative framework to conceptualise disaster recovery and resilience. The framework clearly demarcated the different phases of disaster recovery along a temporal. The domains of disaster recovery (including environment, social, economic, built environment and governance) and the representative actions of each were described. This was the first time the recovery process had been clearly mapped with the key stakeholder involved in each phase. The framework is a significant contribution to the evidence base used to guide the development of a national post-disaster recovery evaluation framework.

Ryan, R., Wortley, L., O'Shea, É., Molloy, L. & Campbell, N. , 'Evaluating Post Disaster Recovery: A Program Logic Approach', Australian Government Attorney General's Department, Centre for Local Government, University of Technology Sydney, July 2015, pp 1-100.

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CENTRE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

COLLABORATIVE LIBRARY SERVICE DELIVERY: A GUIDE TO REGIONAL LIBRARY MANAGEMENT MODELS IN NSW

The role of libraries is evolving due to changes in demography, technology and community needs, and increasingly they are seen as vital community spaces. This means library planning requires foresight and adaptability to contribute to and create public value at the local level. Collaboration for the provision of a range of services, if done well, can lead to enhanced service delivery as well as delivering efficiencies for the local governments involved. It can also build trust, systems and opportunities for capacity building as a precursor to meeting community needs.

The State Library of New South Wales engaged the CLG to conduct research to explore and recommend regional management models for New South Wales public libraries and develop a guide for local governments and library managers to increase understanding about appropriate models for service delivery.

The project examined arrangements that were in place for regional and cooperative library services between councils across New South Wales. It examined barriers

to, and enablers of, increased cooperation and possibilities for future management models.

The project included a literature review, stakeholder interviews, case studies and the development of *A Guide to Regional Library Management Models in New South Wales*. The guide provides local governments and library managers with a framework for considering possibilities for current and future library service delivery.

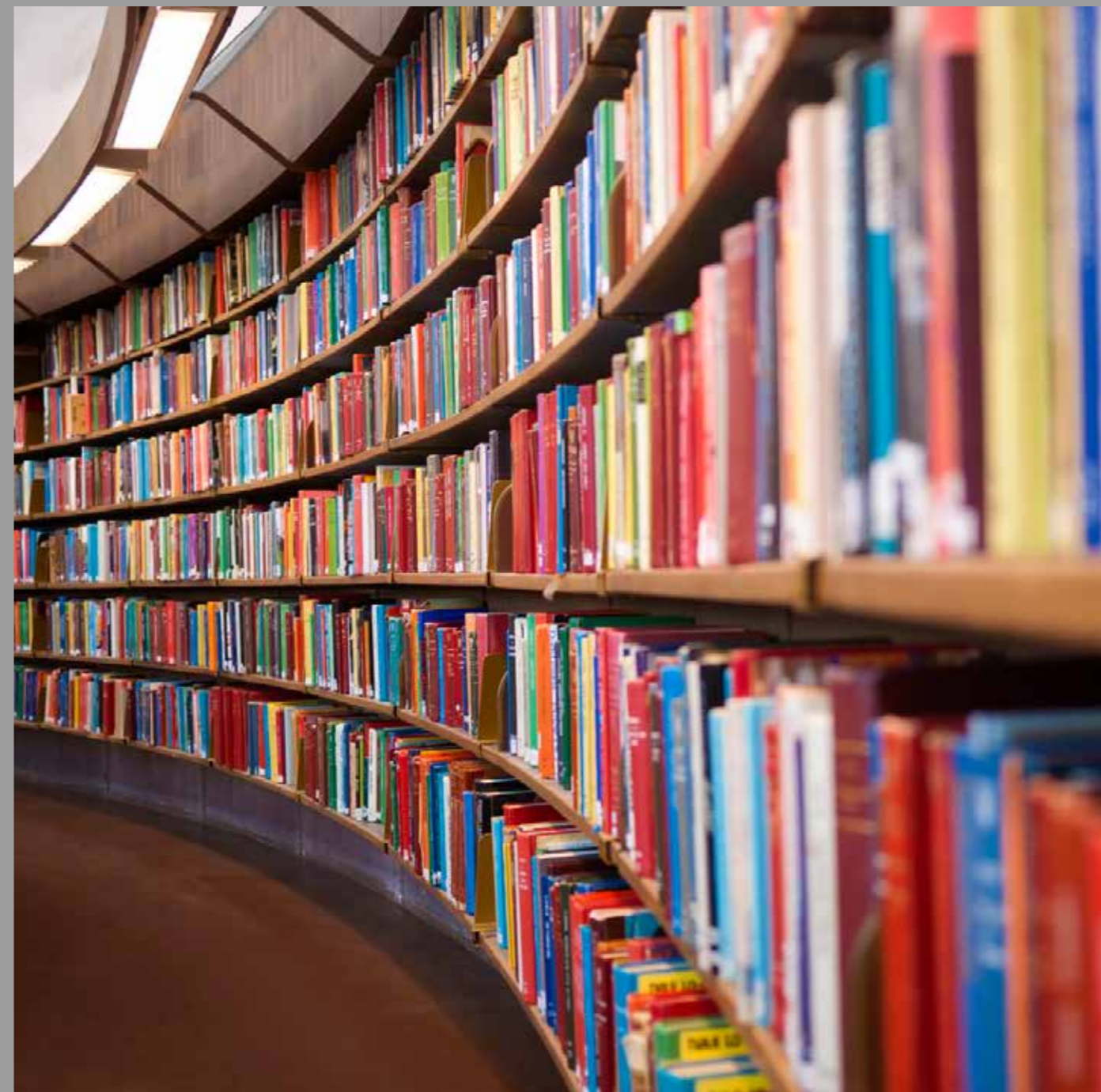
It uses evidence-based research to help understand the conditions under which regional and cooperative arrangements work best, how key challenges for collaboration are faced and provides insights into what types of models might work in various contexts.

At the completion of the project the CLG team presented some of the key findings at the Research Applications, Information and Library Studies conference. The conference theme was 'Expanding Horizons' which focused on building partnerships between educators, researchers and practitioners to ensure that a culture of research-led,

theoretically-informed, innovative practice is nurtured in the information studies field.

The full guide '*Collaborative Library Service Delivery: A Guide to Regional Library Management Models in NSW*' is available to download at <https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/43652>

Hunting, S., Ryan, R. & Dowler, B., '*Collaborative Library Service Delivery: A Guide to Regional Library Management Models in NSW*', Centre for Local Government, State Library of NSW, University of Technology Sydney, November 2015, pp 1-72'.





CREATIVE COUNCILS FOR CREATIVE COMMUNITIES

The 'Creative Councils for Creative Communities' report prepared by CLG for Marrickville Council, New South Wales contributes to understanding of the role of creativity as a prerequisite to innovation in local government, particularly during a time of change and reform to the local government sector.

The study demonstrates that a local council can fruitfully draw on a key characteristic of the community in which it is located and thereby supplement its approach to working in and for that community.

In the case of Marrickville Council and the Marrickville Creativity Project, it represented an opportunity to more explicitly add creativity to council functioning so as to better serve a community that is well recognised for its creative industries and cultures. The Marrickville Creativity Project provided the Council with an opportunity to explore new ways of working with creativity, innovation and collaboration to assist it through a period of change that was undefined and emerging.

A series of creativity workshops conducted with managers – organised as Creativity Labs – provided participants with a range of tools and ways of thinking that have fostered workplace creativity and influenced organisational culture.

The outcomes of the Marrickville Creativity Project have a number of potential implications for the local government sector:

- > Councils can improve their performance through incorporating creativity into the culture and operations of their organisation for the benefit of their communities.
- > Creativity can assist individuals, teams and organisations to develop innovative, appropriate and effective solutions, in recognition of broader changes impacting the sector and the need to develop organisational capacity to meet these challenges.
- > The management of organisational culture to facilitate creativity can contribute to innovation and change processes.
- > Creativity can be incorporated as a specific area of staff learning and development, for example through the development of Creativity Labs as a program and toolkit.

This project suggests that there is value in all local governments drawing on distinctive characteristics of their local communities and adapting their programs and ways of working while being informed and guided by those community strength.

The report 'Creative Councils for Creative Communities' is available to download at <https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/41324>

Bennett, J., Woods, R., Bower, N., Bruce, S. and O'Connor, G. , 'Creative Councils for Creative Communities', Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, Marrickville Council, University of Technology Sydney, July 2015, pp 1-54.

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UTS Institute for Public Policy and Governance

The Institute for Public Policy and Governance at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS:IPPG) was established on 1 January 2016. UTS:IPPG is a leading group of researchers and practitioners in the areas of applied policy, social research, stakeholder engagement, and leadership. The UTS Centre for Local Government is part of the UTS:IPPG, and continues to be a leader in local government research, teaching and advisory.

UTS:IPPG's work includes:

- > Trans-disciplinary and comparative research about public policy and governance
- > a PhD program to support an on-going stream of contemporary research on key sectoral issues
- > Postgraduate education including a Master of Local Government, a Graduate Diploma in Local Government Management and a number of Graduate Certificate courses
- > Professional development and accreditation programs for government professionals, including executive training programs
- > Specialist advisory services for councils, government agencies and associated industry and professional bodies
- > International programs and development projects