



# Impact Report

**Organisation name**

Carringbush Adult Education

**Your name and position**

Rei Chin - Community Development Manager

**Please tell us a short story about someone who has benefited from this funding.**

Samra\* is a young refugee with a baby who previously attended the Carringbush Women's Program but had to leave due to family violence. She is a dedicated learner but could not return to the Women's Program due to ongoing safety issues in her community stemming from her family violence history. With funding from TFN donors, we were able to provide Samra with weekly 1:1 tutoring with a skilled volunteer, enabling her to continue her language and literacy learning outside of the classroom. The tutor has also assisted her with language and literacy skills to prepare for her Learner's Permit. As a result, Samra continued to develop her skills and with support from volunteers, was able to enrol in Cert II in Spoken and Written English at Melbourne Polytechnic, commencing in February 2019. Samra's 1-year-old daughter has been attending concurrent children's literacy activities where she is supported by volunteers to develop early language and pre-literacy skills.

With the funding received through TFN, we have been able to provide individualised and holistic support to both Samra and her daughter, including incidental needs such as registering with external support services and meeting Centrelink requirements. Samra will continue to participate in the Adult and Family Literacy Programs in 2019.

"Trudi, my tutor, she's a good teacher. She knows how to teach me in many different ways. She is a good person and she's very helpful. The tutoring program is important because this is the only place I can come to learn. I think it's also good for my daughter because she can learn with friends and have lots of fun with other children." – Samra

\*Name changed

**Please describe the impact that the specific TFN funding has had.**

Funding through TFN has enabled Carringbush to consolidate and expand the Literacy, Work Pathways Mentor, and Referral and Support Service Programs, which are run by highly committed and skilled volunteers and managed by the Volunteer and Literacy Program Manager, with additional support from the Community Development Manager. With TFN funding, we recruited and trained 41 new volunteers in 2018. Our pool of active volunteers increased from 32 in the previous year to 57 in 2018. This has enabled us to better meet the demands from the community for support in learning, literacy, and accessing services, and has also improved the quality of support as volunteers are able to provide longer-term and more intensive support to each vulnerable community member.

In addition to increasing the capacity of Carringbush programs, TFN funding enabled us to continue funding the Volunteer and Literacy Program Manager's role to:

- provide volunteers with individual and consistent support
- coordinate adult and family literacy programs in partnership with Richmond and Collingwood Libraries
- assess learners' literacy needs and engage them with literacy tutors with the appropriate skills
- facilitate conversation groups with corporate volunteers from Monash University
- establish a new conversation group run by volunteers for Certificate III in EAL students
- trial a men's literacy program in Collingwood
- develop literacy and community education programs involving skilled volunteers
- recruit, manage, and support work experience volunteers from Monash University

The Referral and Support Service grew from operating with 2 volunteers in the final months of 2017 to 5 volunteers in 2018 providing consistent support. The increase in capacity of the service allowed Carringbush to promote the service to other local organisations and develop stronger referral pathways with 14 local services for a more diverse group of vulnerable community members.

4 new Work Pathways Mentors were recruited and trained to provide learners with individual and group support in progressing towards further education and training or employment. With TFN funding, Carringbush implemented a new program in which two mentors were allocated to provide one-on-one support over the year to students enrolled in Certificate III in EAL in achieving their individual goals.

Following the success of this program, we have been inspired to seek funding to recruit a careers counsellor to provide professional support meet growing demands from learners and community members of all English proficiency levels.

Funding through TFN created an opportunity for Carringbush to invest in programs that have previously been proven to be valuable to the community and to implement new programs that best utilise our volunteers' skills. Through this experience, we broadened our awareness of the diverse needs of vulnerable community members residing in the City of Yarra and have become better equipped to provide volunteers with the relevant training and support to best address people's needs. Carringbush continues to seek funding to further establish and improve our volunteer programs.

### **Please provide a quantitative breakdown of how TFN funds have been used**

TFN funds of \$32,197 were used to fund the Volunteer and Literacy Program Manager's role, which is the key person in the organisation responsible of developing and coordinating all volunteer programs.

The funds supported the Volunteer and Literacy Program Manager to:

- Professionally recruit and train volunteers throughout 2018
- Provide ongoing and consistent support to volunteers
- Coordinate the Adult and Family Literacy Programs
- Develop and pilot new programs involving volunteers
- Evaluate volunteer-run programs
- Participate in volunteer manager network meetings and other professional development opportunities to improve upon current practices

### **Describe any ways the funding was used that differs from that described your original pitch**

All funds received from TFN were used to fund the Volunteer and Literacy Program Manager's role in 2018, as described in our original pitch.

### **How many people have been affected by programs or activities that were supported with TFN funding?**

The volunteer program has become integral to Carrington, providing individual, tailored support to each student. We concluded 2018 with 47 active volunteers, supporting learners and other community members in the classrooms, one-on-one tutoring and mentoring, and providing individualised support and referrals to other services. All volunteers were recruited professionally and completed training relevant to their roles. Carrington requires a minimum of 3 months of commitment from the volunteers, which allows for the volunteers to build rapport with the community members and provide long-term support.

Programs run by volunteers that were supported with TFN funding affected people in the community in the following ways:

- Volunteer classroom tutors supported learners individually or in groups in all of our classes, enhancing learning experiences for over 200 people.
- The Referral and Support Service (RASS) supported 74 vulnerable community members to access employment, further education, permanent housing, and services, including legal, health, family, immigration, among others.
- The Adult Literacy Program grew from 13 learners in 2017 to 22 learners in 2018. 13 Adult Literacy Tutors were paired with no more than two learners per term to ensure that the tutors are able to prepare resources that are specifically tailored to each learner and to meet their individual needs.
- 32 pre-school aged or kindergarten children from vulnerable families were supported by 5 Family Literacy Volunteers to improve their early language and literacy skills through creative play, craft, songs, books and story-telling.
- 10 learners in our Certificate III in EAL course engaged long-term with Work Pathways Mentors for one-on-one sessions to discuss, plan, and progress in their employment or further education and training pathways. Through this program, one learner gained ongoing employment in his professional field, 3 learners have gained and continue to participate in volunteer work, and 3 learners have enrolled in further education, commencing their courses in 2019.
- 14 learners have been supported by Work Pathways Mentors in group settings to develop their employability skills through learner-led projects such as planning and running fundraisers and craft workshops.

## **What measures did you use to assess the impact?**

Carringbush assessed the impact of the programs funded through TFN by measuring levels of commitment, satisfaction, and learner progress from both program participants and volunteers.

Impact on participating learners and community members was assessed by:

- Documenting number of learners and community members accessing and consistently participating in Carringbush volunteer-run programs
- Conducting formal evaluation surveys with adult literacy learners
- Conducting informal evaluations through discussions with individual learners and community member participating in programs
- Collecting case notes of individual community members who access the Referral and Support Service
- Collecting data on learners' education, training, and employment pathways progress

Impact on volunteers was assessed by:

- Documenting the number of volunteers continuing their involvement in the programs beyond the initial 3 months of participation (satisfaction level of volunteers)
- Conducting an end-of-year formal online evaluation of volunteer satisfaction
- Conducting consistent informal program evaluation through discussions and feedback sessions with individual volunteers
- Facilitating group debrief and feedback sessions with volunteers.

Through the volunteer satisfaction survey, volunteers have commented:

"[I have gained] greater experience and capability of supporting class participants and tutoring individual students; an increased awareness of the challenges and complexities for adults learning English as a second language"

"[I gained skills for] working with people from different cultures, and gained a deeper understanding of the barriers students face to employment."

"[I have gained] awareness of the different communities within the city of Yarra, co-operation, patience and increase in innovative thinking."

"All staff in the program are supportive, helpful, friendly individuals with highly developed skills ... [they are] delighted to share their knowledge and skills as well as being particularly good at teaching by example."

**Describe three ways that your organisation has changed in the last 12 months since the event**

Since the event, we have been able to expand and strengthen our volunteer programs. The Volunteer Program Manager has been able to develop two new volunteer run programs and recruit a larger number of skilled volunteers compared to the previous years.

The new programs aim to meet the needs of people in the broader community of City of Yarra, including CALD men with literacy needs and Australian born community members living with disadvantage. As all programs expanded over the TFN funding period, Our organisation has increased its capacity to accommodate more referrals to our services from local organisations and to support more community members on a longer term basis.

Through our growth, we have strengthened existing relationships with the local council and services and have developed new partnerships.

Through TFN funding and support, we have discovered our organisation's potential to deliver more services to community members that we previously have not engaged with. We will continue to develop our programs and professionalise our services to provide support that is meaningful and of high impact.

**Over the last 12 months, did you receive any additional financial support from anyone you met through TFN?**

No

**Over the last 12 months, did you receive any goods in-kind and/or pro-bono services from anyone you met through TFN?**

Yes, pro-bono services

**What did you receive and from whom?**

Received CEO mentoring by Kilfinan

**How important was TFN funding in helping you achieve your objectives this year?**

We would have found it difficult to achieve our objectives without TFN funding

**Has the TFN pitch coaching and mentoring helped you successfully secure funding from other sources you did not meet through TFN?**

Yes

**How much and from whom?**

We've applied our learnings from TFN pitch coaching to all of our subsequent applications for grants

**What were some of the other benefits of participating in TFN?**

- Pitch coaching: Carringbush management team have gained invaluable skills to best illustrate and articulate our organisation's values and programs to a variety of funders, including philanthropic and government departments. This has also increased our confidence and has prompted our organisation to invest more in "marketing" and developing our brand
- CEO coaching: Carringbush CEO has received one-on-one support through this program that would not have been easily available to her otherwise
- Social media training with Instagram For Good: This 2 day intensive workshop was a great opportunity to learn in an intimate and highly individualised setting on how to use Instagram for not-for-profit purposes. The facilitators were very knowledgeable and provided targeted feedback. Carringbush has increased its Instagram activity since the workshop and gained an understanding of the importance of maintaining an attractive social media page.
- Self-directed modules: Carringbush management team has been utilising modules on pitching and marketing as professional development resources. We are able to use the resources to upskill our team in our own time and efficiently.

**Do you have any other comments or feedback on the TFN experience or funding process?**

TFN has provided Carringbush with a variety of professional development opportunities throughout the year that significantly increased our capacity to appeal to future funders and donors. The pitch coaching and social media training in particular have changed our perspective on "marketing" as a not-for-profit and has opened us up to ideas for seeking funds that we had not traditionally considered in the past. Thank you, TFN, for delivering an exceptional experience in organisational capacity building.