

**CATALYST >>**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2013**

## About Catalyst

Catalyst is a not for profit policy network established in 2007. We work closely with trade unions, non-Government organisations and academics to promote social and economic equality and improved standards of corporate social responsibility.

Our founding principle is to produce work that promotes good lives, good work and good communities.

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#### Foundation partners and continuing sponsors



#### Donor Unions



We acknowledge the financial support of previous sponsors and donors, whose funds helped to establish the organisation.



## Our year in review

It is very pleasing to report on a year of fantastic achievements for Catalyst. As the organisation matures we are continually challenging ourselves to bring relevant and timely work to the public policy arena.

Although Catalyst has worked across a number of areas, 2013 was a year where we were able to build on our growing expertise in the area of corporate social responsibility with two important projects.

The first was our largest and most exciting output to date: the Catalyst Corporate Social Responsibility or **CSR Dashboard**. This ambitious project was conceived in late 2012 to address some of the shortcomings we identified through our 2010-12 series of research papers on corporate disclosure. The Dashboard took the next step by rating a large sample of leading companies to see how (and how well) they were keeping faith with their social and environmental obligations. The results revealed an urgent need for sharper, stronger and clearer guidance in many reporting areas, and much greater attention by companies to improving their public disclosures. Like all our previous projects, we have made this work accessible through the construction of a new website to display the results in a colourful interactive infographic.

Our second big achievement this year saw the release of our major research report: **What is Wealth For? How responsible investment can shape the future**, putting the onus on investors, funds and trustees to drive change in corporate governance to improve social and environmentally sustainable performance. The report, released in December, finishes a busy and successful year, and lays the foundation some creative new campaigns in 2014.

At the close of this year, the Catalyst Committee would like to acknowledge one of our founding members, former Secretary/Treasurer, John Sutton, who resigned from the Committee in March 2013. John made a valuable contribution to help establish Catalyst and steer it through its formative years and we wish him all the best.

Jo-anne Schofield  
Executive Director

December 2013

**“Many companies don’t make the effort to report about their social and environmental performance... if we don’t make an effort in terms of scrutiny who can blame them”.**  
(Catalyst CSR Dashboard: Sustainability Performance Snapshot)

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## Research

*What is wealth for?* explores innovative investment approaches in global pension funds, Australian superannuation and sovereign wealth funds, and discusses ethical concerns of private equity. It highlights that



Australian funds are lagging behind their global peers in responsible investment practices.

The case studies and measures presented in the report provide a base of international evidence and activism and the recommendations set a clear path to guide the responsible investment in Australia and beyond. The report reaffirms the important leadership role that trade unions have played in the design and continued success of the industry superannuation and urges unions, and other civil society groups to engage more broadly.

This is a timely and valuable paper, brought to life by researchers and authors Claire Parfitt and Gabrielle Lynch, with the assistance of Catalyst Executive Director, Jo-anne Schofield.

## **Building sustainability: ESG performance in the real estate and commercial property sector**

Using the methodology of the CSR Dashboard, Catalyst published a report looking at the sustainability performance of 19 Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) 200 real estate and commercial property companies. Data was presented in a CSR Property Sector Dashboard, accessible on the Catalyst website.

The findings of this report suggest the overall environmental, social and governance performance of the sector is lifted by a few key players while most companies are failing to meet even modest sustainability benchmarks. There was great variation in how, and how well, companies reported against particular topics, and in many cases public information was not available. This lack of attention to sustainability (or ESG) disclosures by all but a few companies is a cause for concern, particularly given the wealth and size of this sector, its significance to investors, substantial environmental impacts and the interaction of the built environment with communities.

# Campaigns

Released in June 2013, the custom built Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Dashboard rates the performance and reporting of 32 leading companies across six sustainability topics.

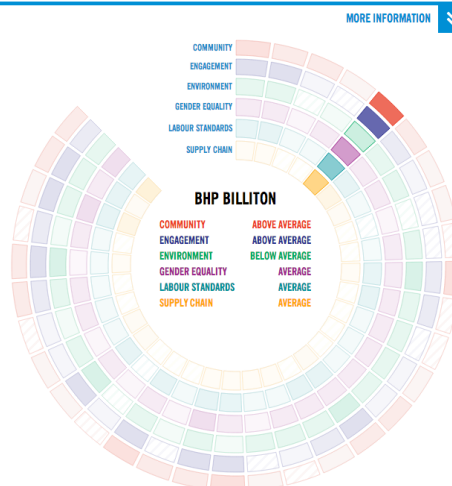
These are: supply chain, environment, labour standards, gender equality, community investment and sustainability engagement.

## 2013 CATALYST CSR DASHBOARD

The Catalyst Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Dashboard.

This report tracks how, and how well, leading companies are keeping faith with growing community, consumer and investor pressure for better social and environmental outcomes.

Hover and click on the infographic to the right to explore more about each company, topic or reporting indicator.



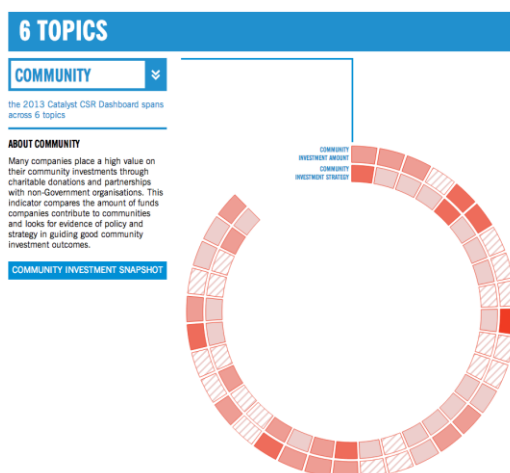
Accompanying the website is a series of six ‘snapshot’ reports available on our website:

- A more complete picture of sustainability (Brief Methodology and Project Outline)
- Sustainability Performance Snapshot. Findings from the CSR Dashboard
- Environment Performance Snapshot
- Labour Standards and Supply Chain – Global Comparison Snapshot
- Community Investment Snapshot
- Gender Equality Snapshot.

## Community investment

Our 2012 benchmark report on community investment *What Gives? How companies invest in communities* remains highly regarded.

The CSR Dashboard provided us with an opportunity to test corporate-community investment approaches more widely. The results are displayed on our website and written up in a summary ‘snapshot’ paper.



Researchers Jenni Downes and Martijn Boersma presented these findings at the London Benchmarking Group Annual Conference in November 2013.

## Events and Seminars

### “Supply Chains 101”

Following the CSR Dashboard Launch in June 2013, Catalyst held its first big event focusing on the findings of the research, specifically in the critical area of supply chains and labour standards where the under-performance of Australian companies is stark.

The seminar assembled four expert speakers and attracted an equally high calibre audience of leaders from non-Government organisations, academics, trade unionists and federal government representatives. Participants were highly engaged in the issue and greatly valued contribution of speakers. The seminar confirmed the importance of Catalysts’ work and its application for practitioners. Many attendees indicated an interest in working with Catalyst on future supply chain related projects

Presenters (from left):

Martijn Boersma and Jo Schofield (Catalyst),  
Jaana Quaintance James (Banarra), Michele  
O’Neil (Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union)  
and Andrew Dettmer (Australian Manufacturing  
Workers Union and Catalyst Board member)



### Anti-Poverty Week – Proposed seminar with Moniruzzaman Masum, Bangladesh Labour Federation

Catalyst and the NTEU NSW branch planned a discussion on global supply chains and labour standards in the aftermath of the Rana Plaza disaster with Bangladesh Labour Federation activist Moniruzzaman Masum.

However the event was postponed after Australian immigration officials refused two consecutive visa applications from Masum. The second visa application included a number of documents with endorsements and guarantees of financial support for the visit from Australian unions. The Australian Government noted that Masum, with only \$46 in his bank account, was just too poor to be granted entry to Australia. This was an extremely disappointing outcome for Masum and for the dozens of academics, unionists and aid and development workers who were interested in hearing him speak. Catalyst hopes a future visa application will be successful.

## **Democracy today with an eye on tomorrow: A public conversation with the Whitlam Institute and UnionsNSW**

Catalyst joined with the Whitlam Institute and UnionsNSW to co-host an exceptional gathering of internationally renowned thinkers for an all too rare public conversation on the questions that are shaking western democracies to their foundations. Further details, including speakers, papers and videos can be found at [http://whitlam.org/news\\_and\\_events/democracyforum](http://whitlam.org/news_and_events/democracyforum)

## **Networks and Members**

Catalyst greatly values its small and committed membership and their continued interest and enthusiasm for our research, campaigns and events.

Catalyst is part of thriving network of think tanks, policy, research, trade union and community organisations. In 2013, we worked with friends in dozens of organisations, including:

- Anti-Slavery Group, UTS
- Australian Council of Trade Unions
- Australian Education Union
- Australian Manufacturing Workers Union
- The Australia Institute
- Banarra Consulting
- Centre for Corporate Governance, UTS
- Centre for Policy Development
- Construction, Forestry Mining and Energy Union
- Construction, Forestry Mining and Energy Union, Mining and Energy Division
- Institute for Sustainable Futures, UTS
- Jubilee Australia
- McKell Institute
- Percapita
- Refugee Advice and Casework Service
- Search Foundation
- Transport Workers Union
- United Voice
- Welcome to Australia
- The Whitlam Institute

## Communications and media

Our media efforts were again supported by the great team at Mountain Media and were focused on the release of the CSR Dashboard. Audio files are accessible on the website.

[CBA and Westpac go head-to-head in CSR study](#), Finsia (Financial Services Institute of Australasia), 11 June 2013

[Mind the gap: company disclosure discrepancies not sustainable](#), The Conversation, 13 June 2013

[Time for big business to lift its game on CSR](#), Working Life, 14 June 2013

[Catalyst Corporate Social Responsibility Dashboard is a must see](#), BACS (Business and Community Shares, New Zealand), 19 June 2013

[Dashboard Tool Ranks Triple Bottom Line](#), ProBono News, 26 June 2013

[Gender Diversity needed in Government](#), The Australian, 11 October 2013

## Website and social media

As part of the CSR Dashboard project our web designers at Boccalatte and Small Multiples successfully built a new website to house the CSR Dashboard which integrated seamlessly with Catalyst's central web presence.

In 2013 our social media strengthened with hundreds of additional new facebook followers and a larger Twitter audience. The Catalyst ENews now has over five hundred subscribers, and our social media reach extends around the globe, to link us to media, academic, sustainability, research and campaigning organisations in the United Kingdom, United States and New Zealand.

## Committee and governance

Our core funding for 2013 was provided by the following donor unions:

Australian Education Union [www.aeufederal.org.au](http://www.aeufederal.org.au)

Australian Manufacturing Workers Union [www.amwu.org.au](http://www.amwu.org.au)

Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union [www.cfmeu.net.au](http://www.cfmeu.net.au)

National Tertiary Education Union [www.nteu.org.au](http://www.nteu.org.au)

United Voice [www.unitedvoice.org.au](http://www.unitedvoice.org.au)

As in previous years, a copy of the audited financial accounts for the 2012-13 year is distributed at our AGM and is available to all members on request.



## Management Committee

Our board brings diverse skills from leaders in the community sector, trade union movement, academics and campaigners. Catalyst's Constitution provides that five of Management Committee be elected by the membership at the AGM. These positions are held by independent members, including the President of Catalyst. Five additional positions are held by donor unions, including the Secretary/Treasurer position.

The Committee for 2013 consisted of: Dr Richard Archer (President), Susan Hopgood (Treasurer-Secretary), Alison Peters (Vice-President), John Sutton (resigned March 2013), Paul Bastian (resigned March 2013), Andrew Dettmer (from March 2013), David Carey (resigned November 2012), Lesley Gruit (November 2012 - May 2013), Maree O'Halloran, David McKnight, Chris Gambian, Louise Tarrant and Jo-anne Schofield (Executive Director)

## Staff and consultants

Under the leadership of Executive Director Jo-anne Schofield, Catalyst retained the services of talented researchers Martijn Boersma and Jenni Downes. Martijn will continue in his part time role into 2014 maintaining his expert oversight of the CSR Dashboard with his academic role at the Centre for Corporate Governance at UTS. Jenni remains a valuable consultant to Catalyst who is able to assist on major projects and reports, particularly regarding community investment. She balances this role with her work at the Institute of Sustainable Futures at UTS.

Catherine Turner also continued in her role as Executive and Policy Adviser, managing the administration, finances, website, events and communications.

Our staff all work part time, and balance their commitment to Catalyst with their broader social justice and sustainability interests. Catalyst is very grateful for their continued contribution over the year.

In 2013 Catalyst was fortunate to engage researchers Claire Parfitt and Gabrielle Lynch to produce our major report, *What is Wealth For?* Both brought practical campaigning experience and deep academic insights to that work.

We also continued our valuable association with Banarra Consulting, through the engagement of Jaana Quaintance-James to provide expert advice on the CSR Dashboard and to present an overview at our 'Supply Chains 101' Seminar.

Our work was further enhanced by our continued partnership with our design team at Bocalatte, while our regularly commissioned editor, Kathleen James added great value to our printed material.

## **Our plans for 2014**

It's been a big year for Catalyst and we can do more in 2014. Fundraising will be important to our continued success, along with expanding our networks to strengthen our focus corporate social responsibility and social justice.

Next year we will sharpen our approach by aligning our analytical work with a campaigning focus through a project on child labour. The project will involve unions, leading NGO's and Catalyst will also invite interested companies and investors to work with us to develop guidance and sound principles that can be applied to this important supply chain area.

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