Final grant report: Waterloo Redevelopment Capacity Building - Whiteboard Animation Project

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<th>Grant recipient</th>
<th>Inner Sydney Voice</th>
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<td>Project manager</td>
<td>Thomas Chailloux</td>
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<td>Position</td>
<td>Capacity Building Project Worker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Law and Justice Foundation awarded amount</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
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<td>6 September 2018</td>
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1. Description of the project

Describe the project in just enough detail so that anyone can understand it. What was the aim of the project, who was the intended audience and what strategies did you implement to achieve the aim?

The aim of this project was to provide independent information to the whole of the Waterloo community and related stakeholders, and to encourage the community to have its voice heard as part of the statutory planning process with an engaging, original and innovative medium.

The main target group was the Waterloo public housing residents. High needs of public housing residents are well documented. This is mainly due to the allocation policy of social housing in NSW, which focuses on people with high needs, such as former victims of domestic violence, people with mental health issues, people with drug and alcohol abuse issues, elderly and disadvantaged people, isolated people, etc. A high proportion of social housing tenants in Waterloo also identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders. We expected this particular project to be useful and positive for all public housing tenants, but especially for people with limited English literacy, which includes CALD communities. Waterloo Estate has an important Russian and Chinese community, along with other CALD communities. In planning the project we focused on Waterloo public housing tenants, however, we did expect the wider community, including local community organisations and private residents to benefit from engaging and independent information about the redevelopment process.

The strategy included a co-design phase to ensure a sense of ownership, increased perception of independent information and reduced perception of the animation being patronising. We also planned to test a first version of the animation with tenant representatives. We planned to distribute the video through various events, as well as outreach sessions, and social media platforms. This diverse strategy using many different mediums of communication should assist in reaching target groups and making sure the desired outcomes would be delivered.
2. The project – what happened?

How did the project come about?
We looked at strategies to reach the part of the Waterloo community that hadn't engaged in the urban planning process to date. This included particularly CALD communities, and harder to reach residents who cannot or do not wish to engage through community meetings and forums. In order to produce independent information and capacity building material that is innovative and allows to reach out, we thought about using an original communication tool such as a whiteboard animation. We wanted to produce and use this animation to inform the community of the upcoming statutory planning exhibitions and opportunities for engagement through the Waterloo Master Planning consultation process.

Briefly set out the project stages and what happened in each stage.

1. Discussion of concept and development of script: In stage one of the project, Inner Sydney Voice’s Capacity Building Project Worker drafted a script around the Waterloo Redevelopment Master Planning process. The concept of the whiteboard animation was also discussed with tenants through the Waterloo Redevelopment Group (WRG) and partner community organisations (Groundswell members including Shelter NSW, Tenants Union NSW, Redfern Legal Centre, amongst others) so partners would be aware of the concept and could provide feedback. The draft script was circulated amongst the WRG and other partners to gather feedback and test it. It was also discussed during a specific session with tenants only. It was revised and edited six times until all stakeholders agreed that the language was appropriate, as neutral as possible, and inclusive of all points of view about the Waterloo Redevelopment. This was especially important given the controversial nature of the Waterloo Redevelopment. Final amendments were made before the illustrator could start working on the storyboarding stage.

2. Storyboarding and further discussion with stakeholders: The second stage of the project involved the development of storyboards by the artist, Lew Keilar. The WRG tenants-only sub-committee discussed drawings and the adaptation of script to fit the drawings, as well as the tone and style of the voice-over, during a specific session. A second storyboarding session was conducted with the artist, community workers and representatives of CALD communities (Chinese and Russian bilingual educators). This ensured that all storyboards were engaging and appropriate before the animation stage started.

3. Production of the Whiteboard Animation: The Whiteboard Animation was produced by Lew Keilar in his studio. He stayed in close contact with key community workers in charge of the project throughout production to ensure the animation would respond to the needs of the community and be successful.

4. Launch of the Waterloo Redevelopment Whiteboard Animation: Initially, the animation was going to be screened exclusively with the WRG members to thank them for their involvement and gather advice about the launch. However, a NSW Government announcement was made about Options for the Waterloo Master Plan, and it was decided to launch the animation online so it would reach people and explain to them how to participate and give feedback about the options as early as possible.
Having the animation ready by this stage was extremely useful as it allowed community organisations to be proactive and react with independent information about the statutory process as soon as announcements about the next phase of community consultation was made. We also benefited from the momentum. The animation was launched online on several different social media pages, on websites, via email. It was subsequently screened at August WRG and at several community events (Chinese Concert and Performance about Waterloo Redevelopment).

**If grant materials were produced as part of the project:**

**How were they distributed?**

The animation was distributed in a variety of ways to reach as many people as possible in the Waterloo community. This was particularly important due to the low levels of internet access in the area (very low compared to surrounding area according to ABS Census data).

Video was distributed on social media pages (Counterpoint and Inner Sydney Voice Facebook pages, including one boosted post), websites (Inner Sydney Voice), via email newsletter (Waterloo Redevelopment Group), but also at screenings of residents and tenants. Future screenings are also planned at community events. It was reported to us that many local organisations used the video internally ("The whole office watched the animation" report from local MP office via email).

**If applicable, at the time of this report, what has been the extent of use of your publication?**

749 views total on YouTube (including counts on Chinese and Russian captions version), 2171 people reached via our Facebook page and 64 clicks, through Counterpoint Community Services post there was 2500 people reached, 135 clicks and 54 interactions including 10 shares.

**Now that the project has concluded, how did the implementation and/or the outcome differ from what was originally intended? Did anything surprise you? Were there any unintended outcomes?**

The launch strategy had to differ from the initial strategy as we had to react to the long-awaited release of *Options for the Waterloo Redevelopment*. We were also unfortunately unable to involve young local Aboriginal artists in the project. They initially showed interest but we were unable to hear back from them.

The project otherwise followed the implementation strategy described in the project outline and achieved all of the desired outcomes (increasing awareness of redevelopment and planning process, decrease anxiety and stress, increase understanding of planning process and willingness to participate in community engagement and statutory planning process).

**3. Evaluation**

**What questions did you ask to evaluate whether you had achieved your aim?**

The main aim of the project was to increase awareness and understanding of the Waterloo Redevelopment Master Planning process, as well as willingness to participate in community engagement and for the community to have its say, by providing independent information.
To find out whether these objectives had been achieved, the evaluation process collected data through questions about:

- How viewers found out about the Whiteboard animation (online, with a friend, at a screening, by attending WRG, or by participating in the storyboarding and script writing);
- People’s perception and evaluation of the animation (whether people found the animation engaging and pleasant to watch, adapted and responsive to the needs of the community, and whether the format and script was suitable);
- Previous knowledge of the Waterloo Master Planning process;
- Current knowledge of the Waterloo Master Planning process to evaluate the impact of animation;
- Willingness to participate in both government led community engagement around Waterloo Redevelopment and other activities and how the animation influenced it;
- Participation in Waterloo Master Planning engagement.

We also collected personal information such as age, residency status and other characteristics (Aboriginality, CALD communities) to be able to evaluate whether we had reached all target groups of the project.

**What data did you gather to answer your questions?**

We collected data about online distribution and promotion of the Whiteboard Animation, such as reach statistics for Facebook page, YouTube view counts, and LinkedIn reach and view counts. The video was shared a significant amount of time and generated meaningful, deep interaction with followers.

We also collected data from community partners about how many workers used the animation with community groups and individuals, and how many workers had seen the animation. We distributed a feedback and evaluation form via email and at different NAB meetings and events, including an event targeted at the Chinese CALD community.

The data collected from the evaluation and intake questionnaires is ongoing, and will provide more accurate information about the effectiveness of the whiteboard animation over the next six months. Despite this, preliminary data has indicated that most people were extremely satisfied with the animation. The animation received scores between 4 and 5 for a 1 to 5 scale. The only negative feedback received was that it may oversimplify the planning process. Creating something simple and accessible was our objective so this feedback is not overly worrying.

**Did you achieve your aim? What did you find out?**

Yes. The information collected throughout the evaluation process indicated that the whiteboard animation was positively received and did increase understanding of the Waterloo Master Planning process.
4. Conclusion and recommendations

What is your conclusion?

The project has been efficient in reaching its objective. We had a reach way above average for a post on our social media pages and managed to get interest from many community members who do not usually interact with our page. The project has also sparked interest in community and received excellent feedback, including from agencies who could have been potentially adverse to it.

The Whiteboard animation project aimed at producing a high quality animation in collaboration with local residents, explaining the planning process in a simple and engaging way. The project was rather lengthy and time consuming, in particular because bringing a diversity of stakeholders around, including tenants with conflicting opinions and agencies, was difficult. In the end, community workers from ISV and CCS decided to lead the project and involve the tenants only committee of WRG so this would be a project representing tenants and their views.

The Whiteboard animation received excellent feedback, including from Waterloo Estate Tenant representatives: “Thanks for sharing! That turned out really well”, local community workers “The video is fantastic! So great and easy to view”, but also government agencies, including agencies which may have been initially worried about “official looking” communication outside of their control, such as Urban Growth NSW, who is developing the Master Plan of the development. Feedback included comments such as “We are all so impressed with how simply it explains a complex process” and “It looks great! Well done to everyone involved.” The only cause of concern came from one participant who said; “I’m not sure that presenting info in this way is not a form of simplification but it is engaging”.

This overwhelmingly positive feedback shows the value of community driven projects, including in creating communication material. With community development work, discussion and capacity building, it is possible to create material that integrates views from all community members but still presents information in a neutral and simple way to inform the rest of tenants.

What are your recommendations for improvements both for the intended audience of your project, and for the strategy you used to achieve your aim? What would you do differently next time?

The distribution strategy could have been more comprehensive and build up some attention around the animation before releasing it. We should have had a better designed and executed distribution strategy. the reasons for this area for improvement was that the animation had to be launched ahead of the Options Testing phase conducted by government about Waterloo Redevelopment. Because the Ministerial announcement was done without notice for community organisations, we had to react and use the momentum to launch the video. Another improvement that could have been done would have been to create specific launch events, especially for Chinese and Russian captions version, had we had the time.

Another issue was that once the product was released, local community organisations were suddenly competing to bring traffic to their pages. This resulted in separate posts on social media, where
potentially more reach could have been achieved through a more comprehensive strategy. The project was overall successful however, with only small improvements identified. A longer process with more meetings between the illustrator and residents could also have been beneficial, but would also have increased the cost and complexity without clear potential improvements.

Finally, one last recommendation for similar projects would be to work in collaboration with local Aboriginal artists to create a project they could also identify with. While we were not successful in spite of meeting with two local young Aboriginal artists to get them to work with us on the project, we were informed by a local Aboriginal Liaison Officer on the project, and produced a final product that is sensitive and culturally appropriate.