case studies
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FOUR WINDS
moving beyond philanthropy to explore other revenue streams

Four Winds held its first open air concert in Bermagui in 1991. Today it attracts thousands of people annually to its beautiful venue on the south coast of New South Wales.

In 1991, a group of friends in Bermagui held an open-air music concert for local residents of this regional coastal town. From these humble beginnings, Four Winds Concerts Inc has grown to offer a year-round program of concerts and workshops featuring virtuoso performers from around the world.

Four Winds raised enough money to fund the construction of an outdoor amphitheatre in 2012 and an all-weather acoustic space in 2014, designed by architects Philip Cox and Clinton Murray respectively. The combined cost of the projects was $4 million.

We interviewed Moira Scollay, Deputy Chair and David Francis, Executive Director, to find out more about Four Wind's fundraising achievements.

In 2014, Four Winds unveiled the second of two state-of-the-art venues, the Windsong Pavilion following the Sound Shell in 2012. How did you fund them?

Moira: Many people, including our architects and project managers, volunteered pro bono services worth $1 million. An anonymous donor contributed $400,000. The remaining $2.6 million came from various grants, including from the NSW government, the Four Winds Foundation and an enormous fundraising drive – the whole town got behind it.

Can you break down your funding mix today?

Moira: One-third of our income is generated from philanthropy and fundraising, one-third from ticket sales and one-third from various government grants.

We are fortunate to be supported by the Four Winds Foundation, an independent philanthropic organisation that provides about 20 per cent of our annual budget. Our events take place on ten hectares of land, which is held in trust for the Four Winds Foundation.

David: The Four Winds Foundation is our only recurrent source of core funding, but as with all funders, we must apply to it for grants. In this case every six months, detailing our artistic program, attendees, projections and intentions for allocating funds.
What steps have you taken to ensure you’re not solely dependent on grants?

Moira: We’re running a number of fundraising campaigns and generating box office income. Every dollar earned is used to fund education programs for the local community, which are not revenue generating.

David: Four Winds is always experimenting with ways of generating revenue. We held an outdoor film festival that was very popular. We’ve tried using our venues for weddings and conferences, which was less successful. We’re now arriving at a clearly-defined model as a social enterprise, with a pragmatic view of what works and what doesn’t. Having a strong volunteer culture is an important part of our sustainable model. We have 200 active volunteers who help run events and maintain our site and their contribution shouldn’t be underestimated.

How do you build relationships with donors and philanthropists?

Moira: We take care of our donors by taking time to communicate with them, telling them what we’re doing, hosting donor events and making calls to say ‘thank you’. We need to raise $150,000 every year from our donors, so these activities are a vital arm of our fundraising strategy.

David: To manage relationships, we work hard to record accurate information about all interactions with our donors and prospective donors. Over time, we have built up a reliable database that supports our campaigns.

How do you engage your board in fundraising?

David: Our discussions begin early, at budgeting time. We all agree on realistic fundraising targets based on our track record. We form a small working group with at least one board member involved.

Involving board members is underpinned by a clear understanding of their comfort zone in relation to fundraising. Some may be willing to host an event but won’t ask prospects for money directly. Others are happy to pick up the phone to ask for donations from a loyal supporter or a long-term prospect.

The Four Winds Board leads by example, which is a great asset. They work incredibly hard as volunteers and without exception are all donors to the organisation.

What are the biggest challenges you face today?

Moira: Funding our education programs is the most challenging arm of our organisation from a financial point of view. It’s part of our mission to enrich the lives of young people by bringing world-class musicians to Bermagui to mentor them. It’s certainly harder to attract donors to cause-based campaigns than it is to attract donors for something tangible like purchasing a grand piano.

David: We’re working hard to ensure our donors know they are funding projects with a core objective so that they feel connected to the results.

Do you have advice for other arts organisations looking to generate income from philanthropic sources?

Moira: It’s important to demonstrate to any funder that they are part of the mix and that we are not solely dependent on any one source of funding.

David: We are regularly applying for project grants and devote time almost every week to writing them. We genuinely believe in what we’re doing and we’re able to demonstrate the impact of our work, which enhances our chance of success.

AT A GLANCE

Name: Four Winds Concerts Inc.
Launched: 1991
Location: Bermagui, New South Wales
Size: 1 full-time employee, 200 active volunteers
Milestones: In 2014, Four Winds unveiled a $4 million outdoor amphitheatre and all-weather acoustic space, designed by architects Philip Cox and Clinton Murray.

fourwinds.com.au
4A CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ASIAN ART
moving beyond grants to offer consultancy services

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art is a place where Australians who have a connection or interest in Asia can come to celebrate Australia’s multiculturalism through art.

Established in 1996, 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art builds cultural ties between Australia and Asia by representing art and artists from both regions. For 23 years, it has been funded primarily by major gifts and grants from individuals, trusts and foundations. According to Director Mikala Tai, this has helped the organisation be more entrepreneurial by building relationships with a broad mix of donors and grant makers.

We asked Mikala to explain how 4A is funding a range of programs, from exhibitions to studio residency programs.

Can you describe your income streams?
We’re trying to move from a 60:40 ratio, where 60% of our revenue is funded through grants and philanthropy and 40% through consultancy services, donations and other revenue streams, to a 40:60 ratio.

We received our first government organisational funding in 2010, but we are trying to be less reliant on grants because we want better long-term outcomes for the artists we support. The limitations imposed by grants mean our artists can only create work within specific time frames and guidelines. It might take an artist several years to complete an artwork or exhibition, yet many grants are designed to fund short-term projects.

In what ways is 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art becoming more entrepreneurial?
We have begun to consult as Asia-Australia experts to large-scale property developers and cultural organisations. Over the past 18 months, we have pitched for more of these projects – it’s becoming a solid arm of our model. We hired an external consultant to bring our proposals up to scratch and we’re now consulting to clients in Sydney and Melbourne.
We recently secured a large contract with World Square, sourcing local artists to develop cultural installations and art hoardings. We’re also consulting to numerous major festivals to help them develop more culturally diverse programs. We have a small team, but everyone develops their own areas of passion and expertise. That’s a really good value proposition for our consultancy clients.

You have an established donor base. How do you approach potential donors?

**Major gifts** do rely on person-to-person relationships. I spend a lot of time having dinners and lunches with potential donors and having conversations around the meaning of 4A and the importance of the ecology of the art world. I don’t know if there’s a way to make these conversations less awkward – I did have a few training sessions with our board and it becomes easier over time. Telling the story of your business – not just your project – is key.

People generally prefer to fund projects, but what arts organisations really need is money in the pot for opportunities that arise unexpectedly. We’re trying to move away from project-based funding to raise funds for the organisation overall. This is a transition we’ve been making over the last few years.

How are you making this transition?

One example is building a base of first-time donors through our Supporters Program. For an annual fee, first-time supporters contribute to commissioning of an artwork, which assists our artists and provides 4A with a regular source of income to invest in the creation of important new work.

We’re beginning to exhibit nationally and as our reach grows, we’re building a bigger supporter base across the country.

**Does your board contribute to fundraising?**

We have a great board that is full of entrepreneurs and small business owners, as well as corporates. They understand we need to remain nimble to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. We’re seen as a premiere Australian gallery in Asia and are often invited to facilitate Australian artists exhibiting overseas. We can only capitalise on these opportunities if we set money aside for when those random invitations come through.

**AT A GLANCE**

Name: 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art
Launch: 1996
Location: Chinatown, Sydney
Size: 4 full-time, 5 part-time or casual employees, plus a network of 300+ artists
Projects: 30 in Australia annually, including two international exhibitions
Milestones: 4A moved to its current location in 2000, and renamed as 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art in 2009.

4a.com.au
Following a rebrand in 2018, BAMM has increased its focus on fundraising. We spoke to BAMM’s Director, Vivien Thompson, to find out more.

Located in northwest New South Wales, BAMM is a regional art institution that hosts an ambitious program of exhibits and workshops. It changed its identity from Moree Plains Gallery to BAMM in 2018. The museum is managed by the Moree Cultural Art Foundation, established in 1987 to raise funds for the then Moree Plains Gallery.

**What are BAMM’s primary sources of funding?**

Moree Cultural Art Foundation and Moree Plains Shire Council support BAMM financially and by providing our premises. We also make sure we maintain a good balance between grants and fundraising. Our strategic plan is very much focussed on fundraising to ensure contributions to BAMM increase.

**How are you doing this?**

Our fundraising campaigns are largely community-based. We host events, dinners and parties to encourage supporters to donate. It’s work in progress. It’s difficult for staff to run fundraising campaigns on top of their workload, given our ambitious programming. We do have a dedicated board which has responded to my calls for extra help with fundraising. They have established a fundraising committee and are looking to set up a sponsorship committee to target local businesses for larger contributions. We are quite demanding of our volunteer board.
What challenges do you face when attracting donors and grant makers?
It can be hard to calculate and communicate our impact. Our attendance equates to 150% of the population of Moree, but compared with galleries in bigger cities, this figure looks small. Moree’s regional location means our running costs can be higher than in metropolitan centres. There is a fabulous spirit of philanthropy in this town, but there are also so many causes competing for donors.

Why did BAMM rebrand in 2018?
2018 marks our 30th birthday and we wanted to do something to reinvigorate our organisation. We were growing our audience at a steady pace, but we wanted to reposition ourselves as a contemporary institution. We needed a new website and logo, which led to the question: ‘What if we changed our name and refreshed everything in our organisation?’

How will the rebrand help from a fundraising perspective?
We’re the only public art collecting institution within a three-hour radius of Moree, so changing our name to BAMM (Bank Art Museum Moree) better reflects our mission and operations. It was important to create an identity that says: ‘We’re a big deal and we’re doing great things here.’

We held a grand opening in March 2018 to unveil our rebrand, which is all about selling BAMM to the world. It’s also about selling our sponsors to the world through our website and social media channels. If you’re associated with BAMM as a sponsor, you will gain access to our growing audience.

How have your fundraising skills developed since joining BAMM in 2014?
I’ve had to grow a lot. The strategic planning side of my role is important. Finding clever ways to access money that’s available in the community has been key. For example, we offer work placements as part of the Work for the Dole program to help with building maintenance and exhibition installations.

What’s next for BAMM?
We’re locking down a schedule of education events and building our relationships with local schools. Some of these programs – particularly our workshops for kids – are income-generating.

Do you have any advice for getting board members involved in fundraising?
Try to recruit people to your board with fundraising experience. Put a system in place for refreshing your board every few years and have a strong Chair – it’s difficult to criticise a board member if they’ve been involved for many years, so patience and sensitivity are required.

AT A GLANCE
Name: BAMM (Bank Art Museum Moree)
Launch: 1987
Location: Moree, New South Wales
Attendees: 18,000+ annually
Milestones: To celebrate its 30th anniversary, Moree Plains Gallery rebranded as BAMM in 2018.
bamm.org.au
In 2011, Genevieve Clay-Smith and Eleanor Winkler launched Bus Stop Films, an organisation dedicated to providing film studies to people from diverse backgrounds and abilities.

Bus Stop Films delivers filmmaking workshops to the disability community and is expanding its reach to other communities.

We spoke to Genevieve Clay-Smith, CEO of Bus Stop Films, about her approach to building the organisation’s donor base and the benefits of defining a business vision in the process of incorporating as a not-for-profit. This process led Bus Stop Films to apply for Deductible Gift Recipient status, which has helped it attract funds through philanthropy.

Genevieve is the 2015 NSW Young Australian of the Year and winner of the 2014 Westpac & Financial Review’s 100 Women of Influence, Young Leader award.

**How did you fund Bus Stop Films initially?**

It’s been an organic journey. From 2012 to 2016, we were funded by the Sydney Community College through the Inclusive Communities Education Program. This partnership gave us time to refine our filmmaking curriculum, incubate our teaching philosophy and set us up for growth. I knew the funding would run out so I was always on the lookout for other opportunities. If you want to build a sustainable program, you need to explore several avenues.

**What did you do when your partnership with Sydney Community College ceased?**

We moved out of our incubation phase in 2016 when we formed a partnership with the Australian Film Television & Radio School. The following year we relied on grants and philanthropic donations. Today, we’re a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) registered provider. This means students can use their NDIS funds to help pay for our courses, which provides a sustainable revenue stream for Bus Stop Films.
Why did you register as a service provider with the National Disability Insurance Scheme?

It was a very important process to go through. I said to our team: “This is going to be hard, we’re going to need help from external consultants, but we’re going to band together and get through the hurdles.”

Now that we are registered, our students are empowered to pay for our services. We are seeing money come into the bank, which is really exciting. It doesn’t cover the cost of our film projects, major operational expenses, excursions or advocacy, so we still need to raise additional funds.

How are you raising these funds?

We are building a strong donor base to cover our project, operational and advocacy costs. It’s about finding people who are already out there advocating in the space in which you work, who are passionate about what we are doing and forming a relationship with them. I never turn down a meeting because you never know where it will lead – a person I had coffee with three years ago may provide an opportunity today. I’m always ready to share the story of Bus Stop Films and people respond to that.

Generally I try to show people the work and talk about our impact. Often when people see the work firsthand, they offer their support.

Do you host fundraising events?

We held our first event a month ago. I shared the journey and the need for funding, our students shared their stories informally, and people in the room were encouraged to pledge. The model was successful for us so I’m sure we’ll do another one. It was wonderful to be in a room with supportive people who understood our vision and how we are making an impact. Joining together with like-minded people to create change is exhilarating. We host a film showcase every year and we’ll probably turn this into a fundraising event too.

In 2011, you incorporated as a not-for-profit. Why did you go through this process?

It took one year to go through this process with the support of Freehills Law Firm. It meant we had to focus on what we would achieve as a non-profit. Our vision was always to provide opportunities for the most vulnerable members of our community to gain access to film studies education. But in the process of incorporating as a non-profit, we expanded our vision to make films that challenge bias. We also advocate to government and the community at large on behalf of people with intellectual disabilities and other marginalised community groups with and alongside them.

What impact has this had?

It was worth going through this process because we can now engage with philanthropists who believe in this cause and share our vision. Strategic visioning also helped us to gain Deductible Gift Recipient status so we can engage with philanthropists and receive tax-deductible donations. By defining our vision, we’ve had phenomenal impact.

How do you fund filmmaking projects?

We’re now looking at corporate sponsorship and we also apply for grants. It’s about constantly looking for opportunities. One of our films did break even because it won a lot of awards and distribution deals, but you can never predict this kind of success. It’s such an organic journey. I knock on doors, and if one door doesn’t open, I knock on another.
What’s next for Bus Stop Films?
The goal is to move from the start-up phase to becoming an established organisation with full-time staff who are charging ahead. We need to hit some fundraising targets – building an ongoing donor base is an important goal for us. We’re expanding our reach to people with mental health issues and youth at risk. We’re also piloting our program in Wollongong and hopefully Western Sydney and we held Japan’s first inclusive film studies workshop this year.

Are you generating income by expanding your reach in Australia and globally?
Our pilot programs represent an expansion of Bus Stop’s Accessible Film Studies Program. In Wollongong, we have licensed our curriculum to the Flagstaff Group to run workshops with their clients. Licensing our curriculum is a way that we can spread the benefits of accessible film studies far and wide in a way that generates income for the company. We’ve trained local facilitators to teach with our teaching philosophy and pedagogy and they are delivering our model in a way that works for their business and their clients. They have had a full class enrol for the first workshop program and students are paying for the lessons through their NDIS funds.

In Japan, the workshops were facilitated in the lead up to the production of Shakespeare in Tokyo and were funded as part of the production by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government.
STUDIO A is increasing its commercial revenue

Studio A is a social enterprise based in the northern suburbs of Sydney. Led by Gabrielle Mordy as CEO and Artistic Director, it supports artists living with intellectual disability by providing education and professional pathways.

Studio A grew from Studio Artes, which offers recreational arts programs for people with disability. After joining Studio Artes in 2006, Gabrielle Mordy realised many artists with disability would never get the opportunity to further their practice.

While working as the organisation’s Artistic Director, Gabrielle began running professional development and mentoring programs. These programs were so successful that by 2011, Gabrielle was ready to launch Studio A, a social enterprise initiative. Today, she is a passionate advocate for the rights of all people to access the arts.

How was Studio A funded originally?

I decided to set up Studio A to work with artists on a project basis with the support of grants and philanthropy. In 2014, Studio A was selected to receive seed funding from the State Government that would help us become a sustainable business.

I worked with Social Ventures Australia to structure Studio A as a social enterprise, which was invaluable. I had never written a business plan, so having expert guidance through this process was critical. Being a social enterprise means we operate like a for-profit. We aim to generate income to reinvest into our organisation to achieve social outcomes. The model works well for us. Rather than having a charity mindset, we have services to offer that are worth paying for. Having diverse income streams is an important part of our model.

Can you breakdown your income streams today?

We’re unique, compared with other arts organisations, because we do receive funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme. As a subsidiary of Studio Artes, artists pay for our services using their National Disability Insurance Scheme funds. This side of our business is managed by Studio Artes.

Up to 75 per cent of our business is still funded through grants and philanthropy. The remaining 25 per cent is generated by commercial services.
What kind of commercial services do you offer?

We are developing a collection of design products featuring the work of Studio A artists. We offer a suite of creative workshops, artist talks and studio tours. We’re currently working with Taronga Zoo and City of Sydney to deliver workshops for kids.

We also lease and license artwork to corporates, and create decorative sculptures for events by commission. Sixty-five per cent of that income rightly goes to our artists. The rest helps to fuel the costs of our business.

Do you have any advice for increasing income from commercial services?

Philanthropy and commercial services can go hand-in-hand. Westpac are customers to our creative services, but also provide pro bono services to our organisation and we have a Westpac executive on our board. Another corporate client makes an annual donation, leases and licences artwork, attends our creative workshops and artist talks, and purchases decorative sculptures for events. It’s possible to foster several revenue streams from one relationship.

You are now launching a range of design products. What’s involved?

We have spent time researching where to distribute our design products and how to pitch them. Having decided that design and gallery stores are the best place to sell our products, we’re now refining our products accordingly. By selling products across Australia, we will also raise awareness of our own brand and what we’re doing.

How do you attract donors?

It’s difficult. We don’t have a fundraising specialist on staff. Often our most dedicated donors are introduced through someone on our board, or through a corporate relationship. They come into our studio and see we’re sincere. For those who donate, it’s about maintaining a consistent relationship with them by taking them for lunch, inviting them to events and making them feel special.

How have you developed your own business skills?

I’ve taken business courses and pitched Studio A as part of an accelerator program called Social Traders’ Crunch. Explaining the social impact of our business to a table of bankers helped me refine our business plan and think more commercially. I’ve received lots of support along the way: I’ve had several mentors; I received pitch coaching through The Funding Network, who introduced me to corporate sponsors like AMP, which has volunteered skills and governance work.

How does having a strong brand impact your fundraising efforts?

In 2015, we rebranded as Studio A where ‘A’ stands for ‘art’. It was critical that our new brand counter perceptions about disability: we’re not art therapists, we’re about art first. Our logo is confident and not too stylised, which means it can represent the diverse range of artists and art forms we represent.

Having a strong brand does help us. When I met a major gallery the other week, they said they love the way we present ourselves in our marketing collateral and were happy to agree to a partnership. I consistently get feedback about how great our website or brand looks, particularly from newly introduced people to Studio A.

AT A GLANCE

Name: Studio A Ltd
Launched: 2011
Location: Sydney
Size: Studio A supports 15 artists and employs 9 full- and part-time staff.
Milestones: Studio A became a social enterprise in 2014 and rebranded in 2015. In 2014, Gabrielle Mordy was awarded a Churchill Scholarship and an Australia Council Career Development Award. In 2011 she received a Curatorial Mentorship Initiative award from the National Association for the Visual Arts.

studioa.org.au
### ARTS LAW CENTRE OF AUSTRALIA on changing its revenue mix

Arts Law Centre of Australia (Arts Law) empowers artists and creative communities by providing free or low-cost legal services to artists and arts organisations. We spoke to Robyn Ayres, Chief Executive Officer about the organisation’s success in raising funds from multiple sources. 65 per cent of its income is now funded through government grants down from 80 per cent a few years ago.

With 240 legal practitioners providing $1.5 million in pro bono services every year, Arts Law also runs the Artists in the Black program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists nationally.

**Can you describe Arts Law’s current funding mix?**

Until a few years ago, the organisation was largely dependent on grants from 11 government agencies, which made up about 80 per cent of our income. We realised this was making us vulnerable to funding cuts. Grants don’t always increase year-on-year, but expenses do. In 2017, 10 of these agencies signed a four-year agreement that will end in 2020. This gives us the financial security we need to focus on other areas of income generation.

By shifting our business strategy, 65 per cent of our income is now funded through government grants with 35 per cent funded by non-government grants, philanthropy, earned income and project grants. Without losing any of our government support, we would like to see a 50:50 ratio, so we are certainly on our way.

**How will you achieve this target?**

Arts Law provides free legal advice to artists by telephone. To access our Document Review Service, a more in-depth service, we charge a subscription fee. This includes discounts on our publications and access to our mediation service. We have had this fee-for-service model in place for many years.
In the past, we provided most of our education and professional development services to artists for free. In a restricted funding environment this was no longer sustainable, so we now look to deliver most of our education program on a fee-for-service basis. We are having the strongest success in the area of professional development services. We’re partnering with government, corporate or tertiary institutions that want to offer legal programs to their own arts communities, and have a budget to do so. It’s a growing arm of our business with income increasing from $12,000 a few years ago, whereas today we’re earning $80,000.

What are the challenges of offering consultancy services?
It’s about being proactive and creating a menu of options for potential partners to choose from. We go back to our partners and ask: “Would you like us to run this program again next year? Shall we try something different?” We have had to learn how to package services together and we’ve had to get outside our comfort zone to learn about marketing these services.

Success has its downsides. Other for-profit legal firms are seeing what we’re doing and launching competing services. Hopefully, our clients will feel they’re getting sufficient value to return to us again. We have set key performance indicators for every state, territory and in regional locations. Where we can charge fee-for-service, we will, because we just don’t have the resources to do everything for free. In some cases there are good reasons not to charge because of the nature of the client group and lack of alternative funding.

Does your board contribute to fundraising?
The board has played an important role in hosting fundraising events, concerts and art auctions. They are committed to raising the profile of Arts Law and tapping into their own networks. The board play a far more active role in fundraising than they did a few years ago. They are now looking at attracting sponsors to help cover the significant costs involved in running fundraising events.

Do you run any other fundraising programs?
We are now running an end of financial year appeal and we have a group of ‘guardian angels’ who donate a minimum of $1,000 per year. A number of our board are guardian angels, including one artist who doesn’t contribute financially but donates artworks to help with fundraising, which is equally valuable.

Two law firms have recently included us in their workplace giving programs, which means their staff can donate to Arts Law from their salaries. Workplace giving could become an important income stream for us.

What about corporate sponsors?
We have developed a relationship with a law firm that is now actively fundraising on our behalf. In 2017, they took staff members on a trek to Arnhem Land. Each person was given a fundraising target and together they raised $80,000. They are hosting another trek in Central Australia and have named the event the Artist in the Black Challenge.
Do you have any advice for building relationships with donors and corporate partners?

It’s important to value these relationships and be actively engaged with your partners so you understand their needs and what they want to get out of supporting you. There’s quite a lot of work that goes into being a good partner and ensuring you remain a charity they want to work with.

How have your own skills fundraising developed since joining Arts Law in 2002?

I’m a lawyer by training but over the past five years I have had to become much more focussed on developing other income streams. I’ve also become more entrepreneurial about how we provide our services. The artists we support are the least able to pay. So we’ve had to ask: ‘How can we increase our fundraising? How can we get the board more involved? Do we need to add someone to the board with fundraising skills?’

I’m now focused on building long-term relationships and partnerships with clients and sponsors. A few years ago we decided to employ someone in the marketing and communications role and in future I would like to employ someone in fundraising. It’s a tough decision as this takes funding away from our legal services.