



Australian  
Community  
Philanthropy

**VitalSigns**<sup>®</sup>

Community foundations taking the pulse of  
Australian communities.

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# VITAL SIGNS TAKES THE PULSE OF OUR COMMUNITIES

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## Community knowledge empowers change

**Vital Signs** uses community knowledge to measure the vitality of communities by gathering data and publishing accessible reports on significant social and economic trends that tell the story of how communities are faring in key quality-of-life areas.

**Vital Signs** connects the dots between existing data to dive deep on locally meaningful issues such as poverty and disadvantage, education, food insecurity and youth unemployment.

Community foundations use **Vital Signs** to start conversations, identify trends, local priorities and opportunities and decide where to focus their attention and resources for greatest impact.

**Vital Signs** is a robust program which helps community foundations engage with citizens and stakeholders around the issues facing their communities.

Collaboration and partnerships occur at many levels in **Vital Signs** – research and data gathering, consultation, funding and community engagement. Community foundations may also choose to partner with another organisation on the production of a **Vital Signs** report.

**Vital Signs reports** present a picture of a community using relevant national data and local research on an identified range of issues. Successful reports leverage stakeholder involvement at every level, from determining the report's issues and indicators, to exploring research sources.

**Vital Signs** reports help communities make connections between issues and trends in different areas. The findings are presented in a reader-friendly format that provides a snapshot of quality of life and community vitality. They are also an important touchstone for community leaders, service organisations and funders.

Examples of **Vital Signs** reports are available at

<https://www.communityfoundations.ca/initiatives/vital-signs/>

<https://www.australiancommunityphilanthropy.org.au/vital-signs/>

## Vital Signs: a global program

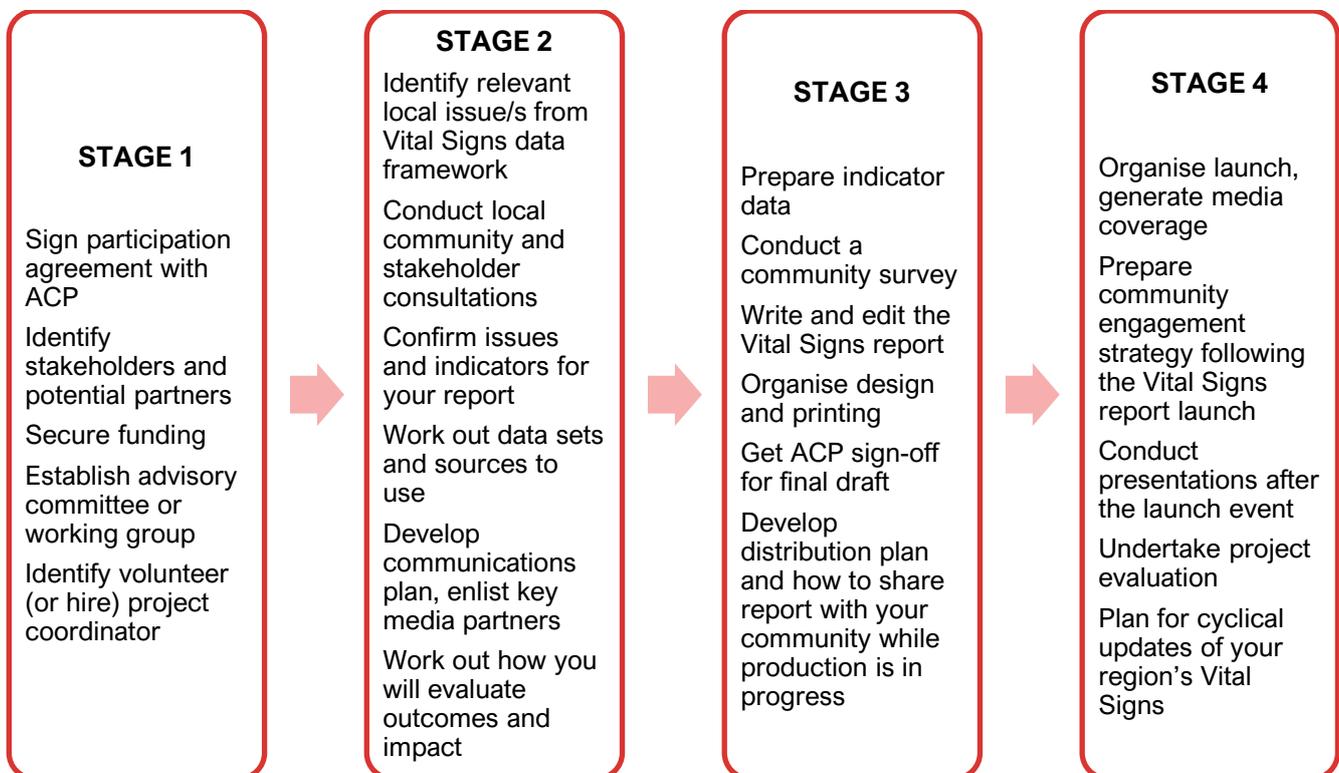
**Vital Signs** was developed by the Toronto Community Foundation in 2001 after a group of civic leaders came up with a new way to engage their community in understanding and monitoring the health and vitality of Toronto on an ongoing basis. In 2006, **Vital Signs** became a national program of [Community Foundations of Canada](#) (CFC). It continues to grow every year, both across Canada and internationally.

## Vital Signs in Australia

Australian Community Philanthropy manages the licensing of **Vital Signs** for Community Foundations in Australia. We are committed to developing **Vital Signs** as a national program in a collaborative approach between ACP and participating community foundations, seeking to identify strategic linkages with research partners, funding bodies and other collaborators and supporters.

## What next?

Undertaking **Vital Signs** is an important commitment for any community foundation. It requires dedicated resources for a concentrated period time of at least 6 months. Below is an overview of the key steps for Vital Signs.



More information:

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