



Initiatives of Change  
Australia

# newsbriefs

Building trust across the world's divides

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AUGUST 2019 NO. 300

## Whew - it's been busy.

We have lots of report-backs in this issue of *Newsbriefs*, which also happens to be our 300th! Participants have returned from the annual conferences at IofC's global centre in Caux, Switzerland, and we're privileged that two first-timers share their life-changing experiences here. Other participant perspectives come from the Melbourne round of Life Matters earlier this year, captured on video, and the Spiritual Ecology Leadership Program (SELP), which we co-organized with the CERES Environment Park in Melbourne.

While our regular program cycle continues, we've also been hosting more occasions like the 4 August discussion with Indigenous broadcaster Susan Moylan-Coombs, who recently ran for election in the former Prime Minister's seat of Warringah, NSW. The event sought to create space for the open-hearted, open-minded conversations we believe are needed in a political landscape that is so often polarized.

Check it all out - and remember to download the 2018-19 annual report, for an overview of the year that was!

*Newsbriefs* is the bi-monthly newsletter of Initiatives of Change in Australia – part of a worldwide movement of people of diverse cultures and backgrounds who share a vision for a just, peaceful and sustainable world.

## NEWS



### South Sudanese Australians Take Up Tools for Changemakers

Monica Deng and Gatluak Puoch attended the Tools for Changemakers program in Caux, Switzerland, in July 2019. The conflict in South Sudan has directly affected their lives, yet, they left Caux with changed perspectives, lightened hearts and confidence that change is a definite possibility. [Read more.](#)

## A Conversation about Treaty: Sovereignty as a Spiritual Notion

Sovereignty is a spiritual notion to Indigenous broadcaster and community leader Susan Moylan-Coombs. "It's about connection, the way we belong, our custodianship of Country," she explained, at the Melbourne event hosted by lofC Australia. Her talk sparked a conversation on what Treaty could mean for Australia. Listen to it [here](#).



## Life Matters for a 'more coherent self'

Life Matters workshops, conducted regularly by lofCA, bring together a diverse group of young people to learn life skills, discern life direction and gain new perspectives. For many, it's a life-changing opportunity. [Read more](#).

## lofC Australia Members Welcome Fresh Faces to the Board

lofC Australia welcomed two new Board members at its Annual General Meeting (AGM) this year; academic Siew-Fang Law and community development manager Laurence Gray take up their positions for a two-year term. Meanwhile, a new Australian representative, Andrew Flynn, joins the Board of lofC New Zealand. [Read more](#).

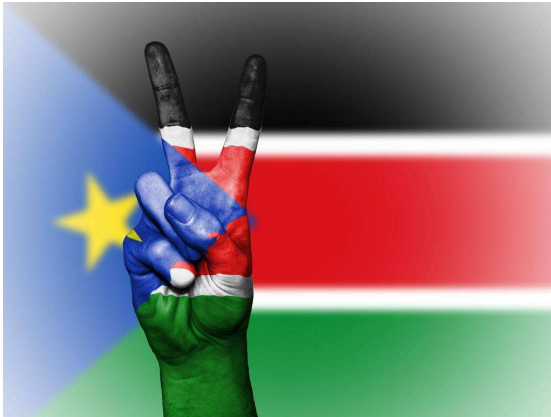
## The Annual Report 2018-19 is out!

The lofC Annual Report gives you a comprehensive insight into the world of lofC activities and people. It provides information on lofC Australia's programs, the supporter community that carries out much of the work, individual stories of change as well as financial information.

[Read it](#) and be inspired to be an agent of change!



## COMMENTARY



### Commentary: Independence Day in South Sudan: How can we move on?

David Vincent, iofC Community Engagement Manager, returns to Juba, South Sudan on the eve of the country's 8th birthday. The place is quiet. Is the absence of celebrations in Juba simply a lack of resources, or a sign of deep despair?

[Read more.](#)

## PERSONAL STORIES

### Charlotte Cameron: The Spiritual Ecology Experience

Charlotte took part in the first Spiritual Ecology Leadership Program jointly run in 2019 by iofC and CERES Community Environment Park. She tells how the retreat in the Otways, and the workshops that followed, have changed the way she views the world and inspired her "to learn more and serve more...go out and go deep." Read her words [here](#).



## FRIDAY FILM SERIES

### Australian documentary films

Our Winter Film Series of documentary screenings drew to a close with *Angels Gather Here*, a film that provides unique insight into the lives of one Aboriginal family over several generations, showing how past government policies continue to affect their lives today. Read a review of the film below.

We look forward to you joining us next year for a another series of thought-provoking films.



## Angels Gather Here

Jackie Trapman is an Indigenous woman from the Brewarrina region in New South Wales. Returning home for her parents' 60th wedding anniversary, she reflects on her personal struggles with alcohol and alienation. As the family and local community gather and prepare for the celebration, she recollects historical injustices and shows what she has done to counter these.

Read the full review [here](#).

## EVENTS

### Life Matters / Life Still Matters Strategy Workshop

**Saturday 7 September 2019:** A workshop for LM and LSM alumni to come together to strategise for the future of the programs. Time: 9.30am to 4.30pm. Venue: Armagh, 226 Kooyong Road, Toorak. Please see [here](#) for more details.

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### Creators of Peace - Nepalese Fundraising Dinner

**Sunday 8 September 2019:** Join a special dinner to raise funds for CoP projects in Nepal. You will hear more about projects underway in Nepal and will be joined by Serena Rix Tripathy - former CEO of Search for Common Ground, Nepal, who will share some of her experiences. Time: 6pm to 9pm. Venue: The Gurkhas Restaurant, 73 Angus Street, Adelaide. For more information, please see [here](#).

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### Initiating Change - From Within to Beyond

A seven-week training program offered by lofC India will be held at Asia Plateau, Panchagani, India, from 2 September to 8 October 2019. The program is aimed at energetic, self-starting young adults who are ready to engage deeply with the core ideas of lofC - to change oneself, live with integrity and bring positive change to society. Applications have now closed for this intake, but you can find out more [here](#) if you are interested in applying for the next cycle.

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### SPROUT! Showcase

**Saturday 21 September 2019:** Come and be a part of the end of year SPROUT! program showcase. It will be

an interactive session and you will get to experience the projects and meet the people behind them. Venue: Armagh, 226 Kooyong Road, Toorak. Time: 2pm to 4pm

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## Creators of Peace Southeast Welcome Tour

**Wednesday 25 September 2019:** Join the first networking event for the CoP project in Melbourne's southeastern suburbs - a day out facilitated by The Interfaith Network of the City of Greater Dandenong, which includes visits to local places of worship. It is a free event open to anyone aged 14+. Lunch will be provided. Past and prospective Creators of Peace Circle participants are encouraged to attend. The meeting point is at the SMRC, 39 Clow St Dandenong, VIC 3175. For further information please see [here](#).

See all events

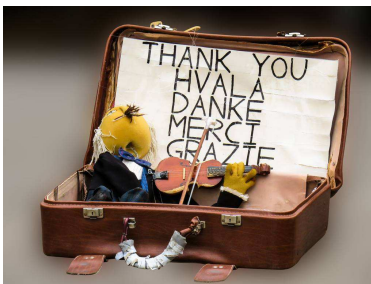
## GET INVOLVED

### Volunteer with us

Initiatives of Change prides itself on being a big family, nationally and internationally, and there are many ways to be involved. As a volunteer, you are welcome to join our bi-monthly social catch-ups and workshops. These are a great way to meet new people and also to get to know more about IofC. Volunteers also have access to the IofCA mentoring program, with experienced people who have worked for many years in peace and trust-building initiatives all around the world.

There are many areas you can volunteer in, depending on your skills sets and where we have a need. If you are interested, please contact our [Volunteer Coordinator](#) with an introduction about yourself, your motivation, and your area of interest. We'd love to hear from you!

## DONATE



As we develop our community engagement work, we're excited to see your donations coming in. We value so much your support. Please know that your contribution allows Initiatives of Change Australia to sustain its trust-building and peace-building work.

**Every donation**, large or small, has a **direct impact** on the individuals and communities with whom we work. You can donate through our page [here](#) or contact the [Treasurer](#) to send a cheque or make a bank transfer.

Donate Now

You can now follow us on social media.



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