Justice, Opportunity and Empowerment

GLOBAL PRO BONO AND CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY REPORT
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Foreword

I am delighted to share with you our latest Global Pro Bono and Corporate Responsibility Report. This report is intended to offer a snapshot of recent work we have undertaken through our global pro bono practice and global corporate responsibility programme. While by no means exhaustive, the report sets out many of our key projects, framed under three overarching themes of Justice, Opportunity and Empowerment. As a global law firm operating across 16 countries, we recognise the important role we can play in ensuring access to justice, breaking down obstacles to opportunities and supporting people to become empowered through education, skill development and access to critical services.

Our global pro bono practice allows our lawyers to provide vital legal assistance to people facing marginalisation and disadvantage and the organisations that support them, as well as in matters for the public good of broad public or community concern. Our Board endorses our pro bono target of 52 hours for each of our lawyers per year; a goal reflected in our global pro bono policy. And alongside the direct legal assistance we provide, we also play an active role in supporting the development of local pro bono culture, infrastructure and collaboration, as well as the development of in-house pro bono.

We work closely with community-based legal and charitable organisations to understand the needs of our clients and to identify clients who are most likely to benefit from our services, from supporting remote communities, to helping not-for-profits scale up from local, to national, to global. We are very proud that our cover for this report features Nic Marchesi and Lucas Patchett, co-founders of Orange Sky. We first met Nic and Lucas in 2014 when our Brisbane office provided Orange Sky, a new local initiative, with some pro bono advice, and we have delighted in watching the organisation go from strength to strength. Since those early days, Orange Sky has grown exponentially, and the pro bono team assisting has grown to include Ashurst lawyers from every Australian office and several other international offices. You can read more about our work with Orange Sky on page 30 of this report.

We also seek to make a broader social contribution as a responsible business, and are committed to being a sustainable global law firm which delivers positive impacts for our employees, clients, profession, the environment and our communities. Our corporate responsibility programme, which is separate to our pro bono practice but works closely alongside it, provides the framework through which all our people can support community volunteering initiatives where they give their time and use their skills, while reducing our environmental impacts, striving for business community leadership and supporting Australia’s reconciliation journey.

As the global head of pro bono and corporate responsibility, I feel very privileged to be able to witness first-hand the passion, enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated by our people. At the heart of all our pro bono and corporate responsibility activities is a desire to help reduce disadvantage, support people and organisations working in frontline social and legal services, and create positive social impact.

Sarah Morton-Ramwell
Partner, Global Head of Pro Bono and Corporate Responsibility

January 2019
“We believe all individuals should be able to have access to the legal system to protect or assert their rights, irrespective of their financial situation. This belief is at the heart of our global pro bono practice, ensuring that we focus our efforts where access might otherwise be denied.”

PAUL JENKINS, ASHURST MANAGING PARTNER
Any individual who is impacted by the use or misuse of laws should be able to rely on the legal system to protect or assert their rights, irrespective of their financial situation. This belief in accessible and equal justice remains at the heart of our global pro bono practice, ensuring that we focus our efforts where access might otherwise be denied.

For people who are experiencing disadvantage and marginalisation, community-based free legal advice is frequently the only option available to them to address often multifaceted legal problems. Some problems are straightforward and easily resolved; others may prove more complex and require longer term assistance; in either case, the problem usually permeates all aspects of the individual’s life.

We partner with many community-based advice organisations on a range of access to justice projects; from frontline service delivery at clinics to full-time secondments serving isolated communities.

The partnerships we develop are designed to be long term and, as part of this, we regularly assess how we can improve and tailor our service. For example, in London, we have begun the process of consolidating our welfare benefits work to build a specialist group in this area. This makes it easier for people to support multiple welfare benefits advice schemes throughout their careers. Our initial partners in this work are Tower Hamlets Law Centre and the National Deaf Children’s Society.

We also look to ensure service delivery is coordinated and holistic wherever possible. For example, the Coordinated Legal Services Delivery Programme (CLSD) comprises 12 justice partnerships in New South Wales. Each partnership is a coalition of legal and non-legal services, working to address unmet legal needs and to achieve better outcomes for vulnerable people facing disadvantage in regional, rural and remote New South Wales. As the pro bono partner firm for the Far West and Central West CLSD regions, our pro bono team travels out to Dubbo and Broken Hill to attend CLSD meetings to meet with key legal and non-legal service providers every three to six months. We work collaboratively to increase the capacity of community lawyers to serve their clients, as well as to identify and address needs.

In Victoria, only 17% of people bound by community-based treatment orders receive representation when seeking to vary or remove their compulsory treatment order via the Mental Health Tribunal. Through the Mental Health Legal Centre Advocacy Programme, our lawyers represent clients before the Tribunal.

In Canberra, our employment team continues to support the Women’s Legal Centre (WLC) Employment Law Clinic, providing advice and assistance to WLC clients in employment law negotiations, tribunals and courts.
SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED BY CRIME IN AUSTRALIA

We participate in a number of projects designed to support individuals impacted by crime. Victims of crime often suffer injury or loss in the process of, or as a result of, the offence and victim support compensation schemes have been developed to provide financial compensation.

Western Australia

Our Victims Support Project in Perth allows lawyers to assist clients in regional and remote communities with the process of preparing and submitting applications to the Western Australia Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. In addition to client representation, we provide training to lawyers working in remote communities to assist in the victim support application process. For example, we provided telephone-based training for Community Legal Centre lawyers in Kununurra, 2,948 km from Perth.

New South Wales

Changes to the New South Wales Victims of Crime Compensation Scheme in 2013 resulted in a simplified yet lower financial payout under the Victims Support Scheme which applied to new claims and to any previously submitted claims that had not been determined at the point the new scheme came into force. This meant that many individuals with retrospective claims received less compensation than they were expecting.

In August 2015, the New South Wales Government announced that it would allow people with original scheme claims affected by the change in law to apply for their claim to be reassessed under the old legislation. Lawyers in Sydney helped lodge reassessment claims which resulted in over A$600,000 additional compensation payments to our clients. We continue to assist victims of crime who are unable to navigate the new system without support.

CASE STUDY

By assisting on a victims support matter from rural New South Wales, our lawyers helped the client receive an additional A$3,500 in compensation following their initial claim. The team also identified that the client could claim in respect of sexual assault, which could result in a further A$10,000 in compensation payments. The identification of the sexual assault claim resulted in criminal charges being laid against the perpetrator.

Northern Territory

Assisting victims of crime accounts for more than one-third of the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) secondee’s practice (see page 20). In 2017, our NAAJA secondee successfully argued that a threat of violence was an “assault” and therefore constituted the third act of violence. This was necessary for the client in that case to qualify for victims’ compensation. Our secondee’s success has since enabled NAAJA to repeat this argument for other victims of domestic violence.
WORKING TO ENSURE A FAIR AND ACCOUNTABLE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The right to a fair trial and due process are some of the most long-standing rights enshrined in law. In addition to our work supporting victims of crime, we also support organisations that focus on due process rights and accountability within the criminal justice system.

Associazione Antigone is a not-for-profit organisation that focuses on the protection of civil rights and guarantees in the Italian penal system. Antigone collaborated with our Milan office and the Italian Coalition for Civil Liberties and Rights to produce a guide explaining the rights people have when stopped or arrested by the police. The publication, Know Your Rights – A short guide to your rights when dealing with the police, is now freely available to the public in Italian, English and French.

Justice Reinvestment is a ground-breaking justice reform project in Australia, working to re-direct prison resources into early intervention, prevention, diversion and community-strengthening activities focused on addressing the systemic drivers of crime in order to lower criminal activity and incarceration rates. We sit on the Strategic Directions Committee of Just Reinvest NSW, the peak body for Justice Reinvestment in New South Wales, where we provide input into the strategic direction of the organisation. We also provide pro bono and in-kind support to Just Reinvest NSW.

Reprieve is a London-based legal action charity that promotes the rule of law around the world, focusing on the death penalty, indefinite detention without trial, extraordinary rendition and extrajudicial killing. Our lawyers continue to support Reprieve in a range of tasks, including preparing complaints to the UN Special Rapporteur concerning the imminent and arbitrary execution of prisoners, assisting with research on the clemency process, reviewing case files and preparing summaries of death row cases in Tanzania. Our lawyers have also drafted submissions in specific cases before international tribunals and bodies such as the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights and the African Court on Human and People’s Rights.

The quality of representation in a capital trial can make all the difference to the outcome of the case. Amicus is a small legal charity which helps provide representation for individuals facing the death penalty in the United States (US), in partnership with US capital defence lawyers. Since 2015, a team of 30 lawyers in London and Glasgow have helped review over 40,000 documents covering a decade of legal proceedings for a death penalty appeal, focusing on the adequacy of legal representation at trial and the conduct of the trial and jury deliberations.

Our lawyers also provide support to Amicus on the Missouri Project. The Missouri Project is a major research project focused on the disproportionate application of the death penalty in Missouri, despite the state operating a legal regime intended to restrict death penalty cases to a “narrow category of the most serious cases”.

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ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN A CHANGING WORLD

Access-to-justice needs are not static. Changes in funding, laws and local or world events shape the world around us and generate new legal needs in communities. Our lawyers remain alert to these changes and work towards proactively responding through pro bono and corporate responsibility support.

Australia Law Reform Project

Communities experiencing disadvantage and marginalisation are often dependent on community and not-for-profit advice organisations to help them navigate the legal system. Through their work as frontline service providers, our community partners are acutely aware of the impact of law and policy on such communities. These organisations have the statistics, cases studies and thoughts on how to address systemic legal issues that impact vulnerable individuals. However, they are also consumed with frontline service delivery, making it difficult for them to allocate any of their lawyers’ capacity to pushing for systemic change.

Recognising this, we have a pro bono law reform practice aimed at helping community legal centres and not-for-profit organisations address systemic legal issues. Our lawyers collaborate with these organisations to assist with their advocacy strategies. We prepare research, submissions, large-scale case study collections, policy and briefing papers, and literature reviews.

Some of the projects undertaken by lawyers and graduates have included preparing submissions on support schemes for child sexual abuse survivors, victims’ involvement in sentencing procedures, adequacy of youth diversionary programmes, creating briefing papers on youth justice issues and reviewing the inquiry into incarceration rates for Indigenous peoples and numbers of women in prisons.

We have been joined by two interns at the University of Sydney to extend the project to law students as part of its Social Justice Legal Clinic.

Brexit

In June 2016, a referendum on membership of the European Union (EU) resulted in the start of “Brexit”: the departure of the United Kingdom (UK) from the EU. This created a situation of legal uncertainty for thousands of EU citizens residing in the UK and prompted a number of initiatives by the legal advice community, some of which were scaled up through pro bono support from our lawyers.

We were able to help long-standing pro bono client the AIRE Centre respond to a significant increase in requests for individual advice from people concerned about their rights after Brexit. The Centre helps individuals facing disadvantage and marginalisation and those in vulnerable circumstances to assert EU law rights through strategic litigation and direct advice on topics such as the right to reside, and rights to work, healthcare and benefits. We work in a coalition of firms to train volunteer lawyers to increase the capacity of the Centre’s team.

We were also able to assist the Bingham Centre (part of the British Institute for International and Comparative Law), which established a post-referendum project to provide EU migrants with an independent and reliable source of information informing them of their current and anticipated rights during the transitional and post-withdrawal phases of Brexit. We supported the Centre with research on substantive rights and also avenues for legal process and access to justice if a breach of rights occurred.
Marriage equality in Australia

The Equality Project is a national organisation in Australia that brings together LGBTIQ people and allies across the social justice movement for a fairer society. We seconded a lawyer to assist the Equality Project Campaign on its work relating to the 2017 Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey, which asked whether the law in Australia should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry. After 61.6 per cent of respondents approved a change to the law, the Marriage Amendment (Definition and Religious Freedoms) Act 2017, which legalised same-sex marriage, came into effect on 9 December 2017. We also took part in the InterFirm Marriage Equality Roundtables.

Crisis response

We recognise the inherent responsibility that sits with international organisations to respond to international crises by leveraging financial and practical support. The provision of crisis response legal support is an emerging area of focus for the global legal community. Firms are moving beyond traditional financial support to understand how and where they can provide other assistance to affected communities and the organisations providing frontline support to them.

In March 2016, bombs exploded at Brussels airport and a metro station, killing 32 people and seriously injuring over 300 people including foreign nationals who were in Brussels at the time. Our Brussels office partnered with other law firms to establish a working group that distributed requests for legal help by those affected, and shared knowledge and best practice learned from those working directly on cases. Lawyers in our Brussels office provided pro bono help on insurance and compensation matters to the family members of one of the deceased individuals and to those who had been injured.

In June 2017, fire broke out in Grenfell Tower, a residential tower block in London, which resulted in the death of 71 people and the loss of homes for more than 100 households. We seconded one of our pro bono managers to support the coordination of legal help by North Kensington Law Centre, which was located directly beneath Grenfell Tower. This support helped boost the Centre’s capacity to respond to emerging legal need and coordinate a range of legal services, including pro bono support from our lawyers and other law firms. The insight and learnings we acquired through the coordination of this work is now being used as part of systemic analysis in communities across Australia, Europe and the US to understand how lawyers can better mobilise and respond to crises.
RESPONDING TO EMERGING AREAS OF NEED

For many not-for-profit organisations, their ambition and ability to respond to emerging areas of need is limited only by available resources. We continue to partner with these organisations to support them in achieving their aims.

The Center for Reproductive Rights advocates for reproductive freedom as a fundamental human right that all governments are legally obligated to protect, respect, and fulfil under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We provided the Center with help on a project mapping the laws and policies on the consent of children and adolescents to marriage, divorce, sexual activity and access to reproductive health services. The Center used this mapping exercise to determine how legal capacity and consent for children is defined, which informed the Center’s Asia advocacy strategy in relation to access to justice for girls forced into child marriage and who suffer reproductive rights violations.

Open Society Foundations (OSF) work to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. The Open Society Justice Initiative is an operational programme through which a team of human rights lawyers and staff pursue legal work that supports the broader mission and values of OSF, helping to establish and strengthen the law’s protection for all. We assisted Justice Initiative lawyers in the production of a casebook on strategic litigation, for use by both practitioners and law students, which included examples of strategic litigation across various jurisdictions (in both domestic and international tribunals).

The Human Rights Law Centre (HRLC) is a not-for-profit organisation that protects and promotes human rights in Australia and in Australian activities overseas. The HRLC undertakes strategic litigation, advocacy, research and capacity-building work across a number of key focus areas, from the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, asylum seeker and refugee rights, democratic rights and freedoms, the rights of the LGBTIQ community and the rights of women. In 2016, we launched a full-time secondment to support the HRLC’s newly opened Sydney office. This is a rolling six-month secondment.

Over the last decade the HRLC has helped deliver justice at both individual and systemic levels including:

• Establishing constitutional protection of the right to vote, restoring voting rights to most prisoners and hundreds of thousands of Australians struck off the electoral roll.

• Reigning in excessive Northern Territory police powers which were disproportionately used against Aboriginal people.

• Leading legislative reform in Victoria and New South Wales to allow men to apply to erase unjust criminal records imposed when homosexuality was a crime.

• Helping push for police change to address the over-imprisonment and deaths in custody of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

• Upholding the right to healthcare for prisoners.
“During my time at the HRLC my work ranged from providing legal research for a roundtable working to decriminalise abortion, drafting media releases, researching proposed law reform, working with counsel in relation to a potential discrimination law test case and researching international human rights law. Working on such a diverse range of matters pushed me to develop and expand my legal writing and advocacy skills beyond measure. One of my most significant pieces of work was assisting with a not-for-profit report to the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Committee for their 2017 review of Australia.

I was responsible for drafting content for the report and coordinating the 56 not-for-profits who were involved in this process. This required me to present a case for law and policy reform in areas that were mostly new to me, including deaths in police custody, coronial inquests, police powers, prison conditions, and laws restricting protests and consorting.

I also had the opportunity to join the not-for-profit delegation that travelled to Geneva to brief the UN Human Rights Committee. The delegation comprised leading disability advocates, Aboriginal leaders and refugee advocates. Watching my fellow delegates in action – be it briefing the Committee, engaging with Australian Government officials and the Human Rights Commissioner, or being interviewed by media back home – was a masterclass in effective advocacy skills.”

IVY KEANE, ASHURST HRLC SECONDEE
“The link between low income and low academic attainment is greater in the UK than almost any other developed nation. Children eligible for free school meals are less likely to get good GCSEs and go on to higher education. This makes it more likely they will struggle throughout their lives, widening social inequality. It’s a cycle that we’re determined to break.”

TEACH FIRST
Opportunity

TACKLING EDUCATION INEQUALITY IN THE UK

Our work to support young people starts with education. Education provides every young person with a foundation on which to carve out their future career. By tackling education inequality we can help ensure that every young person is given the best possible chance to succeed.

We have a multi-year partnership with Teach First, which challenges the deeply rooted reality that a child’s socio-economic background is the biggest determining factor in their chances of future life success. By working with fantastic teachers, schools, communities and supporters, over the last decade the charity has seen transformational change for children in London – moving from being one of the worst places to go to school in the developed world if you are from a low income home, to one of the best.

Educational inequality starts before children reach secondary school. Teach First statistics show that over one-third of children entitled to free school meals in the UK leave primary school without meeting the expected levels for reading, writing and maths.

We also have a long-standing relationship with Bonner Primary School in Tower Hamlets, London, where approximately 45 per cent of students are eligible for free school meals, compared to a national average of 15 per cent. In partnership with Future First, we run the “First Steps” programme with Bonner Primary School. Through a series of workshops with our volunteers, the programme aims to inspire Year 6 students (10-11 years of age) to start thinking about future career pathways and to start building the confidence and skills that will help them pursue their goals.

“The First Steps Junior Enterprise work is a highlight of the year for our Year 6 pupils. It offers educational and enjoyable opportunities to find out about different careers and skills. It broadens the children’s understanding of the world of work. The project helps them to feel that if they plan the steps carefully there are many interesting possibilities for their future careers.”

JENNY WRAXALL, ASSISTANT HEAD, BONNER PRIMARY SCHOOL
Although London’s inner boroughs have been the driving force behind the turnaround in educational outcomes, the further you go from the city centre the greater the education-attainment gap is. North London suffers from some of the worst levels of poverty in the country, with Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest having the highest concentrations of poverty and inequality south of Birmingham. Educational outcomes in these boroughs are lower than the London average.

In 2017, Teach First launched a five-year strategy to address this problem head on, which aims to bring together educational leaders, third-sector organisations, businesses and local government to create a community motivated by change.

In partnership with Teach First, we support secondary school students from state schools across Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest. Each year we welcome secondary school students from these and other low income communities to our London office for our “Access Ashurst” work-shadowing programme, which forms our PRIME commitment to broaden access to the legal profession.

Many students who attend Access Ashurst also attend a second week of work shadowing as part of the Social Mobility Business Partnership (SMBP), a collaboration of law firms, their partner clients and commercial organisations across several cities in the UK. The SMBP offers promising state school students facing social and economic disadvantage access to a Work Insight and Skills Programme, with the aim of broadening access to the legal profession and developing students’ career aspirations.

With the launch of legal apprenticeships at Ashurst in 2018, an alternative route to qualification as a solicitor in the firm was made possible. Historically, anybody wishing to qualify as a solicitor in England and Wales would need to fund the cost of completing a law degree or conversion course at university before moving on to undertake the Legal Practice Course followed by a two-year training contract in a law firm. Legal apprenticeships offer a new, affordable route to becoming a solicitor, through which the law firm funds all training and study costs and pays the apprentice a salary.

“Only 21% of UK pupils entitled to free school meals end up going to university.”

TEACH FIRST

“Being part of the project really gave me a sense of direction.”

THE ACCESS PROJECT ALUMNA, NOW AN UNDERGRADUATE AT OXFORD
Work-shadowing schemes are part of our wider effort to help encourage young people to think about their future career aspirations – an effort that includes ongoing career coaching and mentoring programmes:

**The Access Project** has a proven track record of helping students boost their grades and gain places at university. Since 2013, volunteers in London have provided tuition and support to Access Project students experiencing disadvantage, from schools across north London.

**Future Frontiers** recruits and trains top university students and professionals to deliver a face-to-face career coaching programme to help motivate young people to achieve their career aspirations. Volunteer coaches from our London office guide pupils through a series of organised sessions which focus on the students’ career interests, strengths and aspirations. We partner with a school in Enfield, furthering our support of schools in north London boroughs.

**The Social Mobility Foundation** supports more than 1,000 young people each year who have the ability to flourish in universities and professions but may lack the encouragement and support networks to encourage and support them. As part of the Foundation’s Aspiring Professionals Programme, volunteer e-Mentors from our Glasgow and London offices advise 16- and 17-year-old students from across the UK on a range of topics, increasing their understanding of various career pathways and university applications. In 2018, the Glasgow office held its first “Access Ashurst” work-shadowing programme in partnership with the Foundation.
Volunteering projects supporting children and young people

Across our network:

**Glasgow**

We hosted a “World of Work” visit in collaboration with The Prince’s Trust for secondary school students from Holyrood Secondary School.

**New York**

We hosted an Arts Party in collaboration with Free Arts NYC, an organisation that provides underserved children with a unique combination of educational arts and mentoring programmes that help them to foster the self-confidence and resilience needed to realise their full potential.

**Milan**

We partner with ViviDown, a charity that supports young people with Down syndrome and their families. The charity was founded in 1988 by a group of parents and provides educational, social and medical support to young people to assist them and their families with everyday life. Through this partnership, our Milan office hosted a young person with Down syndrome for work shadowing, involving the student in a range of office-based tasks once a week over several months.

**Paris**

Volunteers regularly support local children with their homework, in partnership with L’Entraide Scolaire Amicale, a not-for-profit organisation, which supports children across France.
Singapore

The Dayspring Residential Treatment Centre for teenage girls provides a safe environment for teenage girls who have experienced the trauma of abuse, and provides both therapy and education. Our Singapore office sponsored a series of educational workshops at the Centre to be run by Discovering Without Borders, a social enterprise in Singapore focused on practical learning activities in science, technology, engineering and maths. Our volunteers attend the Centre to help with workshop participation.

Brisbane

We co-sponsor the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mooting Competition in Brisbane, reflecting the commitments we have made to reconciliation, in particular, with respect to supporting law school programmes aimed at increasing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

We sponsor Project Imba, which was co-founded and is run by law graduates Allison Boland and Corey Curran. The project supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students in Cunnamulla as they start thinking about their future career pathways.

Sydney

We hosted a careers visit to our Sydney office as part of the IMATTER mentoring programme, an early intervention programme for girls aged 7 to 12 run by the Benevolent Society.

We participate in the LEAPS! Mentoring Programme (Law Firms Encouraging and Assisting Promising Students), which focuses on sharing skills, encouraging students to set career and life goals and empowering them to effectively deal with challenges and opportunities they will encounter throughout their lives.

We participate in the Australia Business and Community Network’s “Business Class” volunteering programme.

Perth

We participate in a mentoring programme in Perth with the Australian Business and Community Network for young people in Year 11.
ASSISTING ORGANISATIONS WHICH SUPPORT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Railway Children

Railway Children provides protection and opportunities for children across the UK, India and East Africa who have run away or are forced to leave homes that have become unbearable through poverty, abuse, violence or neglect. Railway Children race to reach children as soon as they arrive on the streets and intervene before an abuser can. We are Company Secretary to the charity; we carry out commercial work on a pro bono basis and arrange joint networking and thought leadership events with Railway Children.

Blue Sky Healing Home

Blue Sky Healing Home is a small medical foster home in Beijing, which we support and which helps orphans and children from families experiencing disadvantage to receive medical care.

Fondazione Francesca Rava

Fondazione Francesca Rava is a charity that helps children in need both in Italy and in the rest of the world including Haiti, where it has operated for 28 years.

Eat Up!

Eat Up! is a not-for-profit organisation which distributes lunch packs each day to schools in Melbourne and regional Victoria, where 1 in 8 Australian students arrive at school hungry.

Singapore Children’s Society

Singapore Children’s Society supports over 70,000 children each year through 11 service centres offering services for vulnerable children, children and youth services, family services, research and advocacy.

Community Roots China (CRC)

Community Roots China (CRC) is an organisation which uses corporate responsibility initiatives to build bridges between Chinese communities and corporations operating in China. CRC focuses on assisting children in China by supporting them with education, healthcare and shelter. Each year the organisation operates the “One Heart Gift Bag Programme”, which aims to bring resources to children in need of funding for education in remote areas of China. Our Shanghai office’s most recent participation in this initiative allowed us to send resources to pupils of Yalang primary school in Huangnan, Qinghai province.

Nick Webber Trust

We are proud supporters of the Nick Webber Trust, created in memory of Nick Webber, a newly qualified solicitor at Ashurst who died in a car accident while undertaking pro bono work in Malawi during his qualification leave. In his memory, Nick’s family set up the Nick Webber Trust, which aims to help people facing marginalisation and disadvantage in Malawi by working to increase access to education, healthcare and justice.
Yayasan Kasih Anak Kanker Indonesia (YKAKI)

Yayasan Kasih Anak Kanker Indonesia (YKAKI) was established in 2006 by a group of parents whose children had undergone cancer treatment. YKAKI aims to ensure that every Indonesian child can receive medical treatment while enjoying their right to learn and play even when sick. YKAKI has built “Rumah Kita”, a house to accommodate patients (and their families) from low-income backgrounds who are in Jakarta for cancer treatment. Oentoeng Suria & Partners (OSP), in association with Ashurst, hosted a cooking class at the Young Chef Academy (Kemang, Jakarta) for children from Rumah Kita.

L’Etoile de Martin

L’Etoile de Martin was founded by the parents of a young boy named Martin who died of cancer in 2006. The organisation helps fund research into childhood cancers and also funds wellbeing activities for children with cancer. Our Paris office supports the charity through a range of fundraising activities.

Più Unici che Rari

Più Unici che Rari – Associazione Italiana Sindrome di Alexander was founded to promote scientific research and thereby improve the knowledge, diagnosis and identification of therapies suitable for the treatment of Alexander’s syndrome, a rare disorder of the nervous system, in children. Our Milan office supports the charity through a range of activities.

La Fundación Pablo Hortsmann

In Madrid, Ashurst Solidario prize recipients included La Fundación Pablo Hortsmann, a project supporting the construction and start-up of a new ward in the Paediatric Hospital Pablo Horstmann in Lamu (Kenya) for children with serious illnesses and complex diseases.

Propaganda Senyum

Propaganda Senyum is a social service which aims to accommodate and take care of children seeking medical treatment for biliary atresia in Jakarta. Biliary atresia is a rare disease of the liver and bile ducts that occurs in infants and can lead to liver failure. Oentoeng Suria & Partners (OSP), in association with Ashurst, supports the service.

Alannah & Madeline Foundation

In Australia, we support the Alannah & Madeline Foundation, which was set up in 1997 in memory of Alannah and Madeline Mikac who were killed with their mother and 32 others at Port Arthur, Tasmania, on 28 April 1996. The Foundation focuses on reducing bullying, advocating for the safety and wellbeing of children, and supporting children who have experienced or witnessed serious violence.
RECONCILIATION IN AUSTRALIA

The formal reconciliation movement in Australia began in 1991. At its heart, reconciliation is about the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians. In Australia, everyone has an important role to play in ending the disparities that exist between many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

We are deeply committed to supporting reconciliation and to working to reduce disadvantage and end the disparities in opportunity that exist between many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians. We seek to do this through our pro bono practice, our corporate responsibility activities and by ensuring we are a diverse and inclusive workplace.

Our reconciliation journey began in the early 1970s. Our firm and our lawyers were honoured to support the work of many of the first Aboriginal community-controlled organisations established at that time. We continue to support many of these organisations, including the Aboriginal Housing Company and Aboriginal Legal Services. Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and organisations remains at the heart of our national pro bono practice, and our Global Pro Bono and Corporate Responsibility Partner sits on the Business Council of Australia (BCA)’s Indigenous Engagement Taskforce. We are also part of the BCA and Supply Nation’s joint “Raising the Bar” initiative, participating in design workshops aiming to grow the Indigenous procurement capability and increase the impact of Business Council companies.

In 2014, we formally launched our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) at Innovate level. In 2018, we formally launched our second RAP at Stretch level.

In our Stretch RAP, we seek to build on work we have done to date by:

• continuing to provide legal assistance and advocacy to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and organisations through our pro bono practice;

• working to support an increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and retention at the firm;

• continuing to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and organisations and to explore new ways we can work together; and

• continuing to work with young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to facilitate opportunities for skills development and through providing meaningful work experiences as they plan for and build their careers.

We are also committed to learning more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and we encourage all our people to join us on this learning journey.

Our ongoing learning programme encompasses online cultural awareness and competency training, face-to-face training sessions and cultural experiences. We also mark National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week each year by hosting internal events and attending external events. These dates are an opportunity for us to reflect on our past and how we can each be part of the next big steps in Australia’s reconciliation journey.
“A RAP is a strategic document that supports an organisation’s business plan. It includes practical actions that will drive an organisation’s contribution to reconciliation both internally and in the communities in which it operates. The RAP Programme contributes to advancing the five dimensions of reconciliation by supporting organisations to develop respectful relationships and create meaningful opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Each of the four RAP types (Reflect, Innovate, Stretch, Elevate) set out the minimum elements required from your organisation to build strong relationships, respect and opportunities within your organisation and community.”

RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA’S DESCRIPTION OF THE RAP PROGRAMME
NAAJA

NAAJA provides vital, frontline legal services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Northern Territory. We continue to place lawyers on rolling six-month full-time secondments to increase NAAJA’s capacity to service its clients. We also provide holistic support to NAAJA to address organisational and legal needs. We provide NAAJA with advice on discrete aspects of client matters, corporate legal advice to assist NAAJA as an organisation, mentorship from our lawyers, free legal training and extra resourcing for larger matters, including strategic litigation and royal commissions.

30,000
PRO BONO HOURS RECORDED TO THE NAAJA SECONDMENT

6
HOURS: HOW LONG IT CAN TAKE OUR SECONDEE TO TRAVEL THROUGH THE AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK WITH NAAJA LAWYERS TO VISIT REMOTE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES
LOCAL DECISION-MAKING

The New South Wales Government’s Local Decision Making (LDM) initiative aims to ensure that Aboriginal communities have a genuine voice in determining what services are delivered to their communities and how those services are integrated. LDM is a new way for Aboriginal communities and government to work together. It places Aboriginal people at the centre of service design, planning and delivery and sets out a pathway for communities to become more self-governing through staged devolution of decision-making and accountability.

The LDM initiative operates between the New South Wales Government and eight Aboriginal Regional Alliances drawn from the New South Wales Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances (NCARA). These eight alliances represent communities throughout New South Wales and they have each entered into agreements with the New South Wales Government to enable the staged handover of decision-making and accountability to the local level. As part of this, each Regional Alliance has an increased say in government service delivery, can exchange ideas and consider common issues, as well as provide leadership and advocacy where and when necessary.

We helped bring together eight law firms in a pro bono partnership designed to support this process of self-determination. Each of the participating law firms has partnered with an Aboriginal Regional Alliance to provide pro bono legal support.

We have partnered with the Northern Regional Aboriginal Alliance (NRRA), which covers the North West of New South Wales. Under a Memorandum of Understanding with NRRA, we have agreed to provide NRRA with pro bono legal support and in turn NRRA will provide us with cultural knowledge and appreciation information.

“Local Decision Making is a new way for Aboriginal communities and government to work together. It sets out a pathway for communities to become more self-governing. It directs the way government works with communities, and it looks at and improves the way it works along the way.”

NEW SOUTH WALES ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS FACT SHEET
“Right across the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region, social entrepreneurship is being recognised as an approach to reduce widening income inequality, address environmental degradation and empower women and girls.”

BRITISH COUNCIL, ASEAN SOCIAL ENTERPRISE GUIDE

SUPPORTING NOT-FOR-PROFITS AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

One of our key strengths will always be the ability to advise not-for-profits and social enterprises on a range of operational legal issues. This assistance is provided in a variety of ways ranging from one-off advice where we have the right expertise to solve a specific challenge, to ongoing help on a range of needs that may emerge over several years.

Our offices around the world regularly support not-for-profits on a range of legal tasks to help them start out on their journey. For example, lawyers in our Port Moresby office were able to provide guidance on the process of incorporating and operating in Papua New Guinea to a not-for-profit that nurtures social impact businesses. And, in the US, when local residents and businesses wanted to ensure the continuation of the Adams Morgan Day celebration, a local volunteer-run community festival, our Washington DC office was able to help the Adams Morgan Community Alliance obtain charitable status.

Our Brussels office has developed a not-for-profit pro bono practice, advising domestic and international organisations on a range of Belgian and European law issues. The team advised Relief International on not-for-profit governance and the registration of entities in Belgium. Our Brussels office also advised CARE International, a long-standing pro bono client in London, on the implementation of EU eligibility measures relating to EU funding and on long-term strategy to ensure compliance with EU eligibility rules.

Checkpoint acts at the intersection of mental health with video games and technology. Lawyers in our Melbourne office have advised the organisation in relation to IP rights, Australian tax status, contracts for volunteers and partnership agreements.

Our Canberra office hosted its inaugural Not-for-Profit Health Check in partnership with the Australian Capital Territories Council of Social Services (ACTCOSS). This day-long workshop for not-for-profit community organisations comprised seminars on key legal issues and one-on-one sessions with lawyers to evaluate aspects of the legal “health” of each organisation.

The Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia (ALSWA) is the largest community-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal organisation in Australia. We advised ALSWA on its transition from an incorporated association in Western Australia to a company limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act, calling on teams from Brisbane, Perth and Sydney to provide the necessary expertise.
As not-for-profits and social enterprises achieve greater success, many seek to scale up their work in order to achieve even greater impact. Impact investing offers a solution for some organisations as investors seek to invest in work that can achieve a positive social impact. Our work in this area continues through our international social finance team.

- **Big Society Capital** connects investors with charities and social enterprises that are creating social change in the UK. It also aims to promote the development of the social investment marketplace in the UK and, as part of this, our social finance team provided a review of the legal aspects of social impact bonds in the UK.

- We also continue to provide pro bono support to **Big Issue invest**, the social investment arm of **The Big Issue** and have advised on a range of finance, tax, funds and regulatory matters.

Social enterprises are an ever-growing market and we continue to provide pro bono support to people with the vision to address the needs of their communities in a different way.

- **startsocial** is an initiative in Germany through which volunteers from commercial, public and not-for-profit sectors provide expertise to groups aiming to address social needs and issues in local communities. Volunteers from our Frankfurt office assist through the scheme, which has now supported more than 1,400 not-for-profits and social enterprises.

- The **Melbourne Sustainability Business Clinic** is a pro bono initiative designed to support social enterprises and not-for-profit organisations with a sustainability or environmental focus. The clinic is run as a collaborative project between Ashurst and the University of Melbourne in which groups of students partner with our lawyers to interview, research and advise clients on a range of commercial legal issues.

- Although social enterprise offers a way to address social challenges and empower communities using a different approach from traditional business models, social entrepreneurs must still operate within the legal framework of each country they work in. With social entrepreneurship experiencing significant growth across Southeast Asia in recent years, the British Council recognised an increasing need to provide guidance on how to carry out business activities alongside pursuit of a social mission. To help address this, Oentong Suria & Partners (OSP), in association with Ashurst in Jakarta, worked with TrustLaw, the British Council, other law firms and local partner organisations to create the **ASEAN Social Enterprise Guide** for social entrepreneurs. The guide provides detailed information on potential legal structures, outlines governance and regulatory guidance and includes case studies for each country, including Indonesia.
“Empowerment: the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one’s life and claiming one’s rights.”

THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY
Empowerment

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

Empowerment is a concept that runs through much of our pro bono practice and corporate responsibility activities. We aim to empower our pro bono clients and community partners to move forward with confidence.

We partner with Bridges Across Borders – South East Asia – Continuing Legal Education and have sent our lawyers to help deliver legal ethics training workshops across the region, most recently in Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam.

We were able to provide similar support through LexisNexis’ The Juris Pilot as part of a pro bono rule of law initiative due to be rolled out in countries throughout Asia Pacific. The pilot saw lawyers from our Tokyo office, other international and local firms and the LexisNexis Asia Pacific rule of law team deliver a two-day training course on international contract law in the region.

The Equal Rights Trust focuses exclusively on the right to equality by seeking to combat discrimination and advance equality worldwide. Serbia is one of a number of countries which has enacted anti-discrimination legislation in the last decade. With Serbia approaching the criteria for full EU membership, the EU Delegation to Serbia has funded a strategic litigation support programme to test the effectiveness of the Serbian legal framework on equality and non-discrimination. The programme is supporting a number of cases of strategic importance in the areas of access to education for children with disabilities and LGBTIQ rights. Our London and Brussels offices assisted the Trust with a strategic litigation support programme to assess the effectiveness of the above legal framework on equality and non-discrimination.
ASSISTING COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY CONFLICT AND PERSECUTION

Assisting stateless individuals

In international law, statelessness refers to a lack of citizenship. Citizenship is the essential foundation of a person’s legal identity, enabling them to vote, hold public office, exit and enter a country freely, or obtain housing, healthcare, employment and education.

- The Institute for Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI) is a research institute focusing on the study of statelessness. Since 2017, our lawyers have supported ISI’s work through various research projects relating to the interconnection of statelessness and the Sustainable Development Goals, including by researching nationality laws in over 40 countries around the world in the context of human and national security.

- We have also partnered with the Migrants Resource Centre, a charity which has spent more than 30 years helping migrants, refugees and asylum seekers overcome the barriers that prevent them from fully participating in British society. Through the Centre’s Asylum Aid Initiative, in partnership with other law firms, we have piloted and launched a clinic in London to help stateless individuals use the UK’s statelessness determination procedure so as to be able to obtain “statelessness status”, which would allow them the ability to work, access social services and travel.

Assisting victims of modern slavery

Modern slavery comes in many forms including forced labour, debt bondage, human trafficking, descent-based slavery, forced or early marriage, child slavery and child labour. It can affect people of any age, gender or race and can take place in any country.

- The Walk Free Foundation is an organisation attempting to end contemporary slavery and human trafficking. Its Global Slavery Index presents an annual ranking of 167 countries based on the percentage of a country’s population that is estimated to be in modern slavery. Our lawyers helped Walk Free prepare its submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade “Inquiry into an Australian Modern Slavery Act”.

- Justice Without Borders (JWB) is a not-for-profit organisation which supports victims of labour exploitation and human trafficking. JWB works to build cross-border networks, knowledge and knowhow on legal remedies which may be available to victims. Lawyers from our Hong Kong and Singapore offices and Oentoeng Suria & Partners (OSP), in association with Ashurst in Jakarta, have provided research support to assist JWB.
Assisting refugees

The refugee crisis that dominated the news in 2015 and 2016 continues with more than 44,000 people forced to flee their homes every day to escape conflict or persecution. In addition to our partnership with Safe Passage (overleaf), our offices continue to support not-for-profit organisations working in this area.

- **The International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)** organises lawyers to develop and enforce a set of legal and human rights for refugees and displaced persons. IRAP provides support and capacity building in the field, creates systemic reforms benefiting hundreds of thousands of refugees, and provides comprehensive legal representation to refugees. In New York, we work with IRAP to support applications for Special Immigrant Visas on behalf of Afghan nationals who served as translators for the American military.

- **Japan Association for Refugees (JAR)** helps to facilitate legal and social assistance to refugees while also advocating for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers through government bodies, local authorities and media relations. In Tokyo, we partner with JAR to target volunteer support where it can be of most help to JAR’s legal work.

- **The Refugee Law Clinic** is a training programme at the Department of Law of Justus Liebig University Gießen. Through training in asylum and refugee law, students provide individual consultations on the asylum procedure. In Frankfurt, we assist students with the process of interviewing refugees and preparing refugees for their asylum hearings.

We also work with a number of organisations that support refugees to integrate into their new home through employment that matches their skills, experience and desire to work.

- In Frankfurt, we coached student initiative ZUBAKA through the startsocial project (see p23). ZUBAKA supports schools with tailor-made projects designed to integrate young refugees, offering simple but important projects such as “Get to know your neighbourhood” or “How to apply for a job”.

- **Our Frankfurt office also supports Frauenrecht ist Menschenrecht e.V. (FIM), an intercultural counselling centre for immigrant women and their families in Frankfurt am Main. Through its work, FIM supports victims of severe human rights violations such as forced marriages, female genital mutilation, human trafficking and domestic violence.**

- In Melbourne, we support SisterWorks, a social enterprise which supports women seeking asylum or with refugee and migrant backgrounds to become economically independent.

58.5 MILLION FORCIBLY DISPLACED PEOPLE
ASSISTING UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

The Safe Passage project was first established in 2015 by Citizens UK as a partnership between community organisers, lawyers and faith leaders. Safe Passage helps unaccompanied child refugees and vulnerable adults find safe, legal routes to sanctuary. Its work started in the Jungle Camp of Calais in 2015 where it partnered with legal not-for-profiles, specialist immigration law firms, barristers and others to establish a legal route for family reunification for children in Calais.

Through this collaborative network Safe Passage has reunited over 1,000 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children from France, Greece, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Bulgaria, Syria and Sudan with their relatives.

Since 2016, lawyers from our London, Glasgow, Brussels, Paris, Milan, Singapore and Saudi Arabia offices have contributed legal, language or research skills to support 20 cases of unaccompanied minors in Greece, France, Italy and Saudi Arabia.

Our lawyers in London supported Safe Passage during the Calais Jungle Camp demolition to provide data on the numbers of lone children in the camp to the UK Government, and to help operationalise the “Dubs Amendment” through the development of a best interest assessment.

Our lawyers in London have also helped Safe Passage develop materials for its resources platform and, as well as supporting their training programme, have provided organisational support on various matters such as company, employment and EU law.

DUBS AMENDMENT

The arrival of nearly 200 children in the UK on 2 December 1938 marked the start of the Kindertransport, an organised rescue effort that saw almost 10,000 unaccompanied children, who were mainly Jewish, transported to England from Nazi-occupied countries across Europe.

Aged 6, Alfred Dubs was one of 669 Czech-resident children to arrive on the Kindertransport. After completing his education in England, Alfred entered politics and received a life peerage in 1994, becoming Lord Dubs.

At the height of the refugee crisis in Europe, Lord Dubs proposed an amendment to the Immigration Act 2016 under which the Government would offer unaccompanied refugee children safe passage to Britain. The Dubs Amendment scheme was accepted by the Government in 2016.
CASE STUDY

BA, a 16-year-old child, fled from Syria in early 2016, reaching Lesvos in Greece after surviving being stranded in the desert and a dangerous boat crossing. Although BA had an uncle and other relatives resident in the UK with refugee status, he had not been able to access his family reunification rights and had been in Greece on his own since April 2016. Safe Passage was able to partner Greek legal counsel with our lawyers to work on BA’s application to the Greek and UK authorities for family reunification with his uncle and relatives in the UK. Our lawyers provided Arabic language expertise to carry out witness statement interviews with BA’s family in the UK, and to review documentary evidence in Arabic, such as identity cards and civil family books which were required to prove the family link to the Home Office. BA’s application was accepted in December 2017, and BA was reunited with his uncle and relatives at the beginning of March 2018.

CASE STUDY

Our lawyers were able to assist Safe Passage on the case of two Eritrean children aged two and five who were alone in Saudi Arabia. The children’s mother had moved from Eritrea to Saudi Arabia over 20 years ago to work as a housekeeper but had passed away in December 2016 from cancer. Their father had moved to Libya for employment purposes and was reported as disappeared leaving the children orphaned, with no family in Saudi Arabia and with a precarious status as they were no longer under their mother or father’s working resident’s permit. Fortunately, the deceased mother’s former employer was able to arrange for temporary care of the children until she and their grandmother could find a legal route for them to come to the UK to be reunited with their grandmother. A collaboration between our lawyers in London and Jeddah enabled legal research and Arabic language support to help obtain witness statements from the deceased mother’s former employer and their temporary carer, following which the letter and bundle of supporting documents could be sent to the British visa office and embassy in Jeddah ahead of the interview to evaluate their application. The children’s application was accepted in February 2018, and the children arrived in the UK in March 2018, to be reunited with their grandmother.
Orange Sky

Orange Sky started as an idea in a Brisbane garage by two 20-year-old mates. Nic Marchesi and Lucas Patchett installed a couple of washing machines and dryers in the back of their old van, visiting parks in Brisbane to wash and dry clothes for free.
At the time of its launch, Nic (a cameraman) and Lucas (a university student) had previously volunteered at food vans and other outreach programmes. Keen to continue supporting their friends on the street, Nic and Lucas launched their van as a test project which soon took on a life of its own.

Within six months, a second van had started operations in Melbourne and, by their first birthday, the pair were ready to expand the service across Australia with the support of a number of businesses and philanthropic foundations.

The key to Orange Sky’s success was discovered unexpectedly during the van’s first week of operation. Having spent so much time focusing on the technical side of getting the laundry van to work, Nic and Lucas realised they had nothing planned to fill the time it would take to wash their first friend’s clothes – so they simply sat and talked.

By the end of the conversation, they realised the impact a simple chat could have on both them and their friend and knew that this, more than the laundry, was how Orange Sky could make a difference.

The Orange Sky approach remains the same to this day: during the hour it takes to wash and dry a load there is nothing else to do but sit on one of the chairs and have a genuine and non-judgemental conversation with Orange Sky volunteers. These weekly chats continue to have a significant impact on people who may otherwise feel isolated and disconnected from the wider community.

“Two normal everyday blokes who had a crazy idea.”

NIC MARCHESI

57,184
LOADS OF LAUNDRY WASHED

189
SHIFTS PER WEEK

5,699
SHOWERS TO DATE

8
TONNES OF LAUNDRY PER WEEK
Orange Sky’s impact is demonstrated by Harry who was one of the first people the Orange Sky team met back in 2014. Although Harry has since moved off the streets into accommodation, he continues to turn up at the van every Tuesday and Friday to grab a coffee and maintain that sense of connection.

As Suzanne, the Service Manager for Orange Sky Perth, says, “We all have our favourites... those friends with whom we have formed special relationships; the ones we know so much about and who are as interested in us as we are with them. They ask after us, they check in with us each week and they are happy to sit and just chill with us whether there is any washing to be done or not”.

Nic and Lucas continue to innovate in how the mobile vans can be used to help the community. In 2015, a van travelled 1,090 km to help communities affected by Cyclone Marcia, where power and water cuts left people struggling with the clean-up. Vans have since responded in the aftermath of the Great Ocean Road bushfires, flooding in the Adelaide Hills and Cyclone Debbie.

“I don’t want to be a homebody and I get out in my local area when I can. I like the community Orange Sky creates. They are there every week and I find out what’s going on when I visit. I read somewhere that a person only learns to communicate if they have someone to talk to. Who would I talk to if I didn’t have Orange Sky?”

BEN, FRIEND OF ORANGE SKY

1,427
ORANGE SKY VOLUNTEERS

27
VANS ACROSS AUSTRALIA
“Four years ago, we had a crazy idea to install a few washers and dryers in the back of an old van, and visit parks around Brisbane to wash and dry clothes for free. We could never have imagined that something as simple as providing free laundry could have grown into what it is today. The major impact of Orange Sky does not rely on washers spinning or dryers tumbling – it happens through the hours of conversation that take place on our six orange chairs, which are pulled out at every one of our shift locations. Each week, all over Australia, thousands of volunteers put other parts of their life aside for a few hours to positively connect with our friends on the street through genuine and non-judgemental conversation. Orange Sky volunteers have engaged in 100,000 hours of conversations to date, helping to challenge the perception of homelessness and positively connect communities all around Australia and eventually the world.”

NIC & LUCAS

In 2016, a suggestion from community partners saw the first Orange Sky Showers van launch, enabling laundry visitors to make use of mobile shower units before sitting down to chat with friends and wait for their laundry to dry.

ASHURST AND ORANGE SKY

Since we first started working with Orange Sky in 2014, lawyers from every Ashurst office in Australia have been called on to provide the team with a broad range of legal assistance including corporate, tax, employment and IP advice.

As Orange Sky’s ambitions continued to grow, so too did the pro bono team assigned to it. Our Australian colleagues have been joined by lawyers from Ashurst offices in several countries to help Nic and Lucas plan when and how to expand into new locations. We are helping to establish Orange Sky in New Zealand and the US, and have also advised Nic and Lucas on the steps required to establish their scheme elsewhere (watch this space).

We are grateful that Nic and Lucas have allowed our lawyers to join Orange Sky’s journey as it has grown from a local, to national, to global pro bono client. This partnership has taken us beyond merely providing legal help and has helped to change many of our perceptions about the realities of life for people experiencing homelessness, inspiring our lawyers to increase their commitment to projects through which they can assist homeless friends.

2014
Orange Sky launches in Brisbane with 1 van

2015
Orange Sky begins to expand across Australia

2016
Nic and Lucas are announced as Young Australians of the Year

2017
Orange Sky starts to consider expanding beyond Australia

2018
A$1 million grant winner of the Google Impact Challenge

2019
Orange Sky on track to hit 1,000,000 kg of washing
Supporting our homeless friends

In Europe and Australia:

Glasgow

**Corporate Responsibility**
We support Lodging House Mission, a "drop-in" centre for anybody who is homeless.

London

**Corporate Responsibility**
We support Whitechapel Mission, a charity that supports homeless and vulnerable people from the local community in London.

Munich

**Corporate Responsibility**
We support HORIZONT e.V., a charity that supports homeless children and their mothers in Munich.

Canberra

**Corporate Responsibility**
In April each year, our Canberra office runs a collection drive (for donations and feminine hygiene products) in support of Share the Dignity, an Australian women’s charity helping women experiencing domestic violence, homelessness or poverty.

We participate in the Vinnies CEO Sleepout, which supports the many Australians who are experiencing homelessness.

**Pro Bono**
We provide ongoing corporate governance assistance and advice to Common Ground, a social enterprise that provides people who are homeless, impoverished, destitute or have a low income with safe and secure accommodation at a rent that is affordable, and that facilitates the provision of support services to those people.

Paris

**Corporate Responsibility**
We support Resto du Coeur, a charity which supports homeless people across France.

**Pro Bono**
We attend a drop-in clinic with Emmaus Solidarité, which focuses on assisting homeless individuals who access its emergency shelter centre, and advise on issues such as housing, asylum, social security and employment.
**Brisbane**

**Corporate Responsibility**
We participate in the annual Street Soccer Tournament supporting the LawRight Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic and The Big Issue, which support people experiencing homelessness and related forms of marginalisation.

**Pro Bono**
We work with the LawRight Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic (HPLC) to assist individuals experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness with civil legal issues. Our volunteers have had particular success in helping LawRight to negotiate the waiver of debts and removal of fines alleged to have been owed by particularly vulnerable clients to a range of creditors.

**Sydney**

**Pro Bono**
We second a lawyer to the Exodus Legal Clinic every week. Our secondee lawyer provides a frontline legal service for individuals living below the poverty line and facing marginalisation. Legal support generally covers issues such as tenancy, debt, basic civil law, discrimination and referrals for criminal and family law matters.

We second a lawyer to Lou’s Place every week. Lou’s Place is a women’s refuge which provides a safe multifaceted service for women in crisis. Our secondee lawyer provides legal support on various matters including debt, tenancy and general civil legal matters.

**Perth**

**Pro Bono**
We second a lawyer to the Street Law Community Legal Centre, which provides free legal advice clinics at community outreach centres as well as legal casework support. Our secondee advises on debt, tenancy, discrimination, police complaints and fine matters.

**Melbourne**

**Pro Bono**
We second a lawyer full time to Youthlaw, on a rolling six-month basis. Youthlaw provides free legal advice to young people under 25 years who are experiencing homelessness, disadvantage, mental illness and/or domestic violence. Our secondee participates in a range of case law and policy work such as advice and assistance with civil matters and commercial disputes, providing legal training to youth workers and policy drafting.

We have developed a special circumstances advocacy programme where our lawyers represent Youthlaw clients with infringement matters in the special circumstances list of the Melbourne Magistrates’ Court. The “special circumstances list” is an informal list dealing with infringement for people suffering from mental illness, family violence, homelessness, intellectual disability and/or substance addiction.
INCREASING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND REDUCING ISOLATION

Create

Create is a charity that empowers lives through the creative arts, working with communities facing disadvantage and marginalisation to deliver inspiring, sustainable arts programmes that encourage everybody to achieve their potential. Our London office delivers a multi-artform project for people aged 65 years and over with dementia or mental health needs. The project aims to give older people the opportunity to participate and explore their creativity in high quality creative arts workshops and to develop supportive relationships with their peers and our volunteers, helping to reduce loneliness and social isolation.

Glasgow’s Golden Generation

Glasgow’s Golden Generation was founded in 1948 to help tackle loneliness among older people. In 1949, the charity’s annual report noted the existence of 14 clubs and 24 older people receiving social visits through befriending projects. By 2017, this number had increased to 100 clubs, 400 older people receiving befriending visits and 3 day centres across Glasgow. Our Glasgow office has selected Glasgow’s Golden Generation as its Charity of the Year and sent volunteers to help refresh and renovate one of the day centres.

City Gateway

For 15 years, City Gateway has offered learning and development programmes for women in east London to help women from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds gain independence, confidence and skills in a supportive community environment. Participants aged 19 to 81 have completed a range of vocational training courses and other activities. Female volunteers from our London office participate in the Literacy Lunch scheme, which is designed to help women learn and practise their English language skills as well as gain confidence in communicating with others.
Whitelion

For nearly 20 years Whitelion has supported thousands of young Australians to reach their full potential, collaborating with local communities, services, businesses and government to find solutions to the issues facing at-risk young people. The Annual “Bail Out” is Whitelion’s national fundraising and awareness campaign providing a unique opportunity to step into the shoes of a young person who has become disconnected from their community due to abuse and neglect, drug addiction and/or poverty. As part of Bail Out, lawyers from our Sydney and Melbourne offices have raised money for the charity while experiencing the reality of life in a prison cell.

We also speak at Whitelion events to raise awareness of children in the justice system and the systemic issues that impact rising incarceration rates.

“Zanzaunlibro” project

The “Zanzaunlibro” project organised by the Cariplo Foundation and Milan central library supports the literacy programme of San Vittore Prison through a coordinated donation of books to enrich the prison’s seven libraries. Our Milan office collects and donates books to the prison library through the project, which also helps to raise awareness of prisoners who choose to spend their time in prison learning and furthering their literacy and academic skills.

ASHURST SOLIDARIO PRIZE

The Ashurst Solidario prize is an initiative operated by our Madrid office which sees the office raise funds throughout the year which it then donates to support not-for-profit organisations, for example, El Instituto Español de Misiones Extranjeras, a home for older people living alone in the Dete area, northwest Zimbabwe. They also provide food, clothing and medical assistance.

ASHURST SOLIDARIO PRIZE

Part of the Ashurst Solidario prize was also awarded to support Nuestra Señora de los Desamparados, a school that works with children whose mothers are in prison.

SHINE for Kids

Our Sydney office has supported SHINE for Kids, a charity that assists children whose parents are involved in the criminal justice system.

“The funds raised at your event will help us provide opportunities for children of prisoners to feel supported, have fun and enjoy spending time with their mum or dad in prison. We are working hard to make sure that kids can be kids, wherever they are and whatever their family is going through.”

SHINE FOR KIDS
Financial exclusion

Around two million Australians are reported to be suffering severe or high financial stress and over three million Australians are excluded from obtaining appropriate financial products and services. Good Shepherd Microfinance, a not-for-profit affordable finance provider, is spearheading the Financial Inclusion Action Plan (FIAP) programme, which has been designed as a collaborative cross-sector national programme involving major banks, commercial partners and other businesses. The programme is designed to help participating organisations to develop their own FIAPs with measurable actions to enable financial inclusion and resilience within their own sphere of influence, with a particular focus on women. Research by the programme partners estimates that an increase in financial inclusion could increase household wealth by A$50.9 billion, with an associated increase in Gross Domestic Product of A$19.7 billion, and allow for government cost savings of an estimated A$2.6 billion. We are one of only two law firms that have developed a FIAP, and we have also acted on a pro bono basis as the independent governance and risk management adviser for the programme participants.

“Financial exclusion places people and their families at risk of financial hardships. This can lead to poverty, vulnerability to predatory lending practices and poor social, emotional and health outcomes.”

GOOD SHEPHERD MICROFINANCE
Food insecurity

Food insecurity is on the increase in many communities. According to the UK Food Standards Agency, 1 in 4 low income households in the UK struggle to eat regularly or healthily because of a lack of money. In Australia, 1 in 6 Australians have experienced food insecurity at least once in the past year.

- In Glasgow, we support Lodging House Mission, a charity dedicated to providing care and support to homeless, vulnerable and socially excluded people. Our Glasgow colleagues organise regular collection drives for tinned and dried foods and other urgently needed items.

- In Milan, we support Fondazione Opera San Francesco per i Poveri Onlus, a charity that provides clothing and food to people experiencing disadvantage, particularly during winter months. Colleagues in Milan also support Parrocchia San Carlo alla Ca’ Granda, a Catholic community headed by Jacques Du Pluy, a missionary priest active in collecting clothes and food to deliver once a month to families experiencing disadvantage in the Milan area.

- In Brisbane, we support Foodbank Queensland, Queensland’s largest food relief organisation which provides over 11,000,000 kg of food to more than 300 charities. Donations from the public are an important part of meeting public need and supplement the food donated by farms, manufacturers and retailers.

- In Canberra, we run a collection drive to help OzHarvest fill its pantry with non-perishable items for people in need.

- Part of the Ashust Solidario prize in Madrid was awarded to Fundación Sant Egido, to support its work with people experiencing poverty in Madrid during the Christmas season.
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