Board Information Paper

Emerging Leaders in Governance Program (ELGP)

Purpose

This paper provides information for organisations considering becoming a Community Partner or Community Supporter of the Emerging Leaders in Governance Program. It outlines the governance challenge facing the not-for-profit and community sector, the purpose and impact of ELGP, the partnership model, and the opportunities available for organisations to contribute to the future of community governance in Western Australia.

Background

The Emerging Leaders in Governance Program was established in 2013 through a one-off social innovation grant from the State Government. Since then, it has grown into one of Australia's leading not-for-profit board pathway programs.

The program was created to address a clear governance challenge. Western Australia has more than 6,000 charities operating across the State, all requiring capable board directors to support effective governance, sustainability and community impact. At the same time, fewer than 5% of community board directors in Australia are under 40. This creates a governance gap between capable, values-driven emerging leaders who want to contribute and organisations that need structured pathways for board renewal and succession planning.

The Emerging Leaders in Governance Program was built to close this gap.

Program Purpose

The purpose of ELGP is to develop high-potential professionals into board-ready governance leaders and connect them with aged care, community, disability, health, education, peak body and other not-for-profit organisations seeking to strengthen board capability, diversity and succession planning.

The program supports:

- A successive recruitment stream of board-ready emerging professionals to strengthen community board governance.
- A strong coalition of Community Partners committed to board renewal, intergenerational leadership and cultural change.
- Increased awareness of the aged care and community sector among emerging leaders.
- Practical pathways to board, committee, advisory and traineeship appointments.
- Stronger long-term governance capability across Western Australia's community sector.

Program Overview

The Emerging Leaders in Governance Program is a competitive four-month development program for emerging professionals from corporate and community sectors.

Each year, approximately 20 participants are selected to complete a structured governance and leadership curriculum. By the end of the program, participants have developed the knowledge, confidence, networks and practical skills to contribute to board and committee roles.

The program includes:

- Practical not-for-profit governance education.
- Awareness of the key issues facing the aged care and community sector.
- Personal leadership and self-awareness.
- Communication, influence and stakeholder engagement at board level.
- Strategic thinking and board-level decision making.
- Site visits and direct engagement with community organisations.
- Mentoring and peer learning.
- Group projects and leadership challenges.
- Networking events with senior leaders, board directors and alumni.
- A residential leadership retreat.
- Pathways to board appointment and long-term sector contribution.

Impact to Date

Since 2013, ELGP has created a lasting shift in community governance in Western Australia. Over 14 years and 17 cohorts, the program has become a primary structured pathway for emerging professionals entering community governance.

The impact includes:

- 235 board placements.
- 58 committee roles.
- 52 traineeships.

These appointments and development opportunities have strengthened aged care and community organisations across Western Australia, while creating meaningful pathways for emerging leaders to contribute to the sector.

ELGP alumni have been appointed to boards and committees across a broad range of organisations, including aged care, disability, community services, health, mental health, education, training, sport and peak body organisations.

Why Partner with ELGP

Community Partners play a central role in sustaining the program and strengthening the future governance pipeline for the sector.

Partnering with ELGP provides organisations with:

- Demonstrated investment in governance quality and civic leadership across WA.
- A meaningful and measurable contribution to social impact and corporate social responsibility.
- Increased brand visibility among high-calibre emerging leaders and sector organisations.
- Support for intergenerational partnerships on boards.
- Direct access to a values-aligned pipeline of emerging board, committee and advisory talent.
- Reduced board recruitment costs, with a single appointment potentially saving $5,000 to $10,000.
- Opportunities for staff, executives and board members to engage in leadership, mentoring, networking and professional development.
- Promotion of board, committee and advisory vacancies to the ELGP cohort and alumni network.

Partnership Model

To support the long-term sustainability of ELGP, Community Partners are invited to make a three-year commitment to the program, with annual partnership contributions confirmed each year.

The partnership model recognises that organisations have different capacities to contribute and different levels of desired engagement.

Platinum Partner — $25,000 per annum

For philanthropic foundations, corporates and sector leaders seeking to make a significant investment in the future of community governance.

Benefits include:

- Principal recognition across ELGP communications, marketing and program materials as a Platinum Community Partner.
- A featured Platinum Partner profile on the ELGP website and social media channels.
- A priority profile opportunity at a major ELGP event, including acknowledgement, speaking or panel participation (by agreement).
- Optional opportunity to host or co-host an ELGP event, site visit or leadership session.
- Priority promotion of board, committee or advisory vacancies to the ELGP cohort and alumni network.
- An annual impact update and strategic briefing on ELGP outcomes, alumni appointments and governance pipeline trends.
- Access to all Gold and Silver Community Partner benefits.

Gold Partner — $10,000 per annum

For not-for-profit and community organisations investing in board renewal, governance diversity and future sector leadership.

Benefits include:

- Recognition as a Gold Community Partner across ELGP collateral and website.
- Direct engagement with emerging board-ready leaders throughout the program.
- Optional opportunity to contribute to a program session, panels, site visit or networking activity, aligned with the partner's interests and availability.
- Priority promotion of board and committee vacancies to the ELGP cohort and alumni network.
- Recognition at key ELGP events.

• Invitations for nominated board members or staff to attend selected ELGP events as guests or observers (subject to capacity).
• Blog and social media recognition as a Gold Community Partner.
• Access to all Silver Community Partner benefits.

Silver Partner — $5,000 per annum

Silver partnership is an accessible entry point for community organisations that believe in the program purpose and want to build their connection to the next generation of governance leaders.

Benefits include:

• Recognition as a Silver Community Partner across ELGP program collateral and website.
• Connection to a growing pipeline of emerging governance talent through program engagement opportunities.
• Promotion of board or committee vacancies to the ELGP cohort and alumni network.
• Up to two tickets to selected ELGP events, subject to venue and program capacity.

Community Supporter — $2,500 per annum

Community Supporter status provides an accessible way for smaller community organisations, local partners and values-aligned supporters to contribute to the future of community governance.

Benefits include:

• Recognition as an ELGP Community Supporter on the ELGP website.
• Acknowledgement in selected program collateral.
• Opportunity to promote board or committee vacancies to the ELGP alumni network.
• Up to two tickets to one selected ELGP event, subject to venue capacity.

Partner Involvement Opportunities

In addition to financial support, Community Partners may contribute to the program through in-kind involvement and sector engagement. This may include:

• Hosting an ELGP participant as a Board Observer.
• Offering a Board Traineeship to an ELGP graduate.
• Promoting board, committee and advisory opportunities.
• Participating as a mentor to an ELGP participant.
• Speaking or participating in a panel discussion.
• Hosting or co-hosting a site visit, leadership session or networking event.
• Attending ELGP events such as the Welcome Breakfast, networking events and Graduation.
• Supporting group projects or leadership challenges.
• Sharing organisational insights with participants.
• Contributing to blogs, social media stories or alumni profiles.

Strategic Value for Boards

ELGP provides a practical response to one of the most significant governance challenges facing the not-for-profit sector: the need to build future board capability while improving diversity, renewal and succession planning.

For boards, partnership with ELGP supports:

- Access to emerging leaders with governance training and sector awareness.
- Stronger succession planning and renewal pathways.
- Increased board diversity, including age and professional background.
- Opportunities to engage future leaders before board appointment.
- Stronger connection between boards and the next generation of civic leaders.
- A practical way to invest in the long-term governance capacity of the sector.

Conclusion

The Emerging Leaders in Governance Program has demonstrated strong and sustained impact over more than a decade. It has supported hundreds of board, committee and traineeship opportunities and continues to build the next generation of values-aligned governance leaders for Western Australia's community sector.

Becoming an ELGP Community Partner or Community Supporter is an investment in the future of community governance, board renewal and sector leadership.

Organisations interested in joining as a partner are invited to complete the Community Partner Registration Form and return it to Southcare.

For further information, please contact:

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