

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



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NORTH MELBOURNE LANGUAGE AND LEARNING
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2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Our vision

To give the adult residents of North Melbourne and surrounding areas the learning needed to build a better life for themselves and their families.



Chair's Report

On behalf of the Committee of Management of North Melbourne Language and Learning Inc. it is once more my privilege and pleasure to share with you the Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2018.

Our mission is to offer language learning solutions to adult members of the local community of North Melbourne and its surrounds; solutions that are aimed at enhancing and improving their lives and their families' lives.

As a Committee of Management, 2018 has been a year of stability of the core functions but with new faces joining the team. The driving force behind the success of the organization comes from the commitment, engagement and

enthusiasm of our staff and volunteers. I have nothing but pride in being involved with a dedicated team that inspires community members to participate in our programs and attend our events.

There are many highlights across the year, some of which are outlined in the following reports. From a governance perspective the organizational strategic planning process was seminal. The facilitated workshop drew on the collective experience and expertise of the NMLL staff and the management committee and produced a clearly focused strategic plan for the 2019 to 2021 period. The discussion and decisions strengthened the resolve and sense of common purpose of all participants.



Chair's Report

A second highlight was that, despite the challenges, NMLL maintained high levels of performance and outstanding outcomes across administration, education, community development and management.

We encourage all in the community to visit us to see what we do, interact with our staff, volunteers and students and help influence improvements to current programs and events and the introduction of new solutions and services. Better still come along and join a class, become a volunteer or participate in an event.

We are deeply grateful to the funding organisations and sponsors that provide the crucial funding that makes NMLL what it is and enables the provision of critical services for our community. Many thanks are also due to our administration, education and community development teams for the prudent and respectful way they deliver high quality community programs within limited budgets.

Our Committee of Management have been a huge support to me for which I am hugely grateful. Special thanks go to Kamalini Kandasamy and Tara Willersdorf, both left the Committee during the course of the year for their excellent contributions to the organization.

And finally many thanks are due to Cliff Rundle, NMLL's General Manager, who creates the conditions for the organization to thrive through his enthusiasm and complete commitment, skillfully leading his team in a complex and uncertain Not-for-Profit environment. His support and encouragement of the Committee of Management is exemplary.

Mark O'Neil
Chair

2018 Committee of Management
Catharine O'Grady (Vice-Chair)
David Lansley (Treasurer)
Catherine Lander (Secretary)
Tara Willersdorf (resigned 28th March 2019)
Kamalini Kandasamy (resigned 26th April 2018)
Tim Conboy (joined 22nd May 2018)
Sarah Alexander (joined 22nd May 2018)

General Manager's Report

NMLL is a positive and progressive organisation that initiates a lot of good in the North Melbourne locale. 2018 was a busy year of activity and consolidation of key activities.

In a challenging year NMLL made progress towards its mission, "to give adult residents of North Melbourne and surrounding areas the learning needed to build a better life for themselves and their families".

The following outlines key activities undertaken during the year.



General Manager's Report

Governance

The committee is committed to addressing NMLL's longer term survival, overall financial sustainability and the funding of the community development activities.

These themes are reflected in the new Strategic Plan for the period 2019- 2021. The framework for the Plan was developed in a workshop facilitated by Ms. Glenys Crawford, a previous and long term member of the NMLL Committee of Management. The workshop drew on the expertise of NMLL staff and the Committee of Management and produced a clear and sharply focused strategic plan. The inclusive process also developed a strong sense of common purpose and engagement.

An Operational Plan & Risk Management Plan were subsequently developed. They are available upon request.

My thanks to all members of the committee of management for their support, advice and contribution during 2018: Mark O'Neil (Chairman); Catharine O'Grady (Deputy Chairman); Catherine Lander (Secretary); David Lansley (Treasurer); Timothy Conboy; Tara Willersdorf and Sarah Alexander.

Leadership and Strategy

NMLL's involvement and influence grew in 2018 through involvement in the NAC, INC and networking. NMLL also

- hosted and participated in consultations reviewing the State government's adult learning policies
- hosted visits from local parliamentarians and the Chairman of the VMC
- hosted LLO network meetings, including for new workers to the sector
- forged stronger relationships with relevant local organisations
- developed stronger relationships with the City of Melbourne and lobbied for improved funding arrangements

Management and staffing

NMLL has a committed, skilled and stable core staff team. This stability has provided a firm foundation for progressive practice development as outlined in the Education and Community Development Coordinators' reports.

Management reporting systems have improved during 2018 but are labour intensive. Increasingly sophisticated information is required to monitor performance in real time, particularly of education delivery. Improvements will continue.

Education

The Education Team is led by Mr. Sam Navarria. Sam deals with significant challenges including the difficulty of recruiting properly qualified and enthusiastic teaching staff and complex and time consuming administrative and compliance regimes specific to each source of funding (AMEP in particular).

An ongoing challenge is the funding level for education delivery. Two of the three funding sources require large class numbers and unrealistic retention rates to earn the budgeted income. Neither regime makes allowance for the relative disadvantage nor complexity of the communities that NMLL serves.

As a consequence, there is an unfortunate tension between what is best from an educational perspective and what is financially viable.

This issue has been raised in policy review forums. While the issue is acknowledged its unlikely the additional resources to address the matter will be provided.

The education team also introduced the EAL qualifications in late 2018, as outlined in the Education Report, and continued to offer innovative new courses. This included two workshops during the term three break. One addressed job application and interviewing skills and the other focused on mobile phone apps that addressed problems faced by the student community. On all counts these were successful, addressing particular needs and bringing new people to NMLL. This model will be repeated in 2019.

Also offered was the first bilingual English Conversation class. This was less popular than expected but will be offered again in 2019. Relevant policies and procedures were also improved during the year.

RTOs' performance is measured each year by the Victorian Department of Education and Training across three categories. NMLLs results for the Student Experience and Student Outcomes improved from 2017 and exceeded the state average. The third measure seeks employer feedback and is irrelevant to NMLL. Outstanding!

My thanks to the education team and Sam Navarria in particular who manages a difficult role with skill, patience and great understanding.

Community Development

The community development team is led by Loretta Asquini who is one of NMLL's longest serving staff members. CD activities, outlined elsewhere in this report, are vital to NMLL, and the starting point of important initiatives such as the microbusiness project. The CD events are also an important way to engage with communities and encourage people to engage in education.

The lauded CLC project was unfunded in 2018. Instead ACFE funded CLC course was offered in its place. While useful this approach cannot provide adequate funding to properly support the program.

This situation highlights the futility of short term funding for successful programs providing socially important outcomes.

The CD team also recruits, trains and engages the teams of volunteers who work in the classroom, support events and provide one on one tutoring. This too is important work inadequately supported through funding. That said the volunteers do a wonderful job and are appreciated by students and staff alike.

Loretta Asquini, NMLL's CD Coordinator provides more detail in her report.

Microbusiness Project

The Microbusiness project finished in December 2018. Unfortunately, further funding for the project could not be secured.

Over the two years of the project 23 women enrolled in the microbusiness course. Twenty completed and late last year 7 women had started microbusinesses. Most were focused on catering and NMLL assisted their growth through engagement in NMLL events and their promotion to INC, NAC and other organisations contacted in business development activity.

The Microbusiness project challenged NMLL's capacity and operations. NMLL benefited from the challenge and applied some of the business practices to the development of pathways in to and from education and CD programs

My thanks to Juliana Lobo and Clare Hawkins who have each lead significant parts of the Microbusiness project.

Administration

Marie Toga and Manatosh Chakma are a skilled hardworking administrative team that supports all NMLL activity. The demands on the team have increased with requirements for better reporting, complex compliance on all education programs, some financial processing, CD activities, project support, student enquiries and marketing. They are busy!

They also provide skilled volunteering opportunities for two people improving their work skills



Looking forward

The competitive market environment in which NMLL delivers education will continue to be a challenge. The policy revisions indicate that Victoria's blunt reforms have come to an end and that more a supportive environment and new funding for service gaps will follow. If this eventuates it will facilitate the implementation of NMLL's Strategic Plan and pathways strategies.

The CD activities are integral to NMLL's business model. However sufficient and secure long term funding is unlikely to be available. NMLL will need to seek innovative ways to support these vital activities.

External adaption and internal cohesion will continue as an organizational and operational principle which will assist NMLL survive and grow.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the NMLL staff and volunteers who do a wonderful job in difficult circumstances with a positive can-do attitude. Together with them it is a pleasure and privilege to work with the communities served by NMLL.

I look forward to working with everyone for the next 12 months and well in to the future.

Cliff Rundle
General Manger, NMLL

Our Volunteers

Classroom support



Thank you to all our volunteers, who make an
invaluable contribution to NMLL.

Our Volunteers

Community Learning Champions (CLC)



Community Learning Champions (CLC)



A connected & empowered community

Working to engage the local community

The community development (CD) program works with adults from the socially and culturally diverse communities in the inner north west of Melbourne. The focus for the 2018 CD program has been:

- o Employment support and pathways
- o Volunteering
- o Intercultural celebrations and workshops
- o Skill recognition and development
- o Co-design practice underpinning CD programs and activities

The CD team aims to expand on existing programs in 2019, with a strong emphasis on building relationships with employers and training providers that will offer direct employment and training pathways for our community members.

The highlights for 2018 are outlined in the following sections



Intercultural celebration and workshop program

Intercultural celebration and workshop program – funded through Moonee Valley and Melbourne City Councils and ACFE – celebrates the diversity of Melbourne’s inner northwest and promotes the shared understanding of cultures through events that primarily focus on intercultural exchange.

Events delivered in 2017:

- Two co-designed intercultural celebrations - the Autumn Harvest Feast (May 2018) and the Living Traditions Festival (November 2018)
- Five intercultural workshops – “Street Foods of Latin America”; “The Sushi Lunchbox”; “Street Foods of Asia”; “Learn the Art of Henna” and “Handmade art books”
- Two excursions – North Melbourne versus the Swans football excursion (July 2018) and the Cherry Picking Excursion (December 2018) .

Through these activities:

- 620 plus community members were engaged
- People from 15 different cultural backgrounds attended events and activities
- 12 community members were employed from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to share their skills and cultural expertise at these activities

A key outcome of all these activities is that participants consistently indicated that as a result of their participation they have gained an increase in knowledge and understanding of other cultures in their community.

Vibrant and diverse volunteer program

NMLL's Volunteer Program is an important feature of all NMLL activities, whether supporting our students or learners in the English classes or supporting the community development team to deliver cultural and community activities and events.

In 2018 our community were able to continue to

- participate as volunteers in the following ways:
- Classrooms Support Volunteers
- Community Learning Champions (CLC)
- Event Support Volunteers
- Community Development Support Volunteers
- Volunteer Program Support

In summary, in 2018:

- 30 volunteers actively participated in the NMLL volunteer program per term
- Volunteers contributed 2,194 hours or \$54,850 of value to NMLL community programs
- Approximately 56% of volunteers were from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.



Community Learning Champions (CLC) Program

For the first time, NMLL ran the CLC program as an ACFE pre-accredited program in 2018. The CLC program has been running since 2014 and trains and supports members of our culturally diverse community to help members of their community to connect to learning and get involved in their communities. CLC's actively participate in the design and development of programs, activities and courses run at NMLL. This is a unique model to engage hard to reach learners and has been copied by other LLOs.

In summary, in 2018, 12 people participated as CLC's who provided the following support:

- Engaged people in their community in learning and or community initiatives
- Supported a disengaged learner to enrol in learning or to access work opportunities.
- Between them, CLC's:
- Were from 9 different countries of origin
- Spoke 10 different languages.

Stories without Borders

Funded by the Victorian Multicultural Commission, Stories without Borders (SWB) was a community development project use storytelling to create and nurture strong intercultural, intergenerational and interfaith connections. NMLL collaborated with local Indigenous Elders, youth groups, artists, and the wider community to develop and deliver a series of community storytelling sessions based on themes identified through community consultation and ongoing project evaluations of importance and interest. A series of videos have been produced and are available for viewing at <http://vimeo.com/324595759>

In summary, in 2018:

- Represented 23 cultural backgrounds (ones that were recorded)
- Spoke 22 different languages between them
- Were aged between 11 years – 86 years.

Project outcomes included:

- An increased sense of belonging and pride in local community
- An increased sense of pride in one's unique cultural identity and practices
- Increased intercultural, intercommunity engagement and participation
- Improved preservation of culture

A SWB participants made the following reflection as a result of their participation in the program
"I learnt more about my own culture – and how it is different to other cultures. Knowing more (about) other cultures I can understood more about my own"

Community Development Coordinator
Loretta Asquini



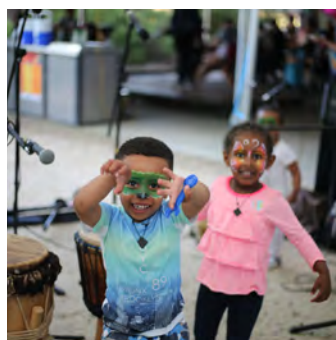
Long Table Feast



Cooking Workshops



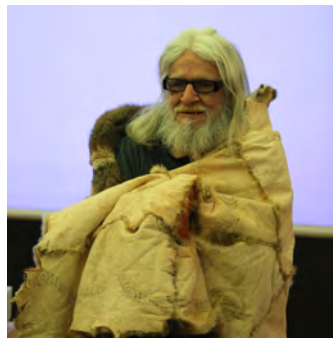
Living Traditions



Cherry Picking Excursion



Stories without border



Excursions



Education Report 2018

As in past years, accredited and pre accredited training have made up the bulk of the education programs at NMLL. These programs are relevant to the needs of our students whose major disadvantage is the English language: without a working knowledge of English, opportunities for employment, further study, community access and engagement are limited. All programs are taught in the context of key content focusing on employment, further learning, and community participation.

Employment and employment pathways are ongoing features of the content of the NMLL program, as are themes like health and wellbeing, civics, the law, housing and transport, social and cultural diversity, and further education. Education in its broadest sense must include applied learning that links the classroom and the 'real' world, and this essential connection plays an important part in the life of NMLL students. The connection is evidenced by excursions and incursions on vital topics and services such as those that relate to the themes listed above.



In 2018, NMLL decided to switch from the Certificates in Spoken and Written English (CSWE) to the English as an Additional Language (EAL) Framework. A lot of planning and development has taken place to change our scope of registration with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) and deliver this new (for NMLL) nationally accredited suite of qualifications. Following notification from the VRQA, NMLL began enrolling new students from term 4 in the EAL Framework, and students already enrolled continued with the CSWE. The transition ran smoothly thanks to the teachers and administration staff who worked very hard to make the centre ready for the new programs. 2019 will prove critical in implementing fully the EAL Framework. In preparation, teachers and assessors have done professional development which will continue in 2019 so that we are better placed to deliver the EAL courses and qualifications and I am confident that we will achieve good results with the EAL Framework.

This year there has been increasing collaboration between Education and Community Development (CD). NMLL students have participated in the Community Learning Champions (CLC) and the Microbusiness for CALD women programs, and activities and community events run by CD, including the Stories Without Borders project. Involvement in these programs has been beneficial for students because it provides opportunities to develop and strengthen confidence, and further develop language, skills and networks. CD also recruits classroom volunteers, who are very helpful in the learning process. Volunteers come from different walks of life and offer so much to the learning context drawing on their personal and professional experiences. They bring the community to the classroom, and much is achieved working together. The outcome is quite often empowering for the participants, and is good for NMLL and the community at large. There is something special on many fronts in this working relationship which goes to the heart of the NMLL vision, mission and values. We hope to continue this cohesive, collaborative approach that responds to the needs of current and future participants.

Employment focused programs are more prominent at NMLL this year, and no doubt will continue in 2019. All courses, whether at the beginner or intermediate or advanced level, have employability skills as part of the content, and some are strongly employment based, such as the Microbusiness for CALD women program and the job applications workshops. We feel that much can be gained having such content, and as most of the students in our programs want to work such content is invaluable. It is most likely that we will continue to provide employment focused educational opportunities in the future. It is worth highlighting in this annual report the contribution that NMLL students have made to articles in the North and West Melbourne News.

Regularly NMLL submits articles to the newspaper and this year there have been a number of articles including a collection of student stories - Stories knit communities together and are an insight into other worlds - that featured in the summer edition of the newspaper. The students found the exercise of developing a story enjoyable and fulfilling, and some have commented that they would like to continue to improve their writing both for pleasure and to enhance their employment prospects. Along with these outcomes, students feel pride and confidence seeing their writing published, and NMLL would like to contribute articles and information to the North and West Melbourne News on an ongoing basis and maintain this valuable partnership.

The intent of the education programs and the involvement of students in various activities is empowerment. This is what education is – or should be – about. It is wonderful to see tangible results from students who are coming to grips not only with a new language but also with new systems and cultures that can be at times bewildering and challenging. NMLL does its part in this process of empowerment.

Thank you to the NMLL learning community for making this a special place..

I am most grateful to all involved in the NMLL learning community.

Sam Navarria
Education and Compliance Coordinator

Financial Report

For the year ended 31 December 2018

Summary of results

	2018	2017
Income	755,700	695,723
Expenditure	(755,425)	(695,534)
Net surplus for year	275	189
Cash held at end	179,191	275,695
Other short-term assets	109,966	58,604
Long-term fixed assets	192,937	204,778
Total liabilities	(167,047)	(224,305)
Net assets at end	315,047	314,772

Note:

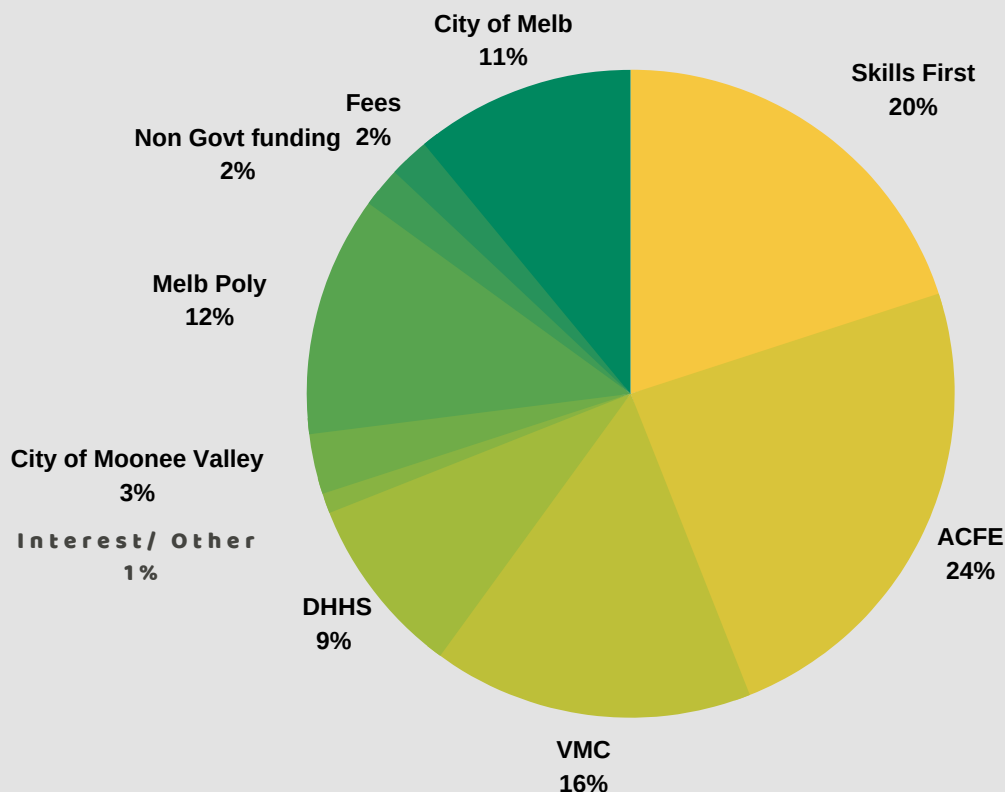
Summary figures used in this report are extracted from the full annual financial accounts of North Melbourne Language & Learning (NMLL) for the year ended 31 December 2018. The full accounts provide more details on the financial performance and position of NMLL, including a description of the accounting policies adopted, explanatory notes, and the independent auditor's report.

Treasurer's Report

North Melbourne Language & Learning (NMLL) recorded income for the year of \$755,700 and incurred expenditure of \$755,425, posting a small annual surplus of \$275. This is the third year in a row that NMLL has achieved an operating surplus, and is a notable effort given the ongoing challenges presented by our operating environment, including income and cost pressures, and the constraints of our limited resources.

Overall financial activity was up on the prior year, mainly reflecting the impact of new community-connectedness and capacity building initiatives delivered during the year, including the Micro Business development program, and Stories Without Borders and Connected Cultures projects.

The main sources of income were:



- Skills First program funding to support delivery of accredited English courses.
- Adult Community & Further Education (ACFE) funding for pre-accredited courses and community learning and capacity-building programs/projects.
- Department of Health and Human Services funding for neighbourhood house coordination.
- Victorian Multicultural Commission funding for the Micro Business project for refugees, asylum seekers and migrant women.
- City of Melbourne community services funding for neighbourhood house activities and community development programs.
- City of Moonee Valley grant funding for Connected Cultures project and Micro Business program support.
- Melbourne Polytechnic funding for English classes for migrants and refugees.
- All other sources, including small grants from other government sources, and earned revenue such as student fees and bank interest.

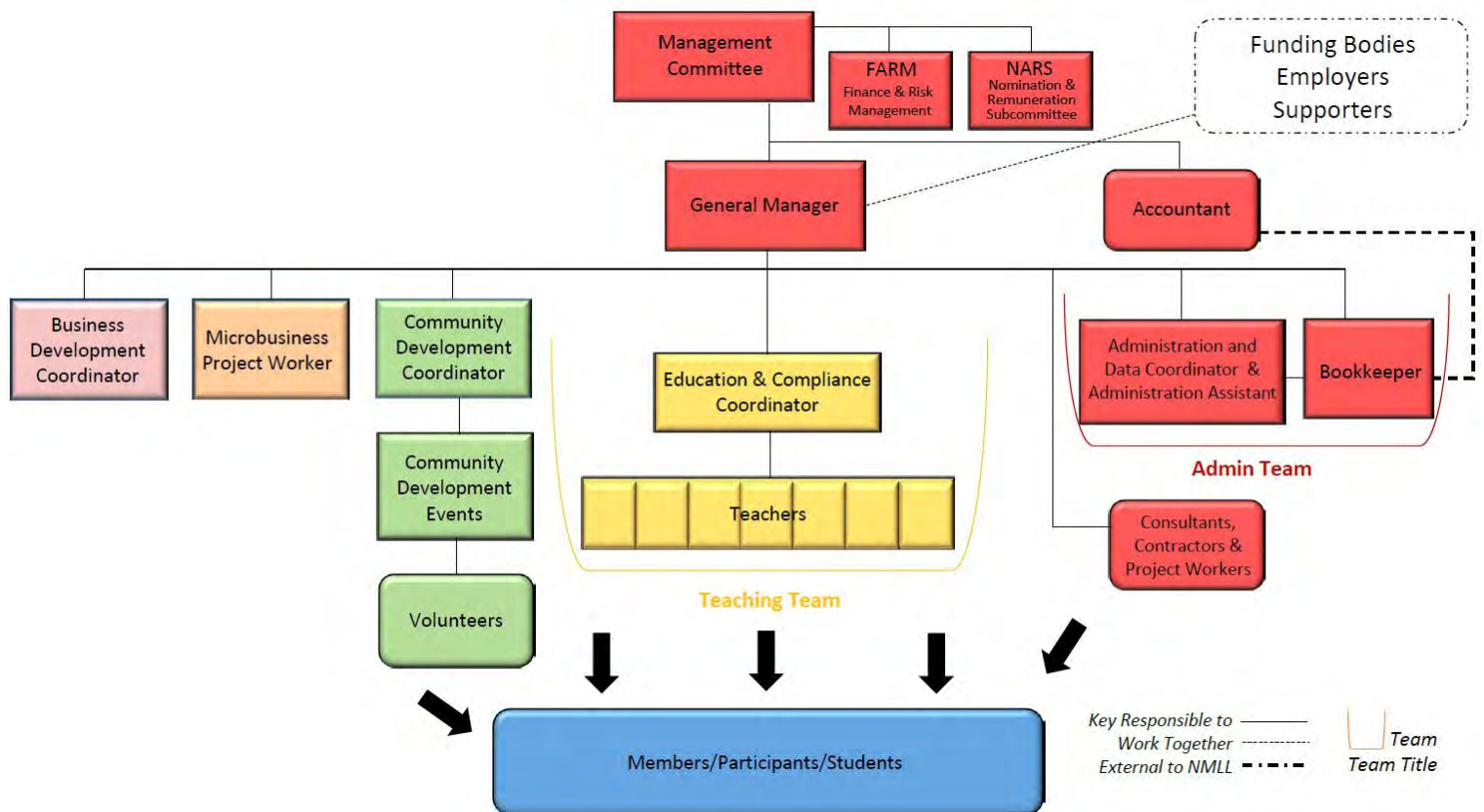
This funding was carefully managed and the associated expenditure contained within our budgeted parameters.

The net assets for the association at the end of the year totalled \$315,047, of which \$192,937 was tied up in long-term physical assets (including building improvements). The balance of \$122,110 effectively comprised NMLL's working capital, required for underpinning our ongoing operations.

For 2019, we are looking to further consolidate our overall program activity while continuing to implement business development initiatives to sustain and enhance our operational model and reach. We will continue to work tirelessly to meet the ongoing and changing needs of our community and help our participants achieve life-changing outcomes.

Our challenges could not be met without the commitment, support and goodwill of our funding partners, our loyal and dedicated staff, and our volunteers. Your contributions are indispensable and, to each, we express our sincerest gratitude, and look forward to working again in unison in 2019.

Our Team



Our partners, supporters and contributors

ACFE | Peter McNabb, David Harris and Ruth Barnes

Asylum Seeker Resource Centre | Gill Meek Australian Government | Adam Bandt

Brotherhood of St Laurence

City of Melbourne | Liam Lenihan, Francesca Hunter, Anna Poulentzas ,

Catherine Rollins, Melanie Del Monaco

City of Melbourne Councillor | Dr Jackie Watts

Cohealth | Trevor Whitton

Department of Education and Training | David Dutot

DHHS NM Housing Office | Valda Cupido, Nick Elmes, Edinha Tchong

Eris Centre | Khalid Mohamed

E&S Communications | Carlo Carabella

Helen Macpherson Smith Trust | Lin Bender & Lea-Anne Bradley

Inner Melbourne Community Legal | Melanie Dye

Inner North Cluster (INC) partners:

Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre | Mary Parfrey & Sarah Deasey

Farnham St Neighbourhood Learning Centre | Cathy Connop

Kensington Neighbourhood House | Carolyn Webster

The Centre | Michael Halls and Tom Seddon

Wingate Avenue Community Centre | Jan Thorpe

Flemington Farmer's Markets

Jesuit Social Services

Melbourne Employment Forum | Christine Njoroge

Melbourne Polytechnic (AMEP) | Rochelle Beatty, Shae Mourtzakis,

Zeenat D'Souza, Karin Whitehead, Linda Boyd

Moonee Valley City Council

North Melbourne Agency Collective

North Melbourne Community Centre| Nathan Sibilia

North Melbourne Football Club - The Huddle

PABX Services | Shaun Cox

Our partners, supporters and contributors

Public Records Office of Victoria | Tara Oldfield

RFP Business Services | Robert Pisano

RE Ross Trust | Maryanne Pearce Service Stars | Jane Farrell

Victorian Multicultural Commission | Domenique Szantyr

Victoria Police - PCCC | Nick Parissis

LLQP | Alex Findlay

ACEVic - Peak body for ACE organisations

ALA - National peak body for adult learning

NHVic - Peak body for Neighborhood Houses in Victoria



Thanks & Acknowledgements



A sincere thank you to all our supporters from the North Melbourne community and beyond. Your contribution makes an immeasurable difference to the lives of so many.



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