

GUIDE TO MANAGING HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Involving People

Partnerships and networking

Increasingly government and other funding organisations expect community organisations, including historical societies, to prove that they work collaboratively with other organisations, if they want funding for projects. Community groups are encouraged to form partnerships with other organisations either long term or for specific projects. Funding bodies will often state that they will look favourably on grant applications where more than one group is involved in a project.

It is increasingly difficult for a historical society to operate effectively without forming partnerships with other organisations. Not all groups have the skills, expertise and / or facilities required for all aspects of a project but working together and sharing resources with another group may enable the project to be undertaken. Working with other groups allows the promotion of the work of the community group to a wider audience outside the group's normal community. Collaborative projects can result in new members for community groups.

Organisations that historical societies may form partnerships with include:

- local government
- libraries
- schools
- community organisations
- arts societies
- woodworkers
- writers' groups
- sports groups
- service groups
- U3A
- ethnic communities
- churches
- youth groups

An excellent module on how to work with the community is found at the Volunteering Australia website - <http://tinyurl.com/2a754qx>.

The article, *Building a better relationship with your local council* - http://www.mavic.asn.au/assets/MA_Local_Council_04.pdf, provides useful advice.

There are an increasing number of networking opportunities for historical societies enabling them to share ideas and keep up to date with latest information.

The History Victoria Support Group provides practical information to help members of historical societies manage and promote their collections and activities and encourages active networking between members of historical societies throughout the state. Seminar Days are held four times a year. Workshops and visits to historical

societies can be arranged. The *History Victoria Support Group My Connected Community* provides online networking opportunities for members and the *History Victoria e-news*, containing a variety of articles of interest to historical societies, is published several times a year.

In many parts of Victoria there are regional groups which meet several times a year allowing members to share information, get to know members of other societies, learn about projects undertaken by other groups and attend workshops.

Heritage networks, organised by some local councils or co-ordinated by public libraries, exist in many areas in the state.

Groups, such as those in the Goldfields region, may be involved in a community museums hubs project.

Special interest groups also exist. For example Inmagic Museum Users' Group meets twice a year for users of DB/TextWorks software.

The Internet has greatly improved networking opportunities for the local history community. As well as My Connected Community – <http://mc2.vicnet.net.au> – there are a number of other forums on specific topics to which people can subscribe.

There is therefore no need for members of societies to feel isolated and not know what is happening outside their organisation.