



Bicycles For Humanity

www.bicyclesforhumanity.com

Bicycles For Humanity, Melbourne – Overview 2011

Bicycles For Humanity, Melbourne was incorporated in late 2008 as the first Australian chapter of this grass root global organisation. It's focus is on the alleviation of poverty in the developing world by providing sustainable transport. Our core activities are collection of unused bicycles and raising of funds to ship them to our partner organisations in Africa and the Pacific. Since incorporation we have sent four 40ft shipping containers of bikes and accessories to Africa where they have been implemented as Bicycle Empowerment Centres by our partner, Bicycle Empowerment Network Namibia, in both Namibia and Zambia. These projects have been extremely successful with the containers being implemented as sustainable small businesses and many of the bikes being distributed to health care workers and orphans of the HIV/AIDS crisis.

The container currently being packed is earmarked for Botswana and we are also developing a project in Fiji.

Board

The core of B4H Melbourne is the three board members – Matt McCullough (President), Ylva Carasone (Secretary) and Andy Gild (Financial Officer). There is a large pool of volunteers who help out during packing the shipping containers.

Funding

Current sources of funding are through individual fund raising primarily through everydayhero.com. We have had some sponsorship through Knog over the first years of operation.

Partners

We currently partner with Bicycle Super Store who receive the bike donations from the public on our behalf. We then collect these bikes and take them to our storage site.

Gibson Freight gives us pro-bono sponsorship through collection and delivery of shipping containers.

Minter Ellison provide pro bono legal advice.

Visibility and PR

B4h Melbourne has appeared on the ABC and across numerous print media, most recently The Age and The Wheeler magazine. As our visibility continues to grow and the volume of bikes increases we need to match this with both time to manage the project and funds to send the bikes to our partner organisations. Our initial intent was to send one container a year – in 2011 we will be sending three.

Challenges

Our scarcest resource is time. As our visibility increases and the volume of donated bikes expands we have to match this with both funds to ship them and time to manage them. Ongoing challenges also exist regarding storage sites for the bikes before being packed.

While the central ethos of B4H worldwide is grass roots and volunteer run we currently find our expansion stretching the resources that a volunteer organisation can sustain. We need to reconsider this stance and plan for further growth. To this point our development has been somewhat reactive due to lack of resources - both time and finances.

While the organisation functions extremely effectively, and is one of the most successful B4H chapters globally, we need to establish a structure and systematic approach to our further development.

Questions

There are currently three chapters across Australia. How do we best establish a national wide body with the various chapters included? How can this be structured to allow all the chapters to leverage off the efforts of the others whilst also retaining strong autonomy?

How do we continue to expand whilst remaining a totally volunteer run organisation? Is this realistic?

How do we best approach large corporate sponsors for funding?

How can we best structure the organisation for future expansion?

Which are the most vital systems to have in place for this expansion?

Contact

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