

Grant Impact Report 2026

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Mannifera is a collective of Australian funders working together to invest in civil society organisations advocating for the systems change we need to strengthen our democracy and build an economy that works for everyone.

Mannifera members acknowledge that a history of colonisation, dispossession and disempowerment of First Nations peoples is woven into the fabric of our political and economic systems. We recognise that Australia cannot achieve a complete democracy or a fair economy without addressing this history, instating the rights and respecting the aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Mannifera is committed to listening to and learning from First Nations perspectives on the state of our democracy and economy, and for these perspectives to inform our funding decisions. We are also committed to dedicating at least 20% of our grantmaking budget to First Nations-led initiatives.

Executive summary



It is our pleasure to share our latest grant partner impact report with you.

Since Mannifera started in 2019, we have had the privilege of supporting more than seventy organisations working towards a fairer democracy and economy, granting over \$6 million. Many organisations we have supported have been in the early years of their operations, with our funding providing the crucial resourcing to keep going.

Today, six years on, these partners are having outsized influence on the national conversation; leading work on Freedom of Information, privacy reform, intergenerational policy making and tax reform. In a year that was shaped considerably by the election of an ALP majority government, our partners have quickly reoriented to meet the new challenges and opportunities emerging.

This report highlights some of the signs of progress over the past year, and provides an overview of enabling and constraining factors in the current context. For example, while momentum for meaningful tax reform seems to be growing among government decision makers (thanks in large part to ongoing advocacy from civil society), the appetite for implementing stronger integrity laws appears to be waning or going backwards.

Mannifera's First Nations practice evolved over the past year, as it was integrated more fully into all that Mannifera does. It has been wonderful to have funders contribute directly into our First Nations-led grant pool, both endorsing and bolstering this practice. The appointment of Liandra Gaykamangu as First Nations Practice Lead has strengthened our capacity and leadership in this space.

Alongside Liandra, Beatrice Roy has joined as Operations Manager. This growth mirrors growth in the Mannifera membership, and we were delighted to welcome seven new members in the second half of 2025. We are excited about the opportunities this opens up to dedicate more time to our strategic convening and partnerships work, as there is still much to be done to increase the amount of philanthropy directed towards systems change advocacy for a fairer democracy and economy.

As Mannifera marks our sixth year, our democracy and economy are being tested in big ways and from many directions. We will need the capability and capacity of civil society, communities everywhere and all levels of government to come through these challenges. We know philanthropy is critically important in supporting this. Mannifera is here to invest in and be alongside those advocating for a democracy and economy that works for all of us, and to build the capacity and infrastructure we need to do this collective work.

I would like to acknowledge and thank all of our grant partners for their dedication and skill, and all of our members for their trust in and commitment to our shared vision. Please feel free to contact us if you would like to learn more about the work of our partners, the evolving context in which they operate, or Mannifera's collective approach.

Yours in fairness,

Harriet McCallum
Executive Officer, Mannifera





First Nations economic inclusion

In 2025, Mannifera's First Nations practice, led by our expert advisors Adrian Appo OAM (Goreng Goreng), Liandra Gaykamangu (Yolŋu), Craig North (Bidjara) and Kezia Jacobs-Smith (Whadjuk Noongar), awarded eight First Nations organisations with a mix of multi-year and one-off grants.

Consistent with previous years, there was a strong emphasis on resourcing First Nations women-led solutions, funding organisations in geographical locations that tend to be overlooked by philanthropy and investing in the organisational backbone that makes long-term impact possible. What continued to emerge in 2025 was the role Mannifera plays beyond the funding itself, as a bridge into philanthropic networks, a trusted sounding board for strategy and a culturally safe partner that builds confidence and funding readiness without overriding community authority. Highlights of the work achieved by our First Nations-led partners over the last year include:

1. Galiwink'u Women's Space (GWS) allocated Mannifera's funding to staff housing to support workforce stability in the remote community, addressing a critical barrier to staff retention and consistent program delivery. Mannifera will continue working with GWS to increase their philanthropic relationships to expand services for women and their families in this East Arnhem community.
2. Cape York Grassroots Corporation (CYGC) has used Mannifera's support to increase their team management and invest in communications, increasing the visibility for their work and the role they are playing in Cape York Aboriginal communities.
3. Hoops 4 Health (H4H) described the past year as one of consolidation with core funding from Mannifera playing an important stabilising role that allowed them to focus on delivery while strengthening internal systems and partnerships.



Maganda Makers



First Nations Academy of Excellence



Mulga Bore Hard Rock at Garma

4. First Nations Projects Institute (FNPI) remains focused on driving national-level economic systems change, positioning itself as a policy and advocacy leader working toward nation-wide economic structural reform rather than place-based service delivery.
5. Maganda Makers – delivered another successful Business Club camp in Lombandina, north of Broome on the Dampier Peninsula in August 2025, supporting First Nations women to reach their business aspirations.
6. WA Aboriginal Leadership Institute used seed funding to attract further, multi-year funding and partnerships to cover operational funding gaps left by larger grants. This resourcing has supported operational growth and confidence in strategic direction.
7. First Nations Academy of Excellence has expanded its high-performance programs across five regions, increased participation of First Nations athletes, developed coaching and umpire pathways and strengthened culturally safe leadership programs.
8. Bush Music Fund saw a significant year of delivery and growth. Mannifera's grant was described as "vital" during a key phase of organisational development, providing stability to balance program delivery with broader sustainability considerations.



Building fair tax and economic systems

Productivity, tax reform and intergenerational equity have all been getting significant air time since the May federal election, and our partners have played a role in driving this. Mannifera partners are hoping to build on the momentum gained over the past few years to secure meaningful commitments on tax, as well as a national conversation on Australia's future, before the end of this term.

Over the past year Mannifera partners have collaborated on national convening efforts, published influential research reports, secured national media coverage, built their online constituencies and continued to deepen their relationships with policy and decision makers.

Markers of progress

- Led by Foundations for Tomorrow, membership of the Parliamentary Group for Future Generations grew to 28 MPs and Senators across parties;
- The Productivity Commission recommended establishing an Avoidable Costs Unit in the Commonwealth Treasury, as put forward by the Centre for Policy Development;
- Advocacy led by Jubilee and CICTAR has helped keep 'country by country' tax reporting in place, despite intense lobbying from multinational companies seeking to minimise their Australian tax obligations;
- A 20% HECS debt reduction, HECS indexation changes, and the introduction of paid practicums for teachers, nurses and social workers have become policy, following advocacy from Think Forward and others;
- 'Productivity with purpose' became the civil society call to action in the lead up to the economic reform roundtable, following significant media coverage of Centre for Policy Development's *Productivity with Purpose* report;
- Tax reform for intergenerational equity was labelled a priority outcome of the economic roundtable process following concerted advocacy led by Think Forward and others.



CPD government roundtable hosted by H.E. the Hon. Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of Australia



The Hon. Dr Andrew Leigh MP learns about the Community Tax Project



The Foundations for Tomorrow team with Dr Sophie Scamps MP

Enablers and barriers

The advent of a strong ALP majority in the House of Representatives has opened up a political window for meaningful economic reform. Coupled with the Treasurer's personal interest in spearheading long overdue action on tax policy, there is a sense that there may be sufficient political capital to tackle big reforms. However, the Prime Minister is said to favour a more cautious approach to tax reform, being wary of 'scare campaigns' from the Opposition and well-resourced interests. This highlights the important role civil society advocacy will play in building the political support for change, and demonstrating to decision makers that there is political opportunity in spearheading reform.



Tax reform panel with Mannifera partners and Allegra Spender MP

Partners

The Community Tax Project



percapita
FIGHTING INEQUALITY IN AUSTRALIA





Improving quality public debate



The ecosystem of mis and disinformation is complex and rapidly evolving. Over the past year public debate in Australia has focused on the social media ban for children, the potential harms of AI generated content, and the 'post-truth' nature of politics in the United States.

The 2025 Federal election was seen by many as a repudiation of 'Trump style' politics, tempering the concern around mis and disinformation to some degree. However, the actors driving mis and disinformation both locally and globally remain incredibly well resourced, and the proliferation of AI technologies is adding additional layers of risk.

Over the past year, work funded by Manifera has helped advocates across civil society better understand the role of the well resourced and networked actors driving mis and disinformation, bolstered the provision of public policy information across the media ecosystem, and highlighted the importance of privacy regulations in moderating the influence of social media companies.

Markers of progress

- Digital Rights Watch (DRW) are increasingly being sought after for commentary on the role of privacy reform, including across national media outlets and at global summits like the World Forum in Berlin;
- A *Children's Online Privacy Code* and *Digital Duty of Care* are expected to be finalised in 2026 following ongoing pressure from DRW and other advocates;
- Research into actors driving mis and disinformation by Australian Democracy Network is being widely used by climate and democracy advocates to better understand the architecture of far-right influence, and to explain this to the general public through strategic relationships with mainstream media;
- The Conversation published 187 public policy articles in 2025, with many driving additional coverage through mainstream media.



The Conversation's Misha Ketchell with colleagues from the Grattan Institute and Chifley Research Centre, at SWSW Sydney

Enablers and barriers

The increasing conversations around AI and the risks of online harm have created an opening for the government to prioritise privacy reform. While the Government is wary of being mired in debates around censorship and free speech that influenced the withdrawal of the 2024 *Combating Misinformation and Disinformation Bill*, 'duty of care' framing seems to have more unanimous support among policymakers across the political spectrum, in line with public sentiment.

Further, declining trust in institutions presents an opportunity for political leaders to demonstrate they are serious about protecting the public sphere against corruption and special interests. Advocates making the case to voters that misinformation campaigns are tied to the economic interests of extraordinarily wealthy individuals and corporations may be well placed to gain electoral support for regulatory measures.



The Conversation's 2025 book, *How Australian Democracy Works*



10 NEWS TOM SULSTON DIGITAL RIGHTS WATCH Digital Rights Watch on Channel 10

Partners





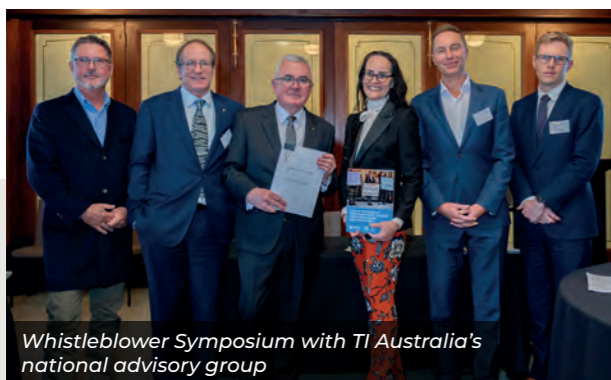
Ensuring accountable and open government

The big story for open and accountable government over the past year has been the Government's attempted Freedom of Information (FOI) reforms. The proposed legislation was considered by our partners to be a significant risk to transparency and accountability, making it harder for journalists, parliamentarians, and citizens to scrutinise government decisions. The legislation was scrapped following a concerted campaign by Mannifera partners, though the resourcing required to secure this outcome diverted focus from a range of proactive activities.

The FOI story appeared to play into a broader dynamic whereby the Government's appetite for integrity reforms has all but evaporated since integrity focused independent MPs lost the balance of power. The exception to this is that whistleblower protections still seem to be getting some attention from the Attorney General's office, though the timeframes for action remain unclear.

Markers of progress

- The *Freedom of Information Amendment Bill 2025* was pulled following a concerted campaign from Mannifera partners including the Centre for Public Integrity (CPI), Transparency International Australia (TI Australia), Grata Fund and Australian Democracy Network;
- Proposed whistleblower reforms, including a plan for a Whistleblower Ombudsman, are being considered and revised by the Government, with ongoing input from CPI and TI Australia;
- The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) are building an updated Influence Engine, with the use of AI technologies significantly improving the usability of the tool;
- Many of TI Australia's recommendations to the Victorian Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission were taken up in the final report, including broadening the definition of corrupt conduct and strengthening prevention and education functions by allowing for public inquiries.



Whistleblower Symposium with TI Australia's national advisory group



FARE CEO, Ayla Chorley



CPI's Dr Catherine Williams speaks to the media

Enablers and barriers

The FOI campaign was an exemplar of the combined power of advocacy coalitions, with many of Mannifera's grant partners working to influence the withdrawal of the FOI bill. Strong relationships with parliamentarians across the aisle was a key contributor to success, with the Opposition's lack of support being particularly instrumental in the outcome. In noting the pulling of the legislation, Senators Pocock and Shoebridge credited the role played by the Centre for Public Integrity in their analysis of the implications of the Bill, a testament to the high regard the Centre is held in among Members of Parliament from across the political aisle.

As noted, a key barrier to further reform has been the limited interest the government has in these issues now that the crossbench holds less sway. Mobilising public sentiment in favour of integrity reforms may help shift this, though is difficult in a context where the reforms are often intricate, and seen as ancillary to costs of living concerns.

Partners





Fostering inclusive political participation

The nature of political participation is changing, and ensuring people can have a voice on the issues that affect them is increasingly complicated by a context of growing distrust, misinformation and overwhelm.

Mannifera has supported a number of efforts in this space over the past year, spanning advocacy on protest rights, to a data collection project seeking to streamline how candidate diversity is tracked through the various electoral commissions across the country.

Markers of progress

- A number of proposed anti-protest laws were amended following concerted campaigning by Mannifera partners. For example, in WA Australian Democracy Network sought constitutional advice on proposed protest laws, which received widespread media attention and put pressure on the Government to change tack;
- The Centre for Public Integrity team were asked to advise the South Australian Government on an overhaul of the state's civics education program;
- Electoral commissions across the country have demonstrated strong interest in streamlining diversity data collection processes following advocacy from Women for Election;
- The Punter's Political Personality test was used by close to 15,000 people in the lead up to the federal election, with enthusiastic feedback from people who engaged with it, more than 70% of whom were young men.



WFE team with alumni Jess Teesdale MP

Enablers and barriers

Social and technological changes in recent years have had a significant influence on the way people participate in politics, with siloed information environments and rising distrust of political leaders, institutions and news sources.

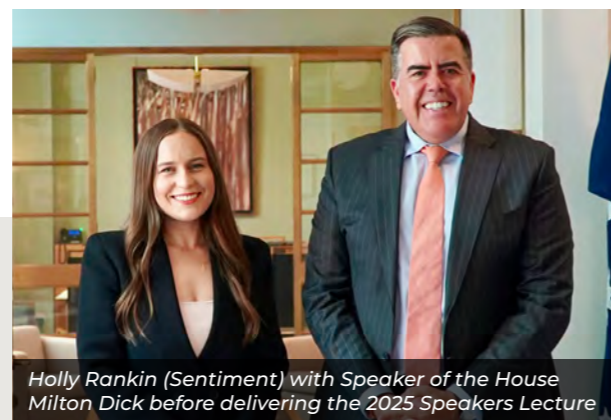
Many people are choosing to opt out of political participation due to information overwhelm and time pressures.

At the same time, growing public discontent around a range of issues has mobilised others, including some with extreme positions.

In this volatile context, with concern about violence and declining social cohesion, governments across the country have been curtailing protest rights in the name of avoiding inflamed tensions. These dynamics are being watched closely by our grant partners, who are needing to tread a careful balance of acknowledging the risks of the moment, while holding the line against attempts to wind back the speech and protest rights that are essential to a resilient democracy.



ADN's government relations masterclass



Holly Rankin (Sentiment) with Speaker of the House Milton Dick before delivering the 2025 Speakers Lecture

Partners



The Centre for Public Integrity



Mannifera contribution

In 2025 we embarked on a project to refresh our evaluation framework and better understand the role Mannifera plays in supporting the work of our partners.

While that framework is currently being rolled out, a few key themes emerged in the process of both putting the framework together (in consultation with members and partners) and in subsequent conversations and surveys about Mannifera's role.

These include:

- Mannifera's support as essential to instilling confidence in our civil society partners that their work is important and needed, especially when funding has been hard to secure elsewhere
- Mannifera's support to open other doors in philanthropy, and to build capacity to navigate conversations with potential funders
- Mannifera's support as a sounding board regarding organisational strategy and collaboration opportunities

We also went out to both members and grant partners with our 'pulse check' to get feedback on how we are performing across the different aspects of our theory of change. We were encouraged to see strong feedback across each element of our theory of change, with particular strength in our role fostering collaboration among civil society, and also room to grow in our work influencing other funders through our practice.

As we begin to develop our next strategy for the coming years, this data will help inform our focus and priorities as we continue to build a coalition of funders and civil society leaders building a fairer democracy and economy.

Our inspiration and strength lies in doing this work together with all of you and we look forward to seeing what lies ahead.

“Mannifera is far more than the money it distributes and I am so grateful to be part of this network.”

Taylor Hawkins, Foundations for Tomorrow

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