

AGORA
THINKTANK

*Building inclusive communities is
not somebody's job, it's everybody's...*

October 2006

Presentation outline

- What is the Agora Think Tank
- Who is involved in Agora
- How did Agora originate
- How is Agora structured
- What questions is Agora trying to answer
- How will Agora deliver this answer
- An Agora observation



What is the Agora Think Tank

- It's a collaboration between not-for-profit, business and government sectors
- It's looking to address issues of disadvantage in new and different ways
- the initial lens is
'economic participation of socially–disadvantaged young people and their families through workforce engagement'

Who is involved in Agora

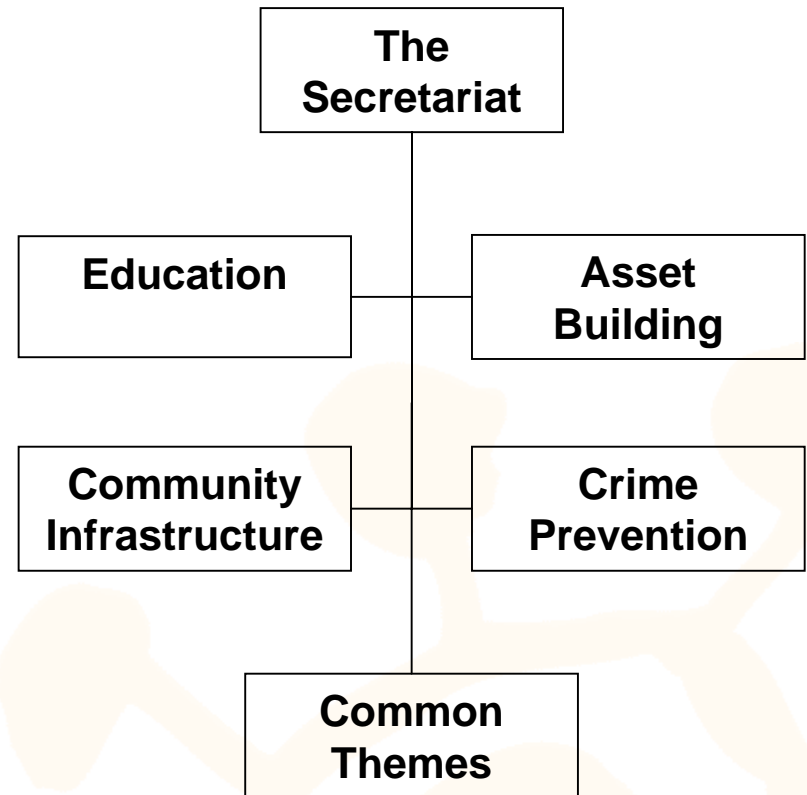
- Four funding partners
 - Melbourne City Mission, Helen Macpherson Smith Trust ,
The Department for Victorian Communities, Ernst &
Young
- One facilitator
 - The Nous Group
- Over 50 active Agora members organisations
- A selection of individual researchers

How did Agora originate

- In 2004, Melbourne Citymission hosted a cross-sector conference as part of its 150th anniversary
- The conference vision was
*building inclusive communities is not somebody's job...
it's everybody's*
- The Conference was the first step in a journey
- In 2005, the Victorian Government's social policy action plan, A Fairer Victoria, formally launched the Agora Think Tank

How is Agora Structured

- A Secretariat coordinates the overall activity
- Four working groups
 - Deliver content specific research and forums
- One working group
 - Brings together the common themes of the four content specific working groups
- All groups contain community, business and government participants



What questions is Agora trying to answer

1. What are the learnings-to-date about new ways of working?
2. Whether and how innovations are emerging?
3. How a more preventive approach to social problems could be instituted?
4. Which successful approaches could be scaled up and how?
5. What are the pre-conditions for constructive government, business and not-for-profits sectors working together?

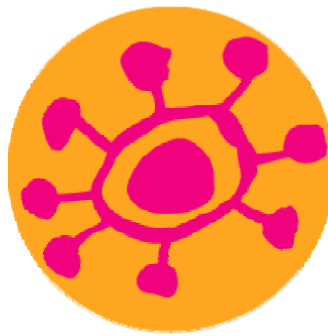
In answering these questions an analysis will be made of the aspirations, capabilities, expectations and challenges for cross-sector partnerships

How will Agora deliver this answer

- Case-study research
 - Its happening now
- An active research collaboration
 - It too is happening now
- Public forums
 - October 2006
- The 2nd Agora conference
 - 3 phases from February 2007 to April 2007

An Agora observation

- A traditional cross-sector partnership?
 - not-for-profits are the delivery system
 - government and business provide the advice and money
- An modern cross-sector partnership?
 - business provides the delivery mechanism
 - not-for-profits provide cultural awareness and assistance to special need clients which appropriately modifies the business system to the needs of a distinctive client group
 - government leverages its superior information capability.



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www.agorathinktank.org