



The Partnership:

The name of partnership and a brief description of its work and key achievements

A SMART Partnership between FIA and ASI supporting professional education in the not for profit sector

Fundraising Institute Australia's (FIA) partnership with Advanced Solutions International Asia Pacific (ASI) began more than five years ago based on commercial benefits. The pivotal change came through a frank meeting between FIA and ASI in early 2005 when both partners expressed frustration with the partnership based on commercial outcomes. From that seminal discussion, which could not have happened without years of working together and developing trust in each other's commitment to the relationship, the partnership was refocussed, on the one hand on FIA's core products, i.e. professional education programs for fundraisers, and on the other on ASI's drive to support the sector in which it works.

The FIA-ASI partnership is now values based for community good. It is firmly secured in FIA's objectives to assist professional fundraising by fundraisers and charitable organisations and ASI's commitment to supporting professional education in the not for profit sector.

In providing scholarships, ASI has enhanced the role of FIA in providing professional education in the not for profit sector. In 2006 ASI provided 25 scholarships for professional education in the not for profit sector worth \$21,000. In 2007, ASI will be providing \$25,000 in scholarship funds.

In 2007, ASI will sign a three-year agreement further enhancing the SMART partnership to the benefit of FIA's members and supporters, approximately 3,000 professional fundraisers in 1,500 Australian not for profit organisations.

Selection criteria:

1. Genuine benefit to each Partner

What commenced as a simple sponsorship agreement, whereby ASI provided software product to assist FIA to manage their membership database in return for promotion as a software provider for the not for profit sector, has transformed into a SMART partnership supporting professional education in the not for profit sector.

Prior to the refocussing of the partnership, ASI's concern was in its commercial position in the not for profit sector. FIA's challenge was to obtain appropriate software to manage its database and communicate with its members.

As the peak national body for fundraisers, FIA's commitment is to assist professional fundraisers and charitable organisations:

- individually, to perform better in their professional fundraising efforts;
- organisationally, to represent their interests to society, including government authorities and the community at large; and
- to establish standards, including ethical practice in fundraising, for the non profit sector.

Sensing a change in FIA's direction to further develop professional development and training¹ and to focus on public education and advocacy on the value of the not for profit sector in all Australian communities, ASI rebranded its company as the SMART Company. It developed a SMART scholarship fund to provide educational development for those working in the not for profit sector. While this fund provides for scholarships across a broader training field than offered by FIA (for example ASI also supports scholarships for those in the not for profit sector to attend courses run by the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Centre on Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies at Queensland University of Technology) fundraisers have consistently selected FIA programs for ASI scholarship benefits.

Both FIA and ASI have benefited from the partnership. More importantly, however, those working in the not for profit sector have benefited most significantly.

ASI's benefits are the enhanced profile of the company as one which is committed to improving the standard of professional education of those working in the not for profit sector, thereby enhancing the professionalism and integrity of their work for community good. ASI's staff have become personally involved in the SMART program and have taken a real interest in the work of the not for profit sector, an area which was previously largely unknown to them.

¹ See brochures included with this nomination for FIA's programs in Skills, Madison Down Under (a 4-day residential training program), Fundraising Leadership Program (a 4-day residential program run in association with Melbourne Business School) and FIA's Diploma of Fundraising Management (the only higher education qualification available in fundraising, delivered by distance education).

ASI began the partnership with commercial drivers and has now secured the partnership with a commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility, giving back to the not for profit sector to improve its education and sustainability.

FIA's benefits have been to its reputation. FIA has benefited from ASI's support which has enabled FIA to communicate better with its members and to develop a more engaging website with more information, including research, available to members, the public and government officials.

Raising FIA's profile has provided direct benefits for professional fundraising. Through such a heightened profile, FIA has developed further partnerships with peak industry bodies, nationally with the Australian Council for International Development and National Roundtable for Nonprofit Organisations, internationally with the Fundraising Institute of New Zealand, Association of Fundraising Professionals (US) and the International Summit of Fundraising Organisations, a world-wide collective of organisations from more than 25 countries which, in late 2006, developed the first International Statement of Ethical Principles in Fundraising.

FIA has further benefited from ASI's support of its professional development programs. FIA's members and others working in the nonprofit sector have attended FIA's key educational programs in increasing numbers. Such interest has enabled FIA to embark on a review of the national curriculum of skills, to be followed by a review of the course work for the Diploma of Fundraising Management.

FIA staff have relished the raised national profile and reputation of the programs they manage and deliver. They appreciate the increasing enrolments, the attendees satisfaction and the enhanced role played by their organisation in developing the not for profit sector. FIA staff have begun to attend FIA programs, seeing their roles as both administrators and professionals in the sector.

2. How the Partnership generates positive and long-term outcomes for the community

Individuals and organisations in the not for profit sector are mission driven. Their professional development has a direct and sustained impact on the Australian community.

FIA's work with the not for profit sector focuses on fundraising activities. The most important issues for the community with regard to fundraising are trust and confidence in the not for profit organisation that it carries out its work in an ethical manner. Governments also, through legislation and regulation, act to ensure public trust and confidence in charitable fundraising is maintained. In this regard governments and the peak industry body may be seen to be working together for the common good.

Fundraising is the one common activity of not for profit organisations. According to the Federal Government's report *Giving Australia*² Australians give \$11 billion per annum to not for profit organisations to enable them to achieve their charitable missions. Any activity, therefore, that improves the professional education of those working in not for profit organisations will provide significant and long-term outcomes for the community.

Research has shown that the public has great confidence and trust in the not for profit sector.³ Such beliefs, however, should not be taken for granted. If one not for profit organisation shakes, or worse destroys, such confidence, all not for profits will suffer and, consequently, the community will suffer a lack of services and facilities provided by not for profit organisations.

The FIA-ASI SMART partnership has created positive outcomes in making professional education more accessible to those working in the not for profit sector, the majority of whom work in small enterprises, some in medium enterprises and even fewer in larger enterprises. This SME characteristic of the not for profit sector, with 600,000 paid employees supported by approximately 6,000,000 volunteers, is important in realising that most employees are unable to access professional education because of the impost such education would have on their small organisation, both in the financial commitment and in the time requirement for the training to be undertaken. ASI has found that the link with FIA's professional development role has better positioned its software in the marketplace.

Professional education has an immediate outcome for an individual and for the organisation which employs the individual. In time, however, with mentoring which occurs in the not for profit sector (and is encouraged through a formal program run by FIA) and with individual employment moves between one organisation and another, the impact of professional education multiplies well beyond the first recipient of the scholarship to the broader not for profit workforce.

3. Variety of contributions made by each Partner

What do a software provider and a peak membership body have in common?

In the beginning, both FIA and ASI saw the partnership in pragmatic, operational terms. Had the relationship continued along these lines, it would have been financially beneficial to both the organisation and the business but limited in its impact outside the corporate borders.

² Giving Australia, Research on Philanthropy in Australia, Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services, Canberra, October 2005. This project was led by The Australian Council of Social Services, with QUT's Centre of Philanthropy and Non-profit Studies, University of Technology, Sydney's Centre for Australian Community Organisations and Management, Fundraising Institute Australia Ltd, Roy Morgan Research PL and McNair Ingenuity Research PL.

³ World Economic Forum (2003) *Trust in Leaders survey*, 2003 (www.weforum.org)
World Economic Forum (2004) *Global Survey on Trust: Update 2004* (www.weforum.org)

While the FIA-ASI SMART partnership has required cash injections to fund FIA's software requirements and ASI's SMART scholarships, the contributions of the organisation and business have extended beyond financial parameters.

FIA's contributions can be summarised as national curriculum development and marketing initiatives.

Because FIA's professional development programs (summarised in the attached Professional Development Pathway) have a newly gained national profile heightened through the SMART partnership, FIA has commissioned a review of the programs so that a national curriculum can be rolled out beginning in 2008. FIA has also commenced a review of the interrelationship between its professional education programs and is embarking on an audit that will recognise prior learning (RPL) so that each component of FIA's professional development may lead as a recognised qualification to the higher programs (i.e. undertaking skills could provide for some of the units of the Diploma).

FIA has taken the opportunity of the SMART scholarship program to improve its marketing of and public recognition for FIA professional education of professional fundraisers. Promotion of the core professional education programs – Skills, Madison, Fundraising Leadership Program and Diploma – has been expanded to include brochures, web promotion and cross-sector promotion.

ASI contributions have been more profound, shifting the business' focus from the bottom line to a community benefit perspective. Such organisational change has been driven from the top through the office of the Managing Director. ASI staff have developed great pride in their company's commitment to improving professional education in the not for profit sector and such impact has had a positive benefit to ASI's performance outcomes over the past two years. The ASI top team has recently embarked on management training to gear their professional skills to those of the scholarship recipients.

As might be expected, ASI has also contributed software product to FIA to enable FIA to deliver copy associated with the SMART program and to communicate more effectively with its 1,500 members and 1,500 supporters, all of whom work in the not for profit sector. More importantly ASI has created a new vehicle to stimulate professional education in the not for profit sector and with the Managing Director's encouragement the company has wholeheartedly embraced its engagement with the sector.