

Vicinity Centres

Taking a shared value approach to sustainability and community investment.

Vicinity Centres is one of Australia's leading property companies with more than 80 shopping centres across the country.

Vicinity is committed to enriching community experiences and, through its sustainability strategy, aims to address the social and environmental issues prevalent across the communities where it operates.

Taking a shared value approach to its sustainability agenda, Vicinity's community investment program focuses on understanding the needs of and supporting unemployed and disengaged youth. This was chosen after extensive research pointed to youth disengagement and unemployment as an area where Vicinity could make a real difference locally.

Melissa Schulz, General Manager, Sustainability at Vicinity Centres said, "We know we're a large employer, whether that be directly through a Vicinity Centre or via our extensive network of retailers and suppliers. We feel the issues of unemployed and disengaged youth are areas where we can have a significant, positive impact through our day-to-day business activities."

Melissa Schulz, General Manager Sustainability, Vicinity Centres said, "Vicinity tapped into Good2Give's expertise of Australia's not-for-profit sector to unearth a charitable organisation that would meet the business' needs. Good2Give understood what we were looking for in a partnership and was able to coordinate the process throughout all stages of the search."

"We often see the consequences of this issue across our portfolio and it goes on to impact the customer and retailer experience at our centres. These things combined make it a great fit for our community investment focus, helping to ensure the program's longevity and success." Ms Schulz said.



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Partnering with Good2Give

"After identifying unemployed and disengaged youth as the issue we wanted to focus on, we were faced with the huge task of finding the right community partner to work alongside," explains Melissa.

"We knew there would be many charities working in this space, some with higher profiles than others. We wanted to make sure we were across all of the relevant charities to ensure we partnered with the right one for us."

Vicinity tapped into Good2Give's expertise of Australia's not-for-profit sector to unearth a charitable organisation that would meet the business' needs.

"Good2Give understood what we were looking for in a partnership and was able to coordinate the process throughout all stages of the search." Ms Schulz said.

Good2Give's Charity Partnership Framework gave Vicinity a rigorous process to step through and helped establish a community partnership with Beacon Foundation.

Good2Give brought Vicinity and Beacon together and assisted with the development of their partnership framework – a living document for the duration of the partnership, that will be continuously updated with future agreed work plans and key measures of success for both parties.

As part of the Sustainability program, Vicinity also introduced Good2Give's online Workplace Giving Platform and matched giving in 2017 to help take internal engagement to the next level.

"We encourage team members doing their own personal fundraising at work to leverage our Workplace Giving Platform, making it easy for employees and creating a better opportunity for fundraising, through pre-tax contributions that are matched by Vicinity."

Employee engagement

"The Vicinity team, across our centres and our corporate offices, is incredibly positive about the Beacon partnership. Our centres are at the forefront of the issues associated with youth unemployment and see first-hand, by initiating local programs, the impact of the work we're doing alongside Beacon." Ms Schulz said.

"We also try to align our community initiatives with other relevant programs in the business, where possible, to help drive engagement. For example, our skilled volunteering program, delivered largely through our partnership with Beacon, is linked to our People and Culture Team's capabilities framework, which our teams use to identify areas where they can build on their skillset as part of their annual development plans."

Melissa said Vicinity's employee-focused sustainability initiatives have resonated well and are an example of how the teams are bringing the company's purpose of 'enriching community experiences' to life.

"We're working with our team, encouraging them to get involved in our programs which is a great way for us to bring sustainability to life across the business."



For more information on Good2Give services, contact us at info@good2give.ngo or on +61 2 9929 9633.

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