



## Community Action Project 2021



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## Executive Summary:

Building leadership capacity is critically important for rural communities to thrive in both the present and future. Strong and capable leaders are the backbone of rural communities and are responsible for the functioning and success of that community from involvement in a wide range of organisations and championing important community issues.

The identification of a deficit of community leaders within the Limestone Coast led to the inception and development of the Limestone Coast Leadership Program with the first course held in 2019.

The Community Action Project (CAP) group consisting of Kerrie Cleggett, Olivia Thomas, Darrel Soderlund and Jacqueline Foster set out to explore the topic, 'Limestone Coast Leadership Program- What does success look like for our community'. Following the initial three years of the program it is now an ideal time to ask how do we measure success of the program and use these results to continue to attract participants in the program, secure ongoing support and build our communities capacity? The CAP members focused on the issues identified in the brief including:

1. What does success look like for our community?
2. How do we balance personal benefit and community benefit and community benefit when considering success?
3. How do you measure and communicate the benefits to relevant stakeholders?
4. What is the community's role in supporting and building the capacity of our new and emerging regional leader

Consultation was conducted with the following stakeholders: current participants, graduates, sponsors, local government representatives and the steering committee in the form of surveys, in person, phone and Zoom interviews.

Following stakeholder engagement and research the following recommendations were made including:

- Appointment of a minimum 0.6FTE program co-ordinator whose role would include: design and implementation of a social media marketing campaign, advertising campaign, increased promotion with businesses and sponsors, yearly contact with councils, increased media engagement and developing program branding such as clothing.
- Utilise the Alumni as mentors for current participants
- Appointment of graduate/s onto the steering committee
- Explore the idea of Mayor interns
- Increase program promotion by having local media attend each session
- Promotion at local events such as Field days and Shows
- Program extension of a minimum of three years to build the programs reputation and alumni.

Our Team believe if the following recommendations were implemented the results through increased promotion and awareness of the program and actively demonstration of the success of the program would be increased applications, increased funding and financial support from industry, government and

business as well as the development of a large pool of strong, capable future leaders for the Limestone Coast Region.

### **The Challenge:**

In 2018 the Limestone Coast community expressed concerns about the limitations of community leaders. The considerable responsibility was held by few to participate on boards, volunteer and contribute to decision making. In order to ensure resilience within the community and to take on challenges, a clear need was identified to build a broader and deeper capacity within the community. This approach would ensure that there was a comprehensive range of people to draw upon to be contributors within their communities.

After community consultation via an open forum, a report was commissioned with recommendations on how to build the skills and dispositions within individuals and therefore the community that are necessary to contribute to decision making and progression within our rural and regional areas. (Appendix report from Louise Stock)

In response to the recommendations from this report, the LCLP has now been offered for three consecutive years. There are over 30 LCLP graduates working, volunteering and leading in communities across the Limestone Coast. Despite this notable potential being offered through the LCLP, there is a lack of clarity around who is responsible to support the organisational and financial aspects of this program.

This raises complex questions for consideration:

- How do we quantify the benefits and opportunities for networking and skill building that formalised leadership programs can offer?
- What is the community's role in supporting and building the capacity of new and emerging leaders?
- How do we find and develop a sustainable model to fund development programs that require longevity to achieve identified aims?
- How do we find and develop a sustainable operational model for the program?
- How do we raise the profile and increase community awareness of the Limestone Coast Leadership Program?
- Individual perspective /buy in: How would building regional community capacity benefit you? What could this look like?
- Ultimately whose responsibility is it to build capacity in rural and regional areas?

## Methodology:

1. S.W.A.T analysis to start our project and identify our group dynamics. (Appendix A)

In order to best understand the impression and impact that the LCLP has on a range of community members, we brainstormed who the potential stakeholders could be. So that we could decide on next steps and where to focus our thinking and research, we developed a set of research questions to ask via a survey. The survey was initially emailed. So that we could capture a range of stakeholder perspectives, many of these emails were followed up with either a face to face conversation, or a phone call. We prioritised the importance of gaining a true insight into the public perception and value placed on the program.

2. Identified stakeholders (Appendix B)
3. Researched the history and current status of the project (LCLP) using the following model of analysis.



We met with Peta Crew and Louise Stock to gain a more in-depth insight into the conception of the LCLP and its intended outcomes. (Appendix C)

We discovered the intent, the proposed model and the partnerships were all representative of the current program.

4. Identified and analysed the main objectives of LCLP specifically and more widely, programs that aim to develop leadership skills within individuals for the betterment of the collective.

## Aims:

The Limestone Coast Leadership Program's (LCLP) aim is to 'Unearth our treasures' by supporting and building community capacity. This leadership program is essentially about stretching the capabilities of our leaders and emerging leaders to ensure they have the relevant skills, emotional intelligence, cross-sector collaboration skills and abilities to work with, and influence others for the benefit of the region.

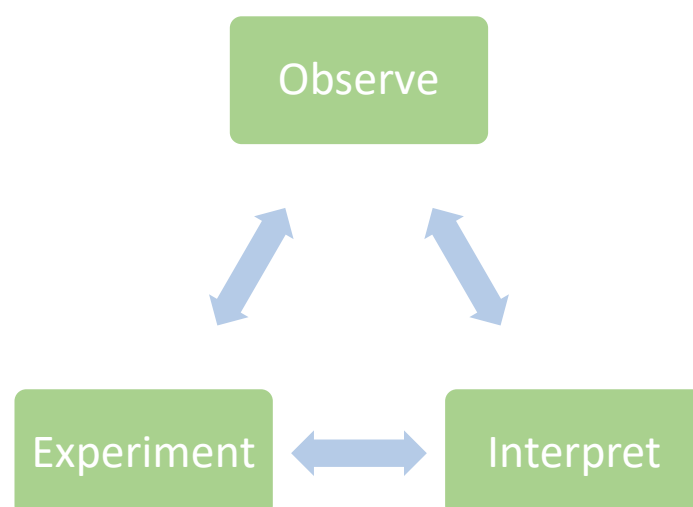
## Intentions:

This innovative program, delivered throughout the region by the Leaders Institute of South Australia, will be open to individuals who are ready to broaden their leadership capabilities and impact through personal growth, self-empowerment and relationship building. The program intends to:

- Support the development of emerging leaders to effect change
- Invest in the leadership of a more diverse cohort in our community
- Foster greater collaboration across business, industry, government & the community
- Develop strong networks with the ability to influence
- Build a culture of active citizenship, shared purpose & community action
- Provide insights into the issues that are important to the region's economy, communities & environment
- Enable participants to explore how they fit within their organisations and broader community
- Develop self-awareness among participants, while challenging their ideas, assumptions & thinking
- Enhance the capacity of the community to identify opportunities and address challenges

Ref: <https://www.lclga.sa.gov.au/limestone-coast-leadership-program/about-program>

5. Identified barriers or challenges to why the future of the LCLP was under question and went through the adaptive leadership process of:



Observe, interpret and experiment with a range of hypothetical changes to ensure the financial and structural viability, and future of the program.

Example in practice:

- Observe: The cost of the program is \$7000 per participant.
- Interpret: The cost of the program can be prohibitive for sponsors and applicants to self-fund their participation.
- Experiment: Could we reduce the cost by having a local provider?
- Discussed this option within our group and with stakeholders.
- Outcome: This could be an option but it would be challenging to meet the original aims of the program with this model. The integrity and value comes from the extremely high quality presenters who are specialists in their specific fields. Working with a 'generalist' would potentially reduce the quality of the sessions, the skills, thinking and therefore quality and reputation of the program itself.

With ongoing stakeholder engagement by connecting with individuals (interviews, phone calls, emails) we conducted ongoing analysis from the perspective of various stakeholders (Appendix D

(Appendix Quadrant Mapping)

6. Research other projects/programs on offer across a range of sectors. (Appendix E)
7. Brainstormed potential solutions and ways to overcome barriers using the "observe, interpret and experiment" framework. These 'experiments' have formed the basis for the recommendations for the future. The stakeholder perspectives, interviews with local government representatives, steering committee members and the community have raised the validity and authenticity of the recommendations as the project has progressed.

## Sponsor and Stakeholder engagement:

Our first point of call was in understanding the meaning of success of the Limestone Coast Leadership Program was to hear from our fellow participants of the 2021 class in what drew them to be in the 2021 group.

Through discussions at our monthly sessions and listening to each of us partake in the sessions, it was clear that we all had a common goal and mindset. This was again underpinned by the feedback from the surveys that were utilised to collate specific data.

This led to meetings, surveys and discussions with alumni of the program over the past two years since inception. Again exploring, why they chose the program, what they learnt and how they evolved during the 8 month journey. To hear how this has helped them grow and in some cases seek new and exciting opportunities in the community as all signs of the success of the program in its infancy.

Through the journey we had the fantastic opportunity to listen to the CEO's and Mayors of the 7 Councils as we visited each region and outside of the course as they all offered their support and understanding of the need for the program to continue in the region to build our leadership pool and strengthen the community.

Our discussions with the Local Government Association, supported the ever growing support of the program and its requirement to continue, having only two groups finish and the third part way through, was only breaking the surface of the overall success of the program.

Reaching out to what we saw as the next level of support of the program, was local industry that have provided scholarships and put forward participants for the program. Again the overwhelming support and expression that there had to be an in region development of leadership and building of the leadership network.

Forming part of the initial focus group and forming the initial prospectus and guidelines to the program, the Stock family offered further insight and contribution to our pursuit to find what success looked like with the Limestone Coast Leadership Program. This passion that was seen three years ago still shone through and the need for the program continued to be supported and needed in the region and to stay in the region.

Speaking to local business that offer training and development opportunities, they to see that a regional based leadership program is required and will see the region grow and prosper.

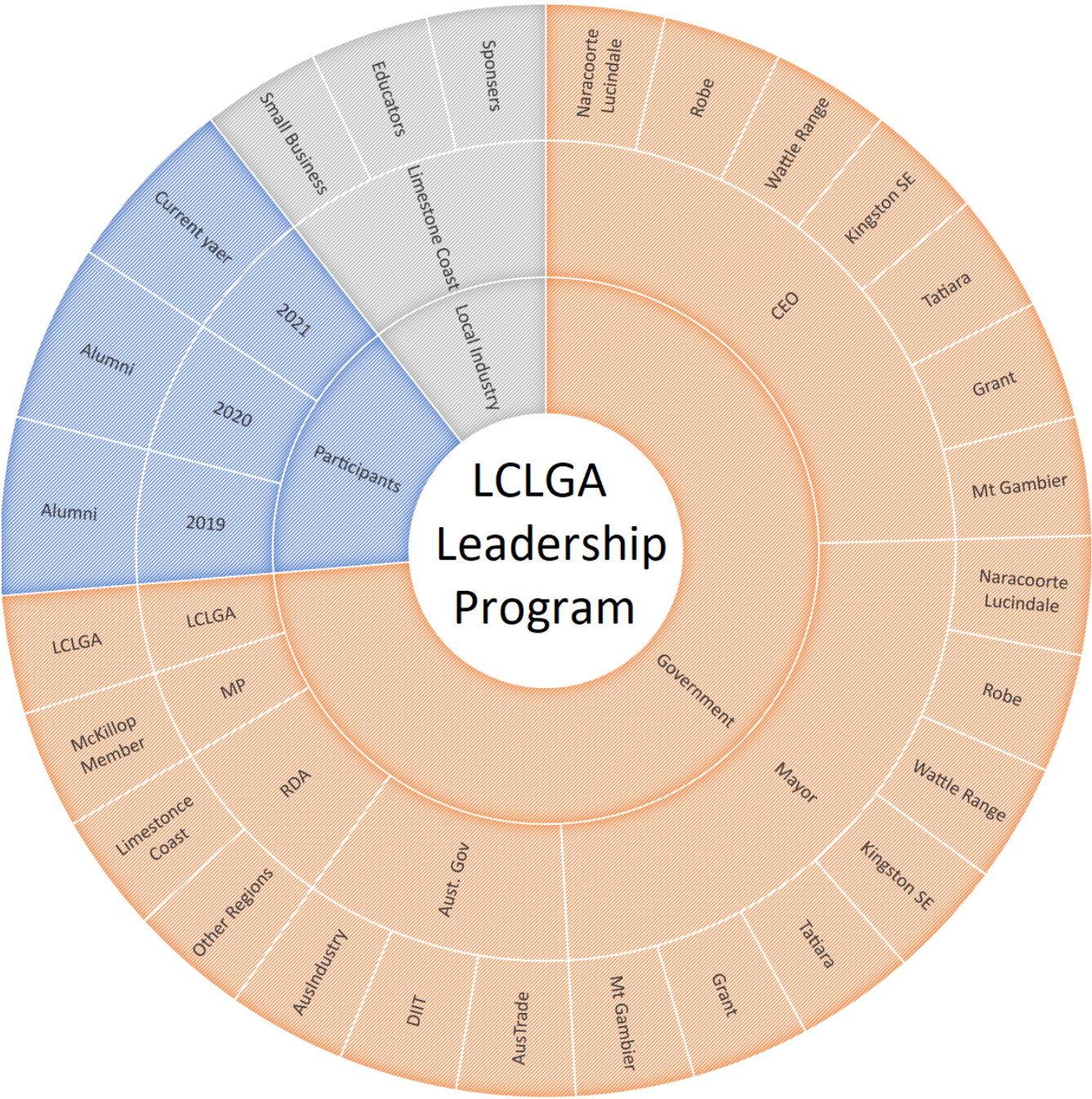
The steering committee members joined our discussion and offered insight through the survey. Insight around the level of applicants and process in which is taken to put the group together was valuable.

With Mount Gambier being home to a number of Government Departments offering support to the region, it was great to have input from the Team, from AusIndustry, AusTrade, PIRSA and RDA Limestone Coast.

Our Team was privileged to sit down with Nick McBride MP of Mackillop to hear his insight and belief around building the Leadership skills in the community and wider region. As with all the people we have

been able to meet through this journey, Nick was very supportive and had the same growth mindset as all the 2021 participants.

Overall through surveys, group meetings, individual meetings, phone calls and zoom sessions, our team was able to meet and hear from a very broad selection of key stakeholders in the region. Everyone we spoke to spoke highly of the program and wants the program to prosper and continue to build a group of Alumni in the region of exceptional adaptive leaders with a Growth Mindset.



## The social impacts from completing program:

The LCLP holds the potential to have significant impact from a social lens across a broad range of communities and sectors.

The following are two possible community scenarios to demonstrate the programs value and validity.

**Scenario #1** – A community sporting group is struggling to keep players and committee members due to a lack of new members and initiative by members. That sporting club decides to put a committee member through the LCLP to help build a resilient leader. That course participant will learn the skills to hold meetings, deal with conflict and lead a group to prosper in the years to follow.

**Scenario #2** – A council within the Limestone coast has an aging group of councillor's who are now unsure of what is important to younger rate payers and they are losing touch with the community. To bring in some younger councillors, they decide to sponsor two individuals from the community that they feel would be an asset to the council in years to come. Once those participants move through the program, they feel inspired to learn more about local politics and in turn decided to run for a councillor position. Given their training from the LCLP they are equipped and confident to speak with other members of the council and to communicate in a respectful and adaptive way. After seeing firsthand, the benefit of upskilling certain members of the public and move them into different roles around the community and in council, they commit to sponsoring one participant per year knowing it is of great community benefit.

We also believe there is strong personal benefit from completing the Limestone Coast Leadership Program which we feel was also an intended impact.

1. Strong communication skills improve all relationships. We believe after learning these skills you are better equipped for reconciling differences with you partner, family members and friends.
2. Throughout the program, students learn different skills in relation to adaptive challenges and how you can work through them. They are taught the benefits of reflecting on a topic of conversation before reacting which instantly diffuses the situation.
3. We believe if you are a good listener, communicator, and adaptive challenge leader you will also be a better partner, father, mother, son, and daughter.

## **Actual Social Impacts of the program**

After reflecting with past participants, it is evident they feel strongly about the positive social and personal impacts the program.

Some quotes from previous participants who were asked if the program was a success -

1. Yes, the program exceeded our expectation, learning from each other and dealing with pandemic situation as few of our graduates were from Victoria and the interstate border closure impacted our regular learnings.
2. The program was hugely successful for me as an individual, and I have seen the success in others who participated alongside me. I learned so many valuable skills which will stay with me for a

lifetime, and I regularly reflect on the core concepts of the program to help me through challenges.

3. Absolutely the program was a success for me. Through the skills I have learnt, I have been able to apply them to my current role which is educating other people around me. This is then creating a 'domino' effect around the community.
4. Personally, I grew so much as a person, and want to push to further benefit my community. I know I am a different person now as to the person that went into the course. I have set goals during the course that I have since accomplished. I also have a completely different mindset and a completely different set of skills to work with. And best of all I still have a great mentor/mentee relationship from this course that we can still bounce off each other to ensure we keep aligned.
5. I am doing everything I set out to achieve in making a real difference for Careers and people who are isolated by disability in our community. I get feedback that what I am working on with others is changing things for the better of our area.
6. I know the program was a success because I have seen the new-found confidence and expertise be put to use by so many participants.

*“I am currently working at the Tatiara District Council in a Community Development – migration specific role. I changed jobs not long after completing the leadership program which I believe is not that uncommon.*

*I continue to be volunteer in my community. I am currently President of the KNT netball association and remain a member of the Bordertown Hospital Health Advisory Committee.*

*As far as what I got out of the program that can be challenging to define.*

*There are the obvious benefits such as:*

- *opportunities to network that have developed into friendships and connections throughout the Limestone Coast*
- *Improved practical skill sets such as public speaking, facilitation and being a more effective board member*
- *Mentoring opportunities*

*I think the real benefits of the program for me were opportunities to reflect on my personality and leadership style. I have learnt to be less reactive and to observe for longer ... hang out on the balcony more. I find this one of my greatest challenges. So, I suppose self-reflection and getting to know myself better has enabled me to work with others in a more effective manner.”*

Tracey Grosser Community Development Officer - Migration

Tatiara District Council

(Appendix G: Quadrant Mapping)

## **Recommendations:**

It is beyond doubt that there is high value in building specific skills and confidence in individuals to ensure high quality decision making for the collective.

These recommendations are based on the certainty that building community resilience through the intentional development of potential leaders is a responsibility shared by all.

When considering current, successful leadership development opportunities, a commonality is that their success is largely based upon longevity. It stands to reason that the models that offer the most longevity will involve a commitment from a range of stakeholders.

Ironically, one of the greatest strengths of the LCLP, diversity, also presents its greatest barrier. One of the challenges moving forward is to develop a strategy to lead a wide range of sectors to see the benefit of investing in the community via a range of participants, not exclusive to their own sector.

A sustainable model of funding could be replicating Victoria's regional community leadership programs:

'Funding is sourced from a wide range of organisations: state government, local government, corporate, philanthropic foundations, service clubs, not for profits, TAFEs, NRM bodies and other semi-government groups. Many of the programs list a dozen or more supporters, indicating a need for significant effort required to gain sufficient funding for ongoing operations. In almost all cases program participants are required to make some kind of financial contribution ranging from \$200 to \$5,000 (plus GST) depending on scholarships allocated and employer support (some participants are sponsored by their employers).'

*Limestone Coast Economic Development, Regional Leadership Development Project*

*PROGRAM RESEARCH & DESIGN REPORT for the Limestone Coast Economic Development Group, Focus Facilitation 2016.*

As the Limestone Coast Leadership Program is in its infancy and has had limitations due to Covid-19, it is recommended that the program be funded for at least another three years to build an impactful reputation, to increase sponsorship buy-in and to raise the profile of the program. A review should be conducted after this period to again explore the short term and long term impact the LCLP has on building resilience communities across the Limestone Coast.

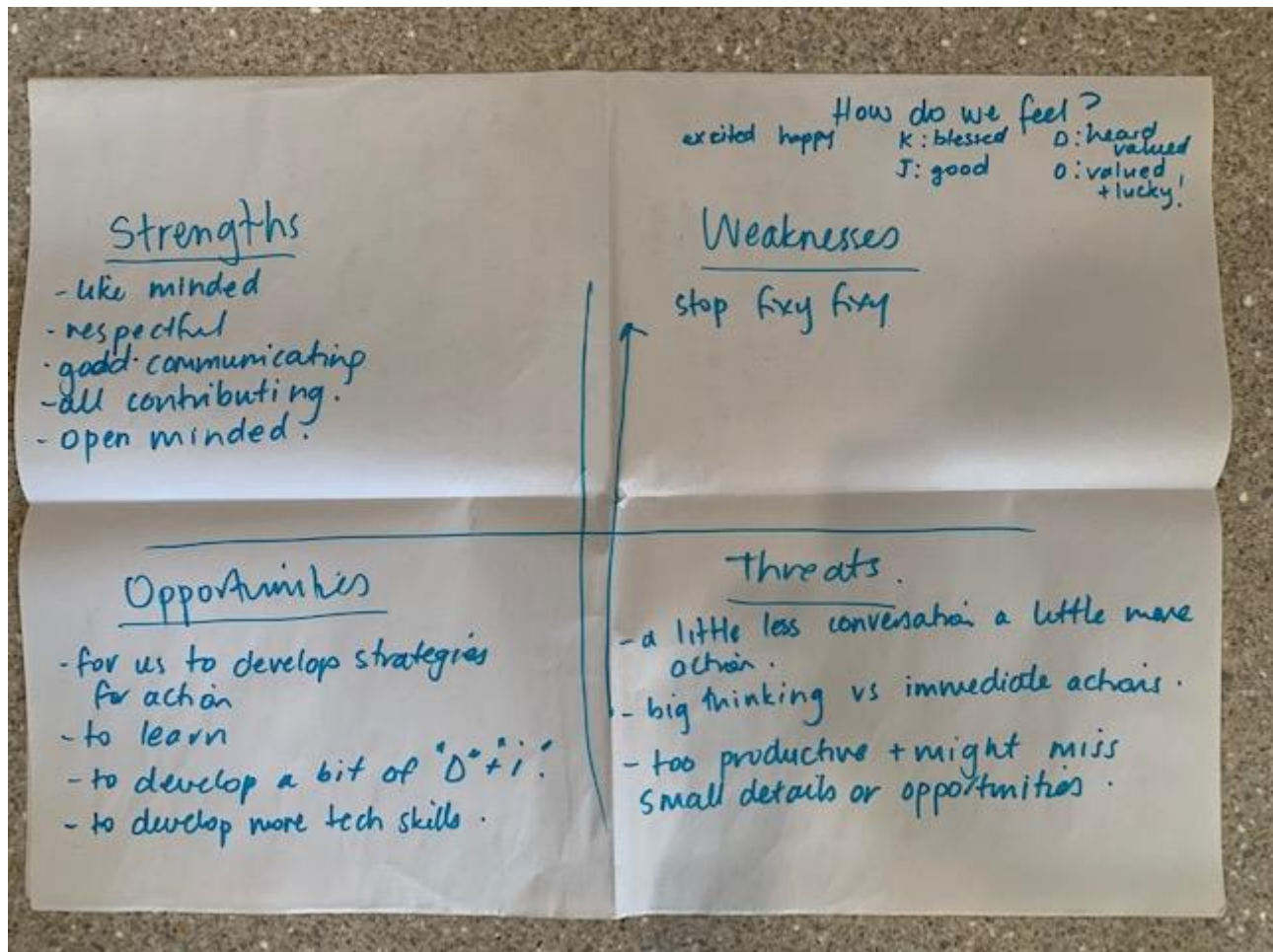
## **The recommendations for contribution from stakeholders follow:**

1. A commitment for a program facilitator (minimum 0.6FTE) would greatly improve the program productivity and awareness. This person should undertake the following key responsibilities:
  - o Social media awareness and advertising to increase program visibility.
  - o PR with businesses who may not know about the program and what it has to offer their business and staff.
  - o Develop a strategy to attract and retain sponsorship from all sectors.
  - o Engaging past participants to share 'where are they now' segments.
  - o Encouraging media outlets to do some pro bono articles for the course and the participant's success over the following months / years.
  - o Branding the program boldly: logo for business participation, merchandise for participants, etc.

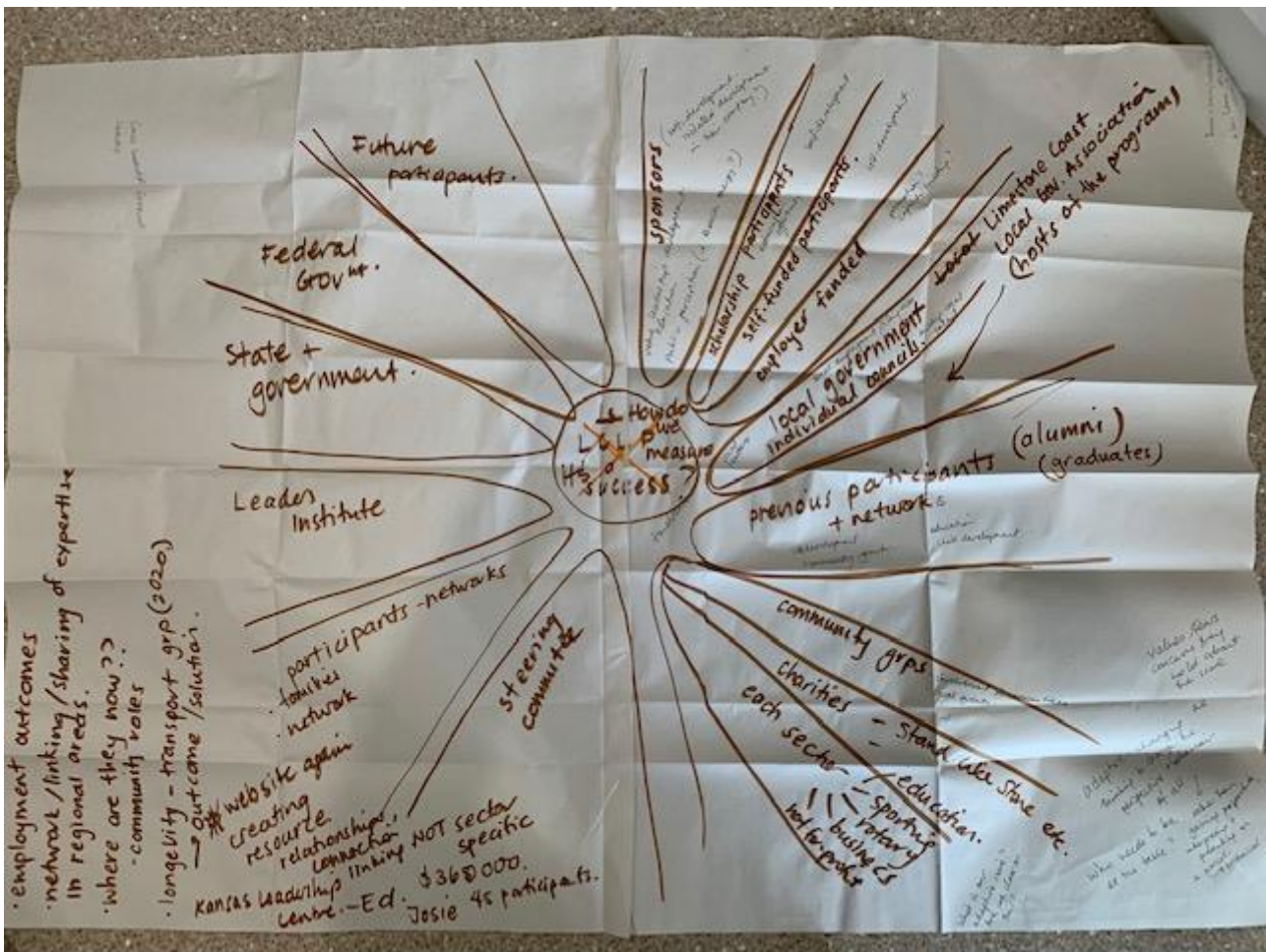
This position could be funded by Limestone Coast Local Government Associations initially with a three year commitment. After three years, this funding could be reviewed with additional time for evidence of impact. With increased measured impact, sponsorship would be largely provided by the private sector and general community, forming dual model of funding commitment from both private and government sources.

2. Formalising a commitment for participants to reciprocate through community involvement/committee representation/decision making would be preferable but also contextual. Different models of contribution and commitment should be explored.
3. Ongoing input into the program for Alumni:
  - a. Past participants sharing expertise as mentors for the following year.
  - b. One mentor could attend each of the days to assist and help with Community Action Projects.
  - c. A commitment from past participant/s to join the steering committee each year there will be great momentum and passion applied to the committee. Having completed the program, they are best equipped to relay valuable information and where the program may be lacking and excelling.
  - d. Attending functions such as the Lucindale field days and community events could be a great way to promote the program. Alumni could share their stories and answer questions.
  - e. Formalising a 'network of fellows' or 'membership' for Alumni would increase impact and networking over time, offering ongoing learning opportunities and shared experiences.
4. Mayor internships could be offered to participants who indicate an interest in local councils and their roles. Mayors have indicated an increased interest in the Limestone Coast Leadership Program, as their interactions with participants has increased.
5. It is recommended to continue to partner with the Leaders Institute of South Australia to access the highest quality presenters in order to maintain the reputation and integrity of what the program has set out to achieve. An opportunity to develop community leaders of the highest quality.

# Appendices



## Appendix B: Stakeholder Map



## Appendix C:

### Reports:

*Limestone Coast Economic Development Regional Leadership Development Project*

*PROGRAM RESEARCH & DESIGN REPORT for the Limestone Coast Economic Development Group*

*Prepared by Louise & Peter Stock*

*Focus Facilitation*

*March 2016*

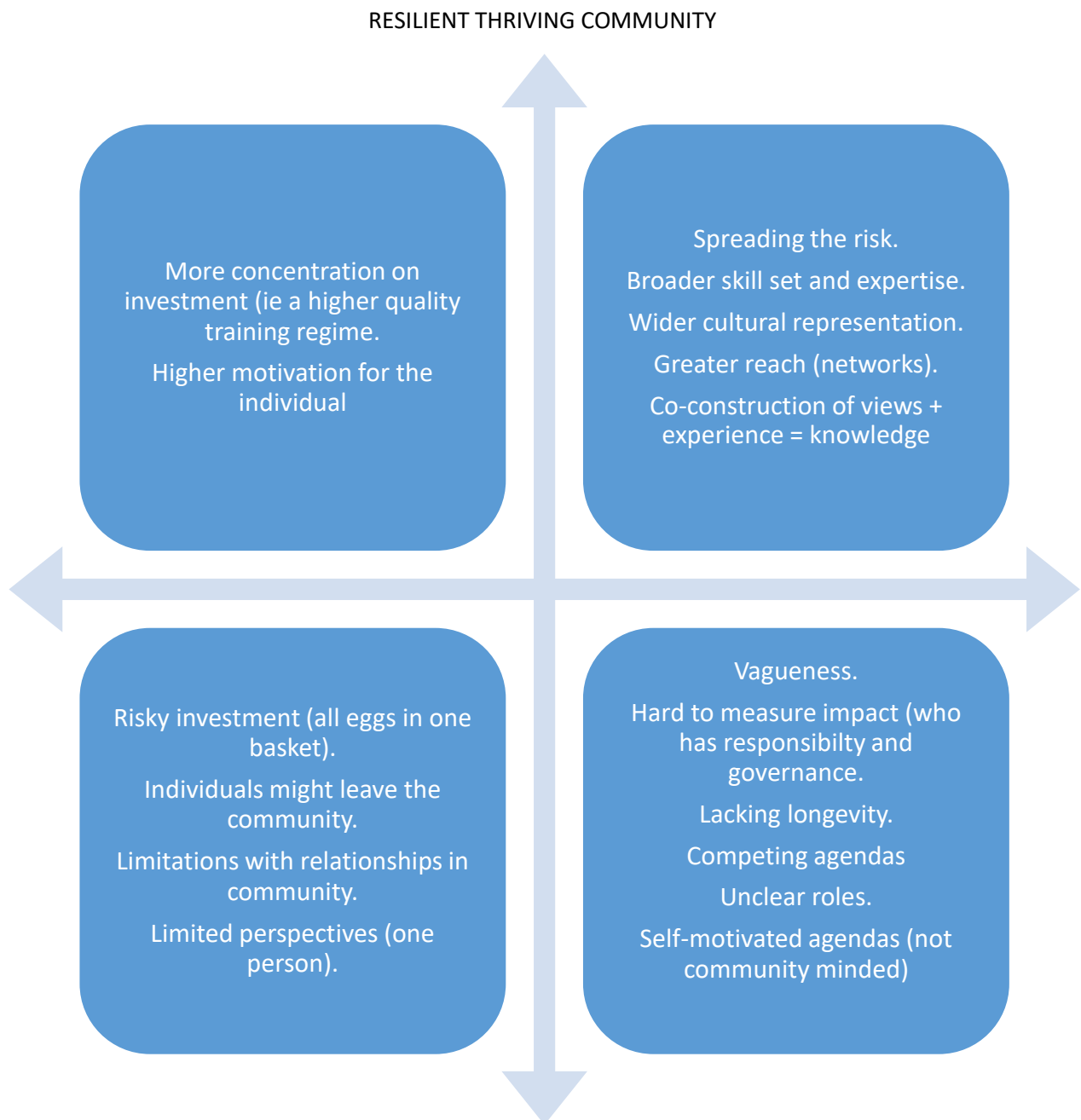
*Environmental Scan of Leadership Programs in, and for, Rural, Regional and Remote Australia.*

*Report for the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal*

*Andrew Huffer and Associates*

*July 2015*

## **Benefits for Individual vs Benefits for the Community**



## Appendix E: Table of leadership opportunities

Program	Organisation	Region	Age	Who can apply?	Cost	Scholarships
Australian Rural Leadership Program	Australian Rural Leadership Foundation	National	18 +	People from remote and rural Aust.	\$50,000 (\$5000 contribution)	Sponsored by various industries
Diversity in Agricultural Leadership Program	National Farmers Federation	National	25+	Women in Ag	Sponsored by industry	No as all costs are covered for participants
Governor's Leadership Foundation Program	Leaders Institute of South Australia	SA	18+	South Australians	\$13,450 +	Limited number of full and partial ones are available
Rural Ambassador Award	Agricultural Societies Council of SA	SA	18+	South Australians between 18 & 30 years involved in a country show	No cost	Sponsored Scholarships
Breeding Leadership	Australian Wool Innovation	National	18-35	People who work in the wool industry	No cost	Sponsored Scholarships
Australian Grain Leaders Program	Grain Growers	National	21 - 35	Australian citizens involved in the grain industry	No cost	Sponsored Scholarships
The Stepping into Leadership Program	PIRSA & WOTL	SA	18+	Women involved Ag related industries or rural communities within SA	\$5000 value (\$750 student fee)	Sponsored by PIRSA
The Leadership and Management Essentials Program	University of South Australia	SA	18+	Anyone (suited for emerging and mid-level leaders and managers)	POA	
Accelerated Leader Program	The University of Adelaide	National	18+	Anyone	\$3,950	
South Australia Leadership Academy	Government of South Australia	SA	18+	Public Sector employees	No cost	
Supportive Leadership Program	SA Health	SA	18+	SA Health Employees only	No cost	
Leadership Courses	Business SA	National	18+	New and existing managers	POA	
Arts Leadership Courses	Australia Council	National	18+	Arts industry personnel	No cost	
CFS Frontline Leadership	Country Fire Service South Australia	SA		CFS members who meet course eligibility requirements	No cost	NA
NAB Agribusiness Rising Champions	Cattle Council of Australia	National	21-40	People involved in the Beef Industry	Sponsored	NA

## SPONSORS SURVEY

### What is your association with or role within the Limestone Coast Leadership Program?

1. sponsor and involved in establishing the program
2. Sponsoring company
3. Sponsoring organisation

### How many years have you been involved with the LCLP?

1. 5+ years
2. 3
3. three years

### What appealed to you about the LCLP and inspired you to provide the opportunity for someone to take part?

1. I have benefited greatly from good leadership training and would like this opportunity to be available to others as I believe that the self-awareness required for effective leadership makes a significant difference to industries, communities, workplaces and families.
2. I have personally benefitted from leadership training and know the important and significant impact that it can make on individuals. As a company, the program also met our community investment guidelines to build up the capacity of people within the community in which we operate.
3. Many years ago, I myself participated in a similar leadership program, run by the Wimmera Development Association (the Wimmera Mallee equivalent to the Limestone Coast Local Government Association). I found the connections made through the program and the learning about myself, my leadership style etc. incredibly useful and was keen to provide the same opportunity to others.

### What do you hope the outcome of the program will be for your scholarship recipient, in the first year after graduation?

1. Increased skills, confidence and networks to try new things and different ways of doing things
2. We hope the recipient will be able to utilise their new found skills to drive change and growth within their own business and also with initiatives in their wider community.
3. That they have the time to learn about themselves, gain insight, skills and confidence to take on leadership roles.

### In an ongoing capacity? (3, 5 or 10 years)

1. As above, along with capacity for reflection to determine what works and what doesn't
2. We hope the recipient will be able to make an ongoing positive impact within their community with the skills they learnt during the course.
3. As above.

### What would make the program a 'success'?

1. Ongoing program delivery, with a strong and growing network of graduates who share information, skills and energy to develop our region and beyond.
2. The success of the program can only really be measured by the achievements of the individuals who undertook the program. This will be determined by their own inherent drive for achievement.
3. A 'new batch' of well skilled, insightful, passionate leaders in our community.

### How will you know if it has been successful?

1. This one is tricky.... ongoing surveys of graduates and their activities, as well as perceptions of employers and sponsors is required.
2. Unless we meet with the recipients at a time after the program conclusion, it will be difficult to know if it has been successful.
3. By observing participants' careers and volunteering roles. Ideally, we would also see it reflected in the success of our community groups, councils and businesses, but it is difficult to effectively track this.

## STEERING COMMUNITY SURVEY

### **What is your association with or role within the Limestone Coast Leadership Program?**

1. Member of the Steering Committee
2. The LCLGA Auspice the program as an incubator project

### **To help us better understand your perspective, please outline your role:**

1. I came onto the committee through my role as chair of the local HR Managers' networking group, as an industry representative.
2. Executive Officer, the LCLGA Auspice the program as an incubator project - 3 program commitment

### **Your involvement implies that you value the outcomes of the program. Please list potential benefits for the Participants:**

1. Building a local network of leaders across a broad range of backgrounds; acquiring solid leadership skills and thought processes; opening their minds to new ways of approaching matters and analysing things.
2. Developing new leaders in our community - in regional communities and with ageing populations the leadership responsibilities are falling on fewer older people with less new leaders emerging, for the Limestone Coast to have a vibrant and thriving community we need to develop a range of skills and encourage new leaders to emerge in our community. Participants will learn how to active their leadership in the community, work environments and within their own lives, the development of networks and new ways of thinking about our world.

### **Your involvement implies that you value the outcomes of the program. Please list potential benefits for the Program Partners:**

1. For industry - a pool of people trained in modern leadership thinking and approaches; for the community the development of community leaders with upgraded skills and a high quality network to tap into.
2. Developing new leaders in our community - in regional communities and with ageing populations the leadership responsibilities are falling on fewer older people with fewer new leaders emerging, for the Limestone Coast to have a vibrant and thriving community we need to develop a range of skills and encourage new leaders to emerge in our community.

### **Your involvement implies that you value the—outcomes of the program. Please list potential benefits for the Sponsors:**

1. Much the same as the partners, with the added benefit of showing themselves to be supporters of developing local talent.
2. Developing new leaders in our community - in regional communities and with ageing populations the leadership responsibilities are falling on fewer older people with fewer new leaders emerging, for the Limestone Coast to have a vibrant and thriving community we need to develop a range of skills and encourage new leaders to emerge in our community. Plus recognition of role in the community to assist the development of regional capability.

**Your involvement implies that you value the outcomes of the program. Please list potential benefits for the Community:**

1. As mentioned above, this program provides an opportunity for emerging community leaders to gain exposure to a diversity of thought and style which would be difficult to achieve in any other program.
2. Developing new leaders in our community - in regional communities and with ageing populations the leadership responsibilities are falling on fewer older people with fewer new leaders emerging, for the Limestone Coast to have a vibrant and thriving community we need to develop a range of skills and encourage new leaders to emerge in our community. New skills and leaders to challenge the status quo and stimulate change for better outcomes.

**What treasures do you hope will unearth?**

1. For me the real "treasure" will be if we unearth an unlikely leader, someone who comes to the program without much of a leadership pedigree but blossoms because of its content and the nurturing environment it encompasses.
2. Graduates with the confidence to take on challenges in their community, work and personal life. A sense of responsibility for their world and the skills to create change.

**What would make the program a 'success'?**

1. A better quality of leadership emerging in local industry and the community
2. Graduates taking on leadership roles, graduates able to identify how their lives have changed for the better from the insights and skills learned.

**How will you know if it has been successful?**

1. Seeing graduates of the course taking up leadership roles in local bodies across industry and the community, and having their enhanced skills influence other leaders in the region.
2. Graduate responses and assessment of the program and their learnings, sponsors value proposition being achieved, being able to identify graduates who are taking on new responsibilities in their lives.

## **GRADUATES SURVEY**

The LCLP has a profound impact on participants and the Limestone Coast community. Please outline your experience in the program and what you consider to be the biggest 'successes' for you.

1. The biggest successes for me was meeting like-minded people, understanding the issues currently being faced by our communities (and widening my perspective) and the ability to apply the skills I learnt to my current role.
2. The 2020 course had significant disruptions due to COVID, and additionally so more for me as I live in Victoria but work in SA. It was incredibly disappointing to participate in the program and yet miss so many of the in-person sessions. I found that there was not a lot of support from the organisers of the course for the online learning component that I had to undertake, no extra notes provided, no time with the speakers apart from the time I spent online while everyone else was there in person and inadequate equipment to allow me to hear the sessions and discussion or for people in the room to hear me. I also found that some of the course content was not especially useful to me, and I often felt as though we were only skimming the surface of many topics. There were also a number of concepts that were not well explained throughout the course. I felt that the Community Action Projects could have been done in a more effective way, as did our

CAP group. None of us had a particular interest in the topic that we were assigned, so whilst we worked in that area for the duration of the course, none of us have a real interest in following up on the issue that we tackled. I found this really disappointing, as I'm sure the stakeholders did too - to have some action and half a plan to fix an issue, but to then have no momentum to continue to take this issue forward is really frustrating. I think this could have been rectified by the CAP groups taking on issues that were of interest to them and that were part of their sector, to increase the chances of action on these issues going forward. It also seemed to me that whilst we were being encouraged to be 'leaders' in our community, we weren't really provided with any real-life experience to prepare us for this. For example, many Boards and Committees are crying out for volunteer members, and to me this is an obvious place where graduates of the leadership program could provide leadership. It would have been really useful for us all to have been placed on a Board or Committee as a temporary position throughout the year, to give us hands on experience whilst we were doing the course - giving us the opportunity to put those skills into action and to experience what it is like to be part of a decision making team. The biggest successes for me from this course were the contacts I made through the course. It's really useful for me in my role to have a wide variety of contacts in the region and the course did help with this.

3. The impact I experienced was not so much changes to my success, but more a validation of where I am at. How I am perceived in the business world and what my strengths are.
4. Self-reflection - taking a step back and learning about what was important to me and what I want to become
5. We survived covid. Our experience was a little prolonged, a little disjointed and a little isolated. Meeting all council leaders, learning from others, connections and making a team mate cry and of course the CAP project presentation were great. Ongoing projects with others and bringing Adelaide based services to us as a conduit are wonderful reasons to be a community leader.
6. Understanding myself and how others see me better.
7. My experience in the program was valuable, unusual (pandemic), creative, informative and personally rewarding. I certainly didn't really know what I was in for, far more self-discovery and vulnerability as an individual than I was expecting. But I made some great friendships and connections and did enjoy the journey and was ultimately challenged to think differently. Our program was somewhat disjointed because of Covid19, but that just added complexity to the group and I guess you could say gave us the opportunity to practice leadership at a critical time in an ever evolving large world.
8. It gave me an opportunity to understand myself as a person, my leadership style, mainly my weakness, and then through CAP projects I got an opportunity to understand local issues. While working in a CAP group, it gave me the opportunity to work in a team, respect each other's opinions and play an active role by taking ownership. Success is a very relative term and can't be described generically, however, the entire LCPL leadership course has opened new horizons for me and helped me become active member of the community.
9. My experience with the program was fantastic. I found the skills and experiences added value to all aspects of my life including, professional, academics and personal. I would consider my biggest success (aside from the connections made, and the new found capabilities which has supported two upward role changes since the program) would have to be the realisation that I, as a person, (and employee) add value. It sounds ridiculous, however I found that I was consistently holding back ideas, opinions and information during meetings and in general. The Leadership Program helped me to see that courageous authenticity is a skill which can be built upon, and this has supported my ability to outwardly add my say and value - which has only improved my prospects in all areas of life.

### **What do you perceive to be the most impact benefits for the wider community?**

1. Development of leaders who can apply their skills for the benefit of the wider community
2. There were a lot of people involved with the course who probably had less leadership experience than I did, and I think there would be benefits for the businesses who employ these people as they likely learned skills that could help them succeed with their jobs. I assume that these benefits may flow onto the wider

community, however I think that the benefits for the wider community are likely to take place through that person's increased skill level at their job.

3. It is fantastic to have this course and to have more empowered graduates go out into the community equipped with a new skill set to assist change and growth in their chosen fields.
4. Personally, the course has encouraged me to explore other opportunities to join local boards and committees and hopefully become a greater asset to said community - Overall - I think we will now have a broad group of people willing to extend themselves and give back to the community in various roles
5. More confidence to try new things, work collectively for the good of our community and support others in the wider area
6. Having more skilled leaders within the community to uplift everyone
7. I'm not sure. From my own perspective I have gone back to my community with renewed energy and am having influence when and wherever I can to create change. I am deliberately looking at many complex problems at local community and local government level. I am not necessarily perplexed by the system that I didn't previously understand and I have spent a lot of time researching different ways of thinking from across the world when it comes to communities, communication and growth. If everyone that participates in the LCLP does a similar thing, even subconsciously, then my hope is that there is impact on many levels throughout the Limestone Coast, which can only enhance the people and places.
8. As an individual regional community, we have lots of issues however as a broader community, Limestone Coast has everything, the resources which we should use as a community for the growth and development of the region.
9. I perceive the most benefit added to the community through the Limestone Coast Leadership Program to be the unearthing of people who have intensively built on their ability to self-reflect and make deep-rooted change. The Leadership Program creates individuals whose success is not in grabbing at low-hanging fruit - but is in an individual's ability to identify issues at the very baseline cause and take appropriate action. The people completing the Leadership Program are those that can now advocate and support cultural and fundamental change.

### **Was the program a success?**

7. Absolutely
8. For most of the participants - likely. For me - marginally. I think the course could be redesigned to deliver outcomes more effectively.
9. I would say yes for some and others perhaps didn't grasp or give as much to the process.
10. ABSOLUTELY
11. Yes I believe so- as always you get out of it what you put into it
12. Yes I found it challenging but valuable
13. Define success. For me as an individual with personal growth & leadership development - I would definitely say yes but as an overall program with objectives, strategy and purpose I feel more could be done to explore and leverage the cost, knowledge and leadership potential of the group before, during and after the program. We could be of benefit to local industry or government, could help offer a fresh or different perspective to a challenge. And we could continue to advocate for our CAP projects to find solutions long after the LCLP had finished.
14. Yes, the program exceeded our expectation, learning from each other and dealing with pandemic situation as few of our graduates were from Victoria and the interstate border closure impacted our regular learnings.
15. The program was hugely successful for me as an individual, and I have seen the success in others who participated alongside me. I learned so many valuable skills which will stay with me for a lifetime, and I regularly reflect back on the core concepts of the program to help me through challenges.

## **How do you know?**

1. Through the skills I have learnt, I have been able to apply them to my current role which is educating other people around me. This is then creating a 'domino' effect around the community.
2. Discussion with fellow program graduates.
3. The course required you to be engaged and vulnerable to the process of self-discovery and I felt many didn't do this. It was a big commitment in my business life to find time for and finding the time to invest was difficult. Very rewarding and certainly a few of my year graduates made life changes afterwards. Need to keep in better contact however!!
4. Personally, I grew so much as a person, and want to push to further benefit my community. I know I am a different person now as to the person that went into the course. I have set goals during the course that I have since accomplished. I also have a completely different mindset and a completely different set of skills to work with. And best of all I still have a great mentor/mentee relationship from this course that we can still bounce off each other to ensure we keep aligned.
5. I am doing everything I set out to achieve in making a real difference for Carers and people who are isolated by disability in our community. I get feedback that what I am working on with others is changing things for the better of our area.
6. More people are talking about it within the community.
7. Know what? Whether it was a success? I can only base this on my own experience, during and after, and the key learnings and discussions with other members of the group throughout the program and after graduation. There is a wealth of leadership potential and deep thinkers that live within our community that would be prepared to take on challenges that create or drive change if given the forum and potential.
8. Though community members and previous alumni.
9. I know the program was a success because I have seen the new-found confidence and expertise be put to use by so many participants.

## **CURRENT PARTICIPANTS**

### **What appealed to you or motivated you to apply to take part in the 2021 LCLP?**

1. Explore leadership and growth in leadership
2. chance of self-development
3. The opportunity to expand my skills when interacting with other team members
4. The opportunity to further develop my skills and to enhance personal development
5. Had a previous participant speak highly of it and saw it on Facebook
6. It seemed like a good course & opportunity to further develop my leadership skills. I liked the fact that it was a community based course and that I had an opportunity to also learn about the limestone coast area
7. I was asked by the Tatiara CEO to take part. Before this I had no knowledge of the program.
8. Self-improvement and career development
9. I loved the idea of doing a leadership course of some sort, any opportunity to upskill, but the the high regard in which the alumni spoke of the program, the fact that it was over many months, that it was local, and supported by many organisations really made this program stand out as the best choice.
10. Self-development and enhance leadership skills.

### **We are in the infancy of the LCLP, what are your hopes or aspirations as an active participant in the program?**

1. Build on the program and add value to future students and the community

2. Firstly to learn more about myself and to get a better understanding of why I act a certain way sometimes to be then a good example in exercising leadership (hopefully)
3. To create network connections, learn about myself and develop my leadership skills to have the confidence in my abilities
4. to use all of the knowledge and experience to enhance my career prospects and benefit my community
5. To become a better community leader
6. To be able to develop my leadership skills and in turn contribute effectively to my community and industry
7. To finally understand adaptive challenges and leadership roles to then apply it to my everyday life
8. I am excited to see how the skills I am learning will aid my future endeavours.
9. I hope that we have future alumni opportunities to stay involved with each other, as well as upskill. I'm currently very excited to see what the rest of the years sessions have to offer!
10. The program will produce future leaders who desire and are able to contribute to their communities.

### **Have these changed since you applied? How?**

1. Yes, looking at everything with an open mindset and opportunities in life
2. No
3. Yes, I have learnt many strategies to handle situations much better and how to understand how others may be processing information
4. No, I just feel more motivated and capable than ever
5. Not really
6. I think only in the fact that I am more motivated now to do this, am more aware of opportunities that are available and am keen to help raise the profile of the course
7. Yes. I thought we would be taught how to be a leader in the sense of how to give a presentation etc.
8. Initially I did sign up for this course to help with my career but it has become a lot more about self-growth now which will help my career as a domino effect.
9. I am more aware of the radio silence that can sometimes follow after these types of programs, so the desire for follow through and future opportunities has grown since I first applied.
10. No.

### **What would make the program a 'success'?**

1. Yes, but can evolve
2. I think if all of us can take at least one tool out of it and try to implement it into our own lives (however that may look like for everyone individually).
3. Any growth in my personal development which would then reflect positively on a team environment
4. success would be gainful career enhancement
5. Becoming more involved in the community
6. Having a successful completion rate, people feeling like it has been worthwhile & seeing people achieve personally as well as contributing to their community and or career
7. To see participants out in the community making a difference
8. I see this program being a success if participants are going to take the knowledge they have been gifted and become leaders that people aspire to be like. I want to see us all becoming well rounded humans who can reflect and engage with people and lead others to take their own journeys of growth.
9. Growth within participants, growth as a group (dynamics, etc.), connected alumni, people having been challenged but supported.
10. If participants did indeed develop their skills and knowledge, and put them into practice.

### **How will you know if it has been successful?**

1. Personal growth and change from initial leadership circle mentoring session
2. I think it's been successful when you can see the change happening. (Inside and around you)
3. It already has been
4. For me, i will know that i have been successful in this program by using my knowledge to benefit myself and the community
5. Quite hard to measure really
6. I think personally if I have developed new skills, confidence and networks
7. If I am able to 'lead' in my business and remember to use all the tools I have learnt along the way. To have ongoing friendships and contacts will also make the program a big success for me.
8. Personally I already feel it has been a success, learning is always a positive. I feel I have gained confidence in myself and my abilities and have already signed up to new leadership opportunities I wouldn't have felt comfortable doing prior.
9. I already feel like I've learnt a magnitude, think about things differently, am more aware of myself, and feel connected with other participants. That to me already feels like a win.
10. Follow up with participants.

