

The Sustainable Schools Network Limited

Annual Report



February 2020

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Acknowledgements

The Sustainable Schools Network Limited acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional custodians of the land and acknowledge and pay respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

As a volunteer-based organisation, the SSN's founding year would not have occurred without the generous donation of time and expertise of many community members. We recognise and commend all volunteers, members and organisations who have supported the SSN in 2019.

Each section of this *Annual Report* has been contributed by the volunteers who are working within the network. Special thanks to all who contributed to the development of this year's *Annual Report* and who have driven the actions of the SSN in our founding year.

Finally, we acknowledge the youth and planet which we serve.

SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS NETWORK LIMITED

ANNUAL REPORT, 2019



Sustainable
SCHOOLS NETWORK

Building partnerships for sustainability education

The Sustainable Schools Network Limited is a group of responsible citizens from multi-disciplines coming together on the basis of a shared interest in education and sustainability. Collectively, we see the need to CONNECT schools, teachers, students and communities to build partnerships for sustainable education. We intend to EDUCATE school communities to ensure the Australian Curriculum Cross-Curriculum Priority - Sustainability - is delivered in meaningful ways. And we IMAGINE by showcasing local leaders and inspiring change through a future-focused approach to ensuring sustainability becomes an accessible mainstream practice.

Our mission is to empower passionate, innovative & collaborative educational networks regarding sustainability. Our vision is to educate and connect school communities to imagine a sustainable future.

The first *Annual Report* for the SSN will comment on the *SSN Strategic Plan* written in mid-2019; provide Chairperson, Chief Executive Officer and Treasurer reports, and outline 2020 plans. It is with great anticipation that the Board looks forward to the 2020 Sustainability Symposium after 12 months of planning and building partnerships for sustainability education.

The Sustainable Schools Network Limited *Annual Report* can be accessed online at: www.ssn.org.au or via email request: info@ssn.org.au

2019 – 2021 STRATEGIC PLAN

KATIE NORMAN

From April – June 2019, four Sustainable Schools Network Limited Directors worked to develop the SSN’s first strategic plan. Aiming to capture the SSN vision for the first three years of operations, the *SSN Strategic Plan* describes foundation concepts, target audiences, mechanisms for action, intended impacts and funding opportunities. After implementing this plan for over six months it is worthwhile evaluating the relevance and applicability of SSN strategies to ensure resources are efficiently managed, we remain goal orientated and focused on our mission and vision.

A summary of the *SSN Strategic Plan* can be found in the ‘Theory of Change’ infographic presented below.

THEORY OF CHANGE

The world faces unprecedented environmental, social and economic challenges and opportunities. Education systems provide a unique context to engage with future change makers and those our changing world will impact most.



EDUCATE



CONNECT



IMAGINE

The SSN are taking action by educating and connecting whole school communities and imagining a sustainable future.



Regional Summit



Annual Sustainability Symposium



School Sustainability Awards

Sustainable Youth Leadership Program

*Regular networking and professional development opportunities
SSN Journal, blog and communication platforms to educate and connect school communities*

Our annual programs build capacity for behaviour change.

Three major events are supported by our plans for a Sustainable Youth Leadership Program, ongoing networking and professional development opportunities and regular communication via our SSN Journal, website and social media platforms.



Train youth leaders & provide leadership opportunities



Educate and support teachers for sustainability



Improve school resource management



SDG education by taking local action on global issues.



Ensure sustainability and regeneration are mainstream practices



Ensure the cross-curriculum priority sustainability is delivered as intended.



Increase resource sharing and collaboration



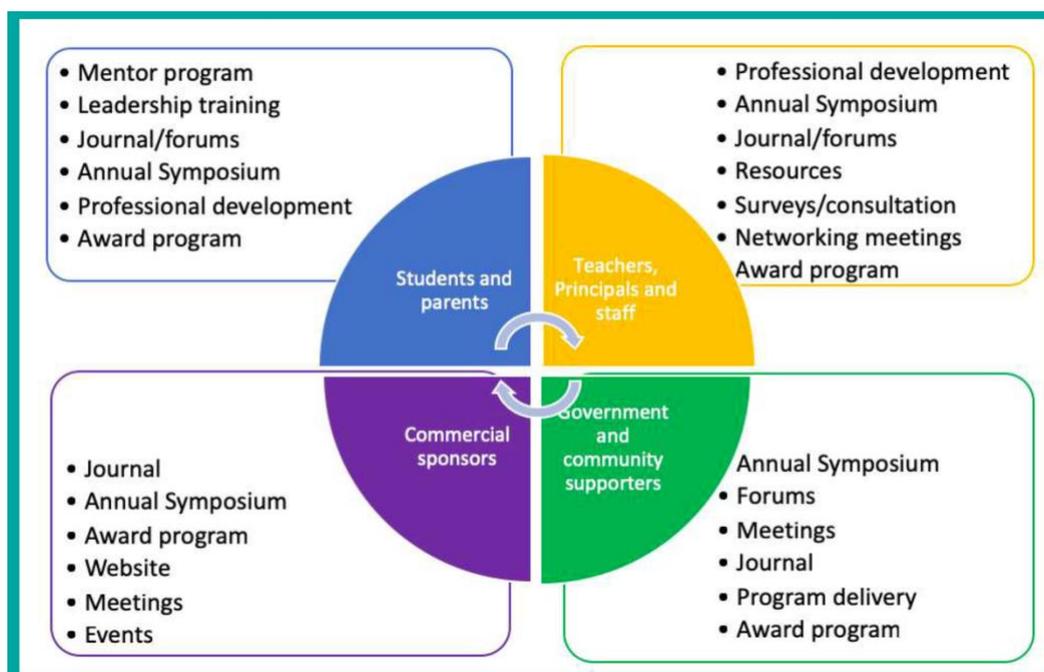
Encourage innovation and creativity

The *SSN Strategic Plan* defines the Sustainable Schools Network Limited’s purpose and has become increasingly valuable in explaining our strategic direction. Our events and communication platforms utilise our three keystones: ‘educate’, ‘connect’ and ‘imagine’, to guide decisions and provide a unified vision of our actions to the volunteer team. It is recommended that both the board and operational team continue to build on this succinct purpose in our future endeavours.

Other initial aspects included in the *SSN Strategic Plan*, such as our understanding of sustainability education, approach, and connection to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have also proved useful in guiding the development of the SSN. Our approach to address the ‘whole-school’ is in accordance with best practice and appears to be a new experience for schools. Opportunities for learning and networking for teachers, students, parents, operational leaders and maintenance staff has been met with enthusiasm. Working on the SDG’s has so far provided a ‘glocal’ context for our work and has already ensured more schools and members of the community have become aware of the goals. We have also been able to link with organisations on the basis of this global platform.

Governance and the SSN’s organisational structure are addressed in the *SSN Strategic Plan*. I’m pleased to announce we end our foundational year with an additional two board members, who are already proving to be considerable assets to the SSN board. All board positions are now filled, as nine was the identified maximum number. Our organisational chart has had some changes, as volunteers disconnect and people with new skills join the team. Our youth ambassadors are currently the most disconnected component of the organisational chart.

The *SSN Strategic Plan* identifies the SSN’s operating environment and stakeholders. After a successful Sustainability Summit in North Queensland, the SSN has already expanded its operating environment beyond the Gold Coast and Tweed Heads. Connecting with other regional areas and building upon established relationships is the focus for 2020. Below is a diagram included in the *SSN Strategic Plan* recognising relevant stakeholders. This has been a useful tool to design the function and target of our communication platforms and operational activities. In many different ways we are working with the four different groups of stakeholders and our communication platforms are connecting with these audiences.



The funding model identified in the *SSN Strategic Plan* has been a useful guideline for our founding year. As a not-for-profit organisation funding remains a priority. Grant applications are timely undertakings, competitive and don't always lead to the desired outcomes. Some significant grants that were applied for have recently been returned unfunded. The board continues to consider alternative funding opportunities and after a successful application for fundraising registration with the Queensland Government the SSN can now consider fundraising activities in 2020. It is with great pleasure that I also acknowledge two new SSN founding partners: AAEE QLD Chapter and Eco-Avengers. With a total of four founding partners the SSN can move into 2020 with reliable, experienced and aligned organisations supporting us.

Finally, the *SSN Strategic Plan* addresses the 2019-2020 organisational activities and key performance indicators (KPIs). More information regarding SSN KPI's can be found in the CEO Report. Below is a brief outline of the 2019-2020 activity tracker:

- The 2020 Sustainability Symposium is on track to be a successful event requiring significant input across the organisation.
- Sustainability Summit was an overwhelming success and future events are already in the planning.
- Awards are currently behind in terms of meeting project deadlines and will build on the successful outcomes of the first awards.
- SSN Journal is likely to increase in number due to an experienced volunteer joining the operational team and the availability of content.
- Networking nights were delivered as anticipated, were again successful and funding was provided for a further three events in 2020 by the same project sponsor.
- The Youth Ambassador/Leadership Program remains unfunded.
- Blogs have been created contributing content in alignment with the SSN vision to educate for sustainability. One blog was missed due to an organisational closure over December/January.
- Youth Masterclass did not occur in the indicated timeframe however has been included in the 2020 Sustainability Symposium program.
- A number of smaller stalls and speaking opportunities took place to promote the SSN, they included the Burleigh Markets, Bond University Sustainable Youth Event, Tinana State School STEAM and Sustainability Symposium, 2040 film screening, ACF Climate Change panel, and the Australian Geography Teachers Conference where meaningful connections were created, and exposure enhanced.

As the above information indicates overall the *SSN Strategic Plan* has been an asset to guiding the organisational direction of the SSN. Some plans remain unrealised (for instance a full operational team and reliable funding), whilst the *Plan* has assisted with tracking activities, defining communication platforms and events that align with our vision to educate and connect school communities to imagine a sustainable future.

CHAIRPERSON REPORT

ERIN MERRIN

As chairperson of the Sustainable Schools Network board, I am delighted to introduce our annual report for 2019.

It has been a great pleasure to work with the Sustainable Schools Network this year and I thank every person for their valuable contribution to our organisation since official registration in February 2019. Our organisation has especially benefitted from board member and CEO Katie Norman for her continued, tireless and dedicated work. As chairperson I would also like to recognise the strategic work of Kate Rogers and Chelli Easson throughout 2019. Finally, the last recognition is particularly to Katie and James Geraldts for their business expertise and founding membership from Green Cauldron Farm.

This report highlights some of the organisation's considerable achievements and challenges over the past year as we began our important work, providing quality connections between schools, teachers, students and communities, educating school communities on the importance of the cross-curriculum priority 'sustainability' and imagining a sustainable future across this vastly diverse region.

The cover design for this year's report reflects our main goal of partnership for the Sustainable Development Goals and the importance of the next decade in reaching the targets set by the United Nations.

During the past year, we established the organisation and achieved registration as a not-for-profit charity, the SSN have also gained additional registration to start fundraising in Queensland. The Sustainable Schools Network (SSN) have attained office space in West Burleigh and maintain this space for volunteer work hours and meetings. The network has added significant additional volunteer positions to enhance our capability to deliver a range of activities including the 2019 Sustainability Symposium, the Gold Coast School Sustainability Awards, the 2019 Regional Summit, various networking events, exhibition stalls, sustainability education, the SSN website, blogs, social media and the SSN journal . Given being only the first year in operations the SSN have seen significant community connections and have been thrilled with the many and varied partnerships and relationships that we have been able to build on.

As much of Australia has struggled with natural disasters especially drought and bushfire this reporting year, I am especially pleased that the work we do is encouraging communities to become more responsible with their water consumption and their overall understanding of the impacts of Climate Change and more importantly the solutions.

We established a Youth Ambassador program that had flashes of success in 2019 especially with Fenlan Miller opening the 2019 Sustainability Symposium and Patrick Brabant closing. The Youth Ambassador program will be an area of growth as we move into 2020 thank you to Katie Norman and Outward-Bound Australia. The SSN want more than anything to include young people, their families and youth stakeholders.

During my 16 years as a teacher in Queensland, I have come to admire the work of teachers in schools establishing 'sustainability committees' and working tirelessly to embed the cross-curriculum priority of sustainability. The Sustainable Schools Network with their mission of empowering passionate, innovative and collaborative educational networks regarding sustainability has strengthened the work of teachers and school communities and allowed them a platform to see that they are not alone and that the work they are doing is brilliant, it allows them to share knowledge and ideas and build on plans they want to achieve. Since becoming chairperson, other teachers have also expressed their admiration for the organisation. It is to its great credit that over its short history the SSN has developed a remarkable reputation. The board hopes to nurture and develop the SSN for the benefit of schools, teachers, students and communities. I am pleased that the organisation is developing and implementing policies, procedures and programs to continue to operate. I am optimistic the SSN will continue to thrive well into the future especially with the up and coming 2020 Sustainability Symposium being held at All Saints Anglican School and with the support of so many organisations and businesses.

A primary focus this year has been to get funding for the organisations continued operation which has proven difficult and time consuming at times. This is one area where the organisation wants to continue to develop and I urge each and every person involved with the SSN for their ideas and solutions to improve our operational funding opportunities. We hope to recruit some interns in 2020 with valuable skills required of the organisation moving forward to strengthen the skills of our volunteers and provide additional support.

I thank the City of Gold Coast, water and waste directorate and Tugun Community Bendigo Bank for its foresight in providing ongoing financial support to deliver services such as the Sustainability Symposium and SSN networking events. I urge the City of Gold Coast and Tugun Community Bendigo Bank to continue this vital funding beyond 2020 so that the SSN can plan for and provide appropriate events and connections between schools in our local region to support to sustainability education and innovative solutions for the future of the Gold Coast as an immerging world city, a city that must ensure sustainable planning and operations well into the future.

It is no secret that I have long been concerned about the lack of support for sustainability education in schools and the perceived understanding of sustainability by varied groups in our community. Having a better understanding of sustainability by a greater number of people will not only ensure a sustainable future but it

will, I believe, bring us together for a shared vision of the future. If it can be done better, why not to do it better? Sustainability in its simplest form is enough for everyone forever. I am therefore delighted that the SSN has this year continued its operations and expanded its goals and is implementing strategies to encourage school communities to adopt sustainable practices.

There are many who have contributed to the Sustainable School's Networks' success and performance this year. I thank the board members, the many volunteers, and our partners and supporters. It has been a pleasure working closely with you all for a shared vision. I gratefully acknowledge the vital support, financially for schools from the Gold Coast City Councillors Cr Daphne McDonald, Cr Gail O'Neill, Cr Pauline Young, Cr Glenn Tozer and Cr Herman Vorster and warmly thank them and encourage them once again for their ongoing and continued support. I once more thank the hard working and capable members of our board. I very much look forward to continuing our work together in 2020 for the benefit of our community.

Erin Merrin

Chairperson, Sustainable Schools Network

erin.merrin@ssn.org.au

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

KATIE NORMAN

It has been an honour to be the Chief Executive Officer and the Secretary of the Sustainable Schools Network Limited Board in 2019. The SSN is about connecting the people who care deeply about people and planet and are ready for and/or leading change. All that we have achieved in our founding year is the result of the people who have been involved.

With Gratitude

I would particularly like to thank Tilly Ryan, who enthusiastically connected our board and believed in our vision before I even knew the SSN was possible! Erin Merrin, who has acted as our Chairperson and in the second half of 2019 as our Social Media Coordinator, thank you for the hours you dedicate to the SSN on top of your fulltime teaching load, and your obvious passion! You keep us connected to our community and focused on the teaching aspects of sustainability. Katie and James Geraldts, who individually are Founding Members and also financially support the SSN by providing Green Cauldron Farm as a Founding Partner, thank you for your experienced perspectives and guidance! Allan Lahey, who has also been with the board from the start, thank you for committing to this endeavour and your support with the youth ambassador program. Chelli Easson, one of our Strategic Planners, took a risk to join a team of then unknown people, and has offered direction and leadership especially in the strategic planning process. Nick Brinkworth, who was appointed Treasurer, has offered wise counsel and leadership in governing the SSN and contributed his time and expertise to the strategic planning process. Sylvie Garner, our most recently appointed board member, is visionary and will lead the SSN towards its full potential in 2020. Thank you Chelli, Nick and Sylvie. Kate Rogers the final SSN board member to mention, has supported me throughout the SSN's founding year with care and wisdom. Kate has edited work on tight deadlines, been there in the low moments with a laugh, and ensured I was the best version of myself to deliver the role of CEO for the SSN. I commend you Kate for your professionalism and integrity.

Building partnerships for sustainability education is our mantra, and we could not do this without an operational team of committed and dedicated individuals. As an Australian not-for-profit charity, our founding year has been limited by funding and therefore our team have offered their expertise voluntarily. In an era of increasing personal and professional pressures, volunteering is one of the most altruistic actions a person can do. Lara Madden, Chelsea McLean, Patricia Lee, and Alison Danzinger offered countless unpaid hours to the SSN, at the expense of their personal lives because they believed in the SSN vision and enjoyed meeting like-minded people. We could not have achieved our 2019 goals without your support and so I offer a heartfelt thank you to you all. Jennifer Boyle also deserves special thanks and recognition for her regular and continuous voluntary hours managing the SSN accounts and providing administrative support. Thank you also to our Youth Ambassadors who have informed and inspired our vision. I'd like to particularly mention Meghan Rooney and Patrick Brabant who have supported the delivery of events and demonstrated commitment and leadership through the SSN's founding year. To all the other volunteers, new and old, we thank you for your time and energy, the SSN's capacity is built on this.

A number of organisations also deserve a special mention. Glowing Green Australia and Green Cauldron Farm have believed in our vision from the onset and our relationship has deepened over our founding year. The

City of Gold Coast and Tweed Shire Council have also supported our development and guided us towards greater impact. Gecko Environment Council, Gold Coast Catchment Association, Griffith University, Outward Bound Australia, Reef Guardian School Program, City of Townsville, Currumbin RSL, Bendigo Bank (Tugun Community Branch), EcoMarines and Tangalooma Island Resort, Professor Jellybean, Camps International, Tell Someone Who Cares, Climatewave Entreprises, Blank GC, Eco Avengers, Samantha Morris, Christine McDougall, Andrea Lewis – thank you all for your support in our founding year. A big thank you to Somerset College for believing in our vision and hosting the inaugural 2019 Sustainability Symposium. Finally, thank you to the Australian Association of Environmental Educators (QLD Chapter) for working with us in sharing a vision for an Australian schooling system that embraces sustainability education.

Performance Indicators

For a founding year the SSN exceeded expectations in delivering more than a Sustainability Symposium. Our first event was a networking night at the Currumbin RSL, which involved more than 30 community members interested to connect with one another. From here our 2019 Sustainability Symposium involved over 600 community members from Tweed Shire to Brisbane, including 39 schools and 44 organisations for a one-day event. In addition, the SSN:

- Coordinated a school sustainability awards program in partnership with Gecko Environment Council;
- Created and shared five *SSN Journal's*, featuring a student, teacher, organisation, parent and school;
- Facilitated an additional two networking nights, supported by the Currumbin RSL and Bendigo Bank;
- Composed a draft discussion paper in collaboration with stakeholders across Queensland;
- Connected Regional Queensland through a Sustainability Summit;
- Offered meaningful volunteer opportunities.

In addition to the above actions, the SSN have spoken at a number of community events, offered a free school membership program and promoted a lot of events and organisations. As a network, connecting with our stakeholders is important. Numerous resources have been invested in developing our communication platforms, including a website, social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Youtube) and a database of schools, organisations and individuals that form our mailing list. On the first day of 2019 our Facebook following was 100, at the end of 2019 we now have over 1070 page likes and over 1100 page followers. Our Instagram following has increased to over 320 followers, whilst LinkedIn is also steadily increasing ending the year with over 200 followers. The SSN YouTube channel only commenced at the end of the year and has 6 subscribers as a starting point. I encourage you all to subscribe to the SSN YouTube channel. These indicators are positive signs that the SSN is connecting with our target audience.

Two other important communication platform indicators are the SSN website and the SSN mailing list. Considerable work has gone into both tools. Statistics indicate most views of the SSN website occur on the day the *SSN Journal* is released, and that traffic has increased over the year particularly October and November 2019. Interestingly, visitors are predominantly arriving either directly or via google search, with a smaller portion arriving via Facebook. The SSN mailing list started the year with approximately 300 entries. The year ended with over 1750 schools, individuals and organisations on the list.

Event Summaries

Networking Nights – three networking nights were delivered by the SSN at Currumbin RSL in 2019. One in Term One, another in Term Three and the final event in Term Four. Community members were invited using Facebook, Mailchimp and our website and the room was filled on all occasions. Three different speakers were

funded to present: Green Heroes (early-childhood focus), Simone Blom (theoretical focus) and Carly Wilson (wildlife and plastics focus). The first event involved a brainstorm about what the concept 'sustainability' means, and a candid discussion regarding the limiting factors involved in delivering sustainability projects in school environments. The second event involved catering and philosophical discussions, whilst the final event involved a presentation followed by trivia and lucky door prizes donated by some of our supporting organisations. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive for all events and ensured connections between teachers, interested community members and organisations occurred to create a support network helping to overcome barriers to change and celebrate successful outcomes.

2019 Sustainability Symposium – an event review was written regarding this one-day event held at Somerset College. A program of events involving students, teachers, maintenance staff and operational leaders was delivered followed by a sustainably sourced meal featuring a panel discussion regarding the concept of 'sustainability'. The first of its kind in the region the concept of a Sustainability Symposium will be the flagship of the SSN and has a great potential to educate and lead school communities to embed the cross-curriculum priority sustainability and the SDGs within school environments.

Awards – over twenty schools applied for the 2019 School Sustainability Awards. A collaborative effort between the SSN and Gecko Environment Council, the Awards successfully inspired schools to engage with sustainability. An engaging afternoon of presentations from the finalists ensured the Gold Coast community would be waiting to submit their school for consideration for the 2020 Awards.

Sustainability Summit – Connecting Regional Queensland was a pilot concept delivered at St Patrick's College in Townsville. Delivered on a minimal budget and organised by distance, this event allowed the SSN to connect with North Queensland schools and the Reef Guardian Schools Program. Highlighting what is possible when organisations work together (Glowing Green Australia, AAEE QLD, Reef Guardians School Program and the SSN), differences were noted between regional and metropolitan schools, yet the same level of commitment and drive for change were evident.

A promising start for the SSN, the 2019 events connected with many people across Queensland and Northern New South Wales. This foundation provides a positive platform to move into planning for 2020.

Financial Factors

It is incredible that the SSN has created the calibre of organisation it became in 2019 on approximately \$70,000. Ultimately this is because over 2800 hours of volunteer time were donated to the SSN. This incredible generosity has ensured the SSN demonstrated a need for their service and interest and support for the vision they have created. Already volunteers have commenced and moved on as volunteering on a regular basis is not always practical or affordable.

As the SSN moves into its second year of operations it will be important to find the balance between what is possible with the funds available and what other resources are available to deliver the SSN operations. The SSN is driven by an urgency to act and contribute to the SDGs however if funding remains an issue the SSN's capacity may be limited. Funding is important to retaining human resources and covering program and organisational costs and will remain an important consideration for both the board and operational leadership.

Conclusion

The SSN has demonstrated in its founding year that schools, parents, students, teachers, operational leaders, organisations and other community members care deeply about the future generations to come will inherit. In a global context of concern regarding climate change and the degradation of our natural environment, heightened fears regarding peaceful relationships and health epidemics, now more than ever we need to work together to create systems of peace, trust and meaningful relationships with planet and people. This requires a collective effort across sectors to ensure a sustainable future. The SSN have chosen to focus on schools as we believe education is a critical factor in the socialisation and design process of an alternate future. Our board represents different viewpoint on how to achieve this, and both our board and volunteers share an intrinsic motivation to act in the best interests of youth. On a daily basis I am driven to work with schools to develop a common language regarding sustainability and move beyond this to a process of regeneration.

In 2020 I'm looking forward to refining the SSN vision and strategies to ensure the organisation is itself sustainable and capable of delivering positive impact in the community. I'm excited about the seven-day 2020 Sustainability Symposium that will be delivered across four venues and two states. An international pioneer, Jaimie Cloud will be joining us for seven days to educate for sustainability, which is an incredible opportunity for the SSN. I'm looking forward to connecting with more regions across Queensland via the Sustainability Summit concept and working with two of our founding partners in this process. And in 2020 I'm looking forward to building partnerships for sustainability education built on trust, integrity, and respect for the role we all have to play in ensuring behaviour change in educational contexts.

Katie Norman

CEO, Board Secretary, Symposium Co-Chair

Awards Co-Founder

Founding Member

Katie.norman@ssn.org.au

TREASURER REPORT

NICK BRINKWORTH

SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS NETWORK LIMITED

ACN 631 573 012

For the Year Ended 31 December, 2019

AGM 22nd February 2019

SSN is a modestly resourced Australian charitable organisation with a noble purpose – to build meaningful partnerships between schools and their communities regarding sustainable education; to advocate for collaboration and an increased profile of sustainability in education; and to ensure sustainable education is embedded in the school-based curriculum through professional development opportunities.

2019 represented the first 11 months of operation, and it has been foundational. As shared in the last edition of the SSN Times newsletter, key deliverables have included:

- Formulation of Board
- Completion of strategic plan
- Completion of a number of key operational policies
- Completion of appropriate insurance policies which covers public and products liability, associations and official's liability, and personal accident insurance
- Registration as a charity
- Rental of office
- Engagement with 22 member schools and 80 organisations
- Delivery of the inaugural Sustainability Symposium, School Awards and numerous networking events
- Establishment of a website and implementation of a social media strategy

The effort from members, volunteers and the Board has been immense, and I wish to thank each and every one of them for their contribution and for helping SSN deliver on its purpose and set SSN for success in the future.

2020 is now about building a financial foundation and disciplines to ensure long term sustainability.

Financial statements for 2019 calendar year show total revenue of \$76258.08. Expenses were \$36725.35, leaving a cash surplus of \$39532.73 in the account. Our cash position is slightly overstated due to the timing difference between receipts from 2020 Symposium sponsorship, donations, grants and ticket sales and expenses for that event, and as a result all surplus monies are allocated to 2020 operations.

Revenue in 2019 came from a number of sources:

Symposium Sponsorship 2019 - \$24827.47

Ticket Sales Symposium 2019 - \$3490.00

Sponsors/ Donations/ Grants for Symposium 2020 - \$32,000.00

Ticket Sales Symposium 2020 - \$1,300.00

Grants 2019 - \$8254.50 from 2 grants - Bendigo Bank and Townsville City Council

Grants 2020 - \$3,300.00 from 1 grant - Bendigo Bank

Members/Founding Partners contributions 2019 - \$2,205.39 from 9 members

Workshop Fees (Facilitation & Presenting) 2019 - \$400.00

Public Donations - \$154.00

Services Provides (Report writing by K Norman) - \$300.00

Interest Received - \$26.72

Our operating expenses for 2019 were \$26193.19 for event costs and \$10532.16 for all other operating costs. Expenses are tightly controlled at all levels and all of our 'staff' are volunteers, except for our CEO and Social Media Manager who have received small honorarium/s for their work, and our Circular Economy Education Officer who charges for her time on a project by project basis. We have no employees.

Our largest regular cost is rent at \$500 per month, whilst the Symposium is the greatest overall cost annually for the SSN with an anticipated cost of \$70,505. We are managing that by seeking substantial sponsorship and increasing ticket prices in 2020.

We are currently renting at a modest cost a room in an office in Burleigh West. This is on a month to month lease and the Board has agreed to review this on a regular basis at our board meetings. The primary driver for establishing an office was to house SSN work outside our CEO Katie's home, store SSN equipment for the team to access, and to present a more professional image.

A budget and accompanying activity plan has been prepared and approved by the Board for 2020. The outcome is that we expect to end the 2020 year with revenue of just over \$200K, which after expenses generates a modest surplus of \$11,323. This surplus is greater than 2019 and starts to build a bank account balance on which we can continue to grow the number of events we hold and our reach into the future.

Our most significant revenue line in 2020 is expected to be ticket sales from the 7-day 2020 Symposium which is being held on the Gold Coast and Tweed Shire in April-May 2020. This is our key event for the year, and we budget revenue from that event to be \$110,000 and expenses to be \$70,505. The scale of this flagship event is significant, especially when compared with the 2019 symposium which saw revenue of approximately \$28K and expenses of \$22K. Based on the quality of the event and the feedback from last year, this year we have increased the cost of tickets quite markedly in an attempt to reflect the increased scale of the event and the quality of outcomes attendees will get, and to leave a surplus to support other activities throughout the year.

On the expense side, of course we will maintain a focus on cost management and mitigate financial risks by not commencing proposed large-scale programs such as the Sustainable Youth Leadership Program, unless funding is secured beforehand.

From a financial governance point of view, the Board meets quarterly where a full set of previous quarter's financial statements is circulated to Board members prior to meetings and is then reported on and discussed in detail at Board meetings. We are of a size where our association does not require external auditing, but all Board members have full access to the accounts and opportunity to raise any issues or concerns.

Ms Chairman, I have pleasure in moving the adoption of the Treasurer's Report for 2019.

Thank You.

Nick Brinkworth

Honorary Treasurer

2020 VISION

KATIE NORMAN

Following an incredible founding year, in 2020 the SSN aims to strengthen our foundation by investing in: our operational processes and human resources; relationships with schools and external organisations; and working on the balance between funding and program delivery. In 2019, a volunteer induction process was designed and commenced. In 2020, this process will be completed as part of managing the SSN's human resources. It is important to offer a rewarding, safe and quality experience for our volunteers as the SSN develops. Valuing our volunteers is a critical strategy to ensure the SSN is a sustainable entity well into the future.

It is with great pleasure that I confirm Bendigo Bank (Tugun Community Branch) have agreed to sponsor three networking nights for the local community in 2020. Erin Merrin is working on an engaging format and high-quality speakers to ensure the SSN Networking Nights both connect and educate and are of great community benefit.

The SSN intends to build on the success of events piloted in 2019. For example, in 2020 the SSN plans to deliver between 2-4 Sustainability Summits across regional Queensland. The School Sustainability Award in collaboration with Gecko Environment Council will not only offer recognition for schools but also for teachers with a celebratory dinner for exceptional educators. The SSN are still seeking funding for the Sustainable Youth Leadership Program with Outward Bound Australia and hope to identify suitable opportunities in the first half of the year. We also have some engaging youth lead activities planned for Queensland 2020 Youth Week and some short professional development opportunities in the planning.

Communication with our stakeholders is an essential part of the SSN operations. In 2020, we will develop our YouTube platform with greater intensity as this is the most used tool on the web. Our database, LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram communities will no doubt also grow. In 2020 we will use our website to engage, educate and connect via our blog, journals and event information, whilst also providing rewarding opportunities for our partners and supporters to reach more broadly across the community.

Completion of the education for sustainability discussion paper is also on the agenda, as is joining with other organisations to lead school community regeneration and/or cleanup activities. It is important to the SSN to engage with our community in significant ways that positively impact schools and their communities. The discussion paper offers a method to connect with leading practitioners, whilst regeneration/cleanup activities connect with our primary stakeholder: schools.

Of great significance to the SSN is the 2020 Sustainability Symposium. This event will be delivered towards the end of the first half of 2020 across four venues and two states. Already significant support has been offered especially from the City of Gold Coast, Tweed Shire Council, Griffith University and All Saints Anglican School (ASAS). SUEZ Community Grants, the ASAS Parents' and Friends' Association, Councillors from Divisions 12, 13 and 14, Envirotech, Study GC and Glowing Green Australia are all on board to financially support the event. The program involves leading local individuals and organisations and Jaimie Cloud who is an internationally recognised leader. We will be offering:

- A student masterclass, student water security challenge and a full-day program of workshops for youth;
- Operational leader workshops;
- A sustainably sourced dinner, with an expert panel discussion;
- Parent workshops; and,
- A four-day curriculum workshop for teachers, preservice teachers and resource designers.

The SSN has great potential in 2020 to deliver quality learning and networking opportunities for the Queensland and Northern NSW community. We invite you to engage with us to educate and connect school communities to imagine a sustainable future.

