



# 3 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

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THE ROTARY CLUB  
OF BRISBANE INC  
  
ACHIEVING DIVERSITY

COMPILED BY:  
JAYANI AMARASINGHE

*DEDICATED TO THE ROTARY CLUB  
OF BRISBANE 95<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY*

*29<sup>TH</sup> - MAY- 2018*



## Preface

*I am given the honour to be President of the Rotary Club of Brisbane in the 2017/2018 Rotary year. Our Club was established back in 1923 and is the first Rotary club in Queensland. Despite the recognition for the value of its service, the Rotary Club of Brisbane suffers from the very problem Rotary has in general in the "western" world – declining membership. This reduces both the current capacity and the future potential of the Club to follow its mission. To continue making a difference in the Brisbane community and even expand its positive impact on society, the Club needs to expand its membership base which is at the core of its community efforts. And having done that, it also needs to retain these members and help them expand their horizons into service in the wider world community.*



Daniel Vankov

**President**

Rotary Club of Brisbane

During my year as the Rotary Club of Brisbane President I was committed to encourage innovation and positive approaches in addressing our Club challenges. This very comprehensive Strategy document is a result of our Club effort to face the reality and look into a "mirror" in order to identify not only the challenges that lie in front of us but also how we can leverage our internal resources to successfully meet those challenges.

I am delighted to introduce you to our 3-year Strategic Plan "Achieving Diversity". It represents an independent overview of both the Rotary Club of Brisbane status quo and the views of our current, some of our ex- as well as of some of our potential members. The Strategy is an excellent starting point for our future Presidents to develop their actions plans accordingly.

Thank you, Jayani, for your hard work and for your persistence to unveil the true picture!

## About the Author

*Jayani Amarasinghe is an experienced Strategy Consultant, having worked as a Manager at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Sri Lanka in Corporate Finance and Strategy Consulting. She has over 8 years of experience in many facets of strategic advisory.*

Her previous work in the area of strategy consulting includes leading teams of consultants to identify areas for development and key issues facing corporates. This includes assessing the effectiveness of regulatory environments and profiling of select institutions as precursors for investments.

She's a qualified financial professional, being a member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (UK), Chartered Management Accountants (UK) and Certified Professional Accountants (Australia).

This study was carried out as part of her final subject for the Master in Business Administration programme at the QUT Graduate School of Business.



Jayani Amarasinghe  
**Strategy Consultant**

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## Executive Summary

With an overarching theme of “Achieving Diversity”, the study broadly analyses the issue of aging and falling membership of service organisations such as Rotary and focuses attention specifically on these challenges in the context of the Rotary Club of Brisbane (“the Club”). The Club's membership has dwindled significantly from a peak of 246 in 1969 to a current membership of 35 and the Club is aging, with 80% of its Club members being over the age of 50, and 37% being over 70. In an attempt to solve these challenges, the study sets out to provide answers to the key problem of “How the Rotary Club of Brisbane can target its efforts to attract and retain new, diverse and active members?”. From this key problem statement, the following three research questions were developed that framed the outcomes of the study.

- What? What is the value proposition that is delivered by the Rotary Club of Brisbane?
- Who? Who is the “Ideal Rotarian” and who are the target markets and demographic segments that will be attracted to the value proposition offered by the Club?
- How? How can the Club grow and diversify its membership?

In answering the above research questions, the study encompassed a combination of primary and secondary research sources and tools. The primary research was carried out in the form of surveys. Face to face and telephone interviews and questionnaire-based surveys were utilised in order to gather exploratory and qualitative data from Club members, ex-Club members, members of suburban Rotary Clubs and potential members (QUT Business School alumni).

On the basis of secondary research, social and life style changes and economic transformations were identified as the key underlying causes which has led to a fall in civic engagement among younger generations and correspondingly an observed decline in membership of social service organisations such as Rotary. The research findings revealed that time and cost associated with volunteering were key constraints for younger demographics and therefore flexibility was essential. Both primary and secondary research findings, seemed to collaborate these assertions, with the study identifying commonalities in findings with regard to the importance and emphasis placed on diversity and flexibility.

Focusing on the Rotary Club of Brisbane, all those surveyed unanimously agreed and supported diversity within the Club. In terms of flexibility, the degree of flexibility that is

offered was connected to the pace of change. The pace of change of the Rotary Club of Brisbane was described by many as "very slow". This was also associated with how the Club was being perceived, with many of those surveyed describing the Club as being ancient, old school or steeped in tradition. Therefore, in terms of change and flexibility, a deep divide was identified among the viewpoints of Club members with some understanding the need for flexibility expecting radical change, while several others were resisting flexibility altogether. For the Club to move forward compromises will need to be made. However, the balance of power in making decisions as highlighted by those surveyed, was with senior members who were presently not fully open to hearing the voice for change.

Based on the research findings, solutions were arrived at which address the key research questions of the study of "what?", "who?" and "how?". In terms of the question "what?", two separate value propositions were compiled for the Club, focusing on its general membership and proposed corporate membership.

In addressing the question of "who?" the "Ideal Rotarian" was conceptualised as;

"A socially conscious business or professional individual, who believes in truth, fairness, building goodwill and doing what's beneficial for all concerned; who has the expertise, knowledge, experience and capacity to give back to the community, and who is willing to volunteer time and resources for social causes".

Stemming from this conceptualisation and research findings, the following target markets were identified for the Club.

- Age 30-49 years: Developing professionals and business leaders
- Age 50-64 years: Established professionals and business leaders
- Age 65+ years: Retired and semi-retired professional and business individuals
- Corporates

In identifying solutions for the question of "how?", strategies were developed that focused on achieving diversity through the attraction of younger demographics and women members and also in the form of a 3-year strategic plan.

The 3-year strategic plan was framed under 3 horizons, each focusing on key elements that can improve the Club's current and future state. The strategies for the 1st year focus on strengthening the Club's core activities. Key areas examined in year 1 were leadership and administration, club projects, weekly meetings, building the Club's image, fellowship and developing induction and mentoring and leadership development programs. The strategies for the 2nd year examine building on and leveraging on the foundation that

has been created through strategies implemented in year 1. It aims at targeting emerging membership markets such as corporates, professionals and business and community leaders. Year 3 builds on both year 1 and year 2 strategies and focuses on bolstering the Club's position within the Brisbane CBD, through consolidation.

In developing the 3-year strategic plan, compromises have been made and where possible alternative strategies have been suggested. However, given the opposing viewpoints among Club members, gaining consensus will be crucial to its success. Furthermore, managing change will be essential for the effectiveness of the Strategic Plan and pacing this change will be critical. Moreover, amid the leadership of the Club changing every year with a new president being inducted, this would be a key limitation for the continuity of the strategic plan. Therefore, unless consensus is sort among Club members and clear implementation plans developed, the success of the strategic plan and its continuation will be at risk.

The challenges of aging and falling membership cannot be addressed without achieving diversity and diversity cannot be achieved without change and flexibility. The Club needs to recognise that it is at a crucial turning point and its future survival depends on the strategies it implements today.





## SECTION 1

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### THE STUDY

## Background & Context

Rotary is a leading international service organisation with over 1.2 million members and 35,000 clubs around the world (Rotary International, n.d.). Founded in 1923, the Rotary Club of Brisbane ("the Club") has been a high-profile club within the Brisbane Central Business District. Presently, the Club is facing significant challenges with its membership aging and declining. From a peak membership of 246 in 1969, the membership has steadily dwindled, with the current membership standing at 35 members. Furthermore, 80% of its Club members are over the age of 50, with 37% of the Club being over 70.

Globally, Rotary clubs have lost 1.2 million members over the past 8 years and the average Australian Rotarian is now aged 71 (Pulley, 2016). Similar to Rotary many other service organisations have been observing declining membership, with the membership of clubs such as Jaycees and Masons falling by 64% and 76% respectively over the past two decades (Brand, 2016). This decline being observed in service organisations is not so much that old club members are dropping out, but rather that "community organisations are no longer continuously revitalised as in the past, by the freshers of new members" (Putnam, 2000). Furthermore, the decline observed, not only depicts a quantitative decline in involvement in voluntary associations, but a qualitative one, where there is a shift from active involvement towards more passive and instrumental forms often for a more directly personal interest (Putnam, 2000, Dekker and Broak, 2000).

The key underlying causes of such trends have been identified as social and life style changes (Putnam, 2000) and economic transformations (Keen, 1999). These impacts are evident in Australia as statistics indicate volunteer numbers falling by 5% over the period 2010 to 2014, Australians feeling increasingly time-poor with 45% of women and 36% of men feeling always or often rushed or pressed for time and a decline being observed in the proportion of Australians providing less formal help (ABS, 2015).

While there is debate surrounding assertions on the origins (Dekker and Broak, 2000), the problem of aging and falling membership of social service and civil organisations such as Rotary nevertheless remains a "complex" and "wicked" problem being a symptom of a wider array of social and economic transformations.

## Problem Statement

This Study focuses on the Rotary Club of Brisbane. Therefore, in developing the problem statement, consideration was placed on the Club's anticipated goal of having "60 members by 30 June 2018, of whom at least 25% are women" and on identifying effective methods of attraction and retention that are targeted at specific and diverse membership bases.

"How can the Rotary Club of Brisbane target its efforts to attract and retain new, diverse and active members?"

## The Purpose of The Study

Based on the problem statement, the purpose of the study was broadly listed as follows:

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ To explore the value that can be gained by being a part of the Rotary Club of Brisbane and what motivates individuals to join the Club.</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ To explore the concept of an "Ideal Rotarian" who encompasses characteristics that are ideal to provide the 'best-fit' and can derive the most value to the Club.</li></ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ To investigate target markets and/or personas of individuals derived from the concept of "Ideal Rotarian" who will be attracted to the Club's value proposition and would allow diversity among its membership., and</li></ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ To develop both short and long-term strategies that can attract and retain targeted new, diverse and active members.</li></ul>   |

In summary, therefore, the purpose of the study was to produce a 3-year strategic plan for the Rotary Club of Brisbane, which comprises of targeted strategies to grow membership by achieving diversity in attracting and retaining a combination of demographically diverse members.

## The Research Questions

The key research questions that stem from the problem statement and the purpose of the study was identified as follows (Table 1):

Table 1: Key Research questions

What?	What is the value proposition that is offered by the Rotary Club of Brisbane?
Who?	Who is the 'Ideal Rotarian' that could generate the most value to the Club? Derived from this 'Ideal Rotarian', who are the target markets and demographic segments that will be attracted to the value proposition offered by the Club?
How?	How can the Club grow and diversify its membership? What are the strategies/ mechanisms/channels that can be used to attract and retain identified target markets of diverse and active members?

## Research Design & Methodology

Given that the study was expected to solve a specific problem of membership for the Rotary Club of Brisbane, the overall Research methodology was based on 'applied research' which was anticipated to provide practical outcomes that can be derived through the research and can be utilised in the development of clear strategic solutions for the Club.

Table 2: Primary and secondary data collection

<p>Primary Research:</p> <p><i>Data was gathered directly from the source.</i></p>	<p>The key sources for Primary Research were as follows:</p> <p><i>Current Club members:</i> A total of 35 members were involved in the study. From the total members a sample of 15 members were selected based on the following criteria for face to face or telephone interviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Tenure of membership (long term members vs. newly inducted)</li> <li>b. Demographics (gender, age)</li> <li>c. Members involved in Membership, Service Projects and Public Image Committees</li> <li>d. Members who have significant say in the future direction of the club (Board members, present president and incoming presidents &amp; secretaries based on the club's succession plan)</li> </ul> <p><i>Study Response:</i></p> <p>Of the members involved in the study 23 members responded. Interviews were had with 14 Club members and 9 members responded through a questionnaire.</p> <p><i>Ex- Club members:</i> The study included 5 ex-members of the Club, who had stated their willingness to be a part of the study.</p>
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	<p><i>Study Response:</i></p> <p>Responses were gained from 4 ex-members through face to face interviews and questionnaires.</p> <p><i>Club members from suburban Rotary clubs:</i> The study involved two members of suburban Rotary clubs, who were interviewed in order to gain an understanding of the dynamics of a suburban club compared to a city club such as the Rotary Club of Brisbane.</p> <p><i>Alumni of the QUT Business School:</i> The study involved 10 members of the alumni who were familiar with the issues faced by the Rotary Club of Brisbane through their previous involvement in the QUT 'Ideas Factory' and had expressed their willingness to be part of the study. The alumni members were expected to provide insights from the point of potential members and were expected to be involved in a focus group discussion and ideation session.</p> <p><i>Study Response:</i></p> <p>Of the QUT alumni involved in the study 6 alumni members responded. Due to time constraints faced by respondents, responses were gained through a questionnaire as oppose to having a focus group discussion and ideation session. Amid the alumni already having been involved in an ideation session through the 'Ideas Factory' a content review was carried out (which formed part of the secondary research) to further gain insights as to possible strategies for the Club.</p>
<p>Secondary Research:</p> <p>The review of published data.</p>	<p>Secondary research in terms of desktop analysis of publications, journal articles, insights gained from the QUT 'Ideas Factory', survey data by the Rotary Club of Brisbane and Rotary International etc. was carried out to better understand the broader background of the challenges faced by the Club and possible strategies to attract new members to the Club.</p>

## Insights- Research Approach

Of the 'qualitative research' approaches adopted, interviews proved to be the most effective research tool in gathering 'exploratory' data, by allowing to effectively extract different viewpoints and opinions from members and ex members. While a questionnaire-based survey was also used to obtain information from Club members and ex-members, the inability to customise the questionnaire based on the profile of the respondent and the incapability to probe on questions were clear limitations. However, given time constraints, not only on the part of the study but on the part of respondents' questionnaire-based surveys were an appropriate alternative to gather viewpoints from different sources involved in the study.

Significant limitations were faced in engaging with the QUT Business School alumni as part of the study. Given their background knowledge of the Club due to the involvement of the alumni in the 'Ideas Factory', they did not form the ideal sample to gain responses as potential members in the form of a focus group, as their responses would not have been spontaneous. Furthermore, given the time constraints faced by respondents it was difficult to gain face to face participation of the alumni. Therefore, a questionnaire-based survey was considered the best approach in gaining insights.



## SECTION 2

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## THE FINDINGS

## Research Findings

### Secondary Research Key Findings

#### Secondary Survey Data

One of the key secondary research documents assessed was the “2017 Triennial Strategic Planning Survey” which was a global survey of Rotarians, Rotaractors and alumni carried out by Rotary international. There were several challenges and observations identified through the survey that resonated with the Rotary Club of Brisbane (Rotary international, 2017).

Table 3: Key Findings- 2017 Triennial Strategic Planning Survey

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Younger Rotarians, female Rotarians, Rotaractors, and alumni desired a higher percentage of younger and female members than Rotary has currently.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A significant percentage of Rotarians were frustrated with the pace of change.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many Rotarians wanted their clubs to take part in more community service and international service projects.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Results suggested that some clubs do a poor job of involving Rotarians in projects and activities, which can lead to member disengagement and attrition.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More strategic planning by Rotary clubs was thought to improve members' satisfaction and their optimism for Rotary's future.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not only Rotaractors and alumni but also a growing number of Rotarians chose the environment as a chief cause for their ideal organisation.</li> </ul>

#### Content Review- 'Ideas Factory'

Through the 'Ideas Factory' 23 QUT Business School alumni, in 5 groups collectively ideated on “How to promote community engagement amongst Brisbane CBD professionals through the Rotary Club of Brisbane?”. The salient points of the discussions and recommendations made by QUT Business School alumni during the 'Ideas Factory' are highlighted as follows (Table 4).

Table 4: Key Findings- Ideas Factory

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The general perception of QUT alumni, of the Rotary Club of Brisbane (depicted through rich pictures) was that of a club that has not adapted with time.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Through their discussions, recommendations and analysis presented through frameworks, all alumni groups seem to comprehend the need for flexibility and identified time and cost as being key constraints of being part of the Club.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Another key insight provided by the alumni was that senior members of the Club are a significant asset to the Club which is currently not being leveraged on, as mentoring programs run by senior members can be a key attractor for new members.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The need for a clear value proposition was acknowledged by several alumni groups, with “defining a value proposition” or understanding the “why?” being one of the key recommendations set out for the first 30 days.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two alumni groups clearly emphasised the need of conceptualising the “Ideal Rotarian” or the need to identify target markets.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Other key recommendations involved partnering with corporates or providing corporate membership and involving more volunteers with the view of being able to convert them to permanent members.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Most groups also acknowledged the importance of using social media for promotion, and the importance of a clear marketing and channel strategy.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Another significant area which several groups seem to recognise was the need for engaging with Club members whether align with the value proposition or to gain feedback and buy-in.</li> </ul>

A more detailed discussion of the ‘Ideas Factory’ findings is provided in Appendix 1.

### ABS Statistics- Volunteering Patterns in Australia

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in its General Social Survey carried out in 2010 provided several insights into volunteering patterns in Australia. In the survey “a volunteer was defined as someone who, willingly gave unpaid help, in the form of time, service or skills, through an organisation or group” (ABS, 2011).



Table 5: Volunteering statistics

Gender:	More women than men participate in volunteering. In 2010, of Australians aged 18 years and over, 38% of females volunteered compared to 34% of males (ABS,2010).
Age groups:	For both males and females, people between the middle age groups of 35-44 years to 65-74 years were more likely to volunteer than those in younger and older age groups (ABS,2011). Of females those age groups more likely to volunteer were 35-44 years (45%) and 45-54 years (48%) in 2010. For males this age group differed with males aged 55-64 years (46%) more likely than other males to volunteer in 2010. This possibly reflected increased availability of this age group to undertake voluntary work as their entering retirement (ABS, 2011).
Life Stage:	"Parents in couple relationships and with dependent children aged 5-17 years had the highest rate of participation in voluntary work (55%)" (ABS, 2011). This was reflective of "family commitments such as volunteering to support activities undertaken by their children, as well as the support that couple parents are often able to provide to each other to facilitate activities such as volunteering" (ABS, 2011). A key observation therefore is that the type of volunteer work most likely to be undertaken by those who have dependent children revolve mostly around activities where they can be involved as a family unit.
Type of volunteering:	In 2010, people within the age groups 35-44 years and 45-54 years (47% and 46% of volunteers respectively) were most likely to volunteer in a sports and recreation organisation. While people aged 65 years and over most commonly volunteered for welfare and community organisations (37%) (ABS, 2011).
Occupation:	"For employed people, the volunteer rate varied considerably between occupational groups with professionals and managers having higher volunteer rates (51% and 47% respectively) than machinery operators and drivers, labourers, and technicians and trades workers (26%, 28% and 32% respectively)" (ABS, 2011).

Reasons for volunteering:	The common reasons identified for being a volunteer was; to help others or the community (64%), personal satisfaction (57%), to do something worthwhile (54%), personal or family involvement (45%), social contact (37%) and to be active (35%) (ABS, 2014).
Family and childhood experience:	Children whose parents had volunteered were more likely to volunteer themselves, with "66% of volunteers reporting that their parents had done some voluntary work compared to 44% of non-volunteers" (ABS, 2011).

## Primary Research- Key Survey Findings

### Club Members- Key Findings

Through the responses provided by Club members, a clear divide in viewpoints, which can be observed with a section of members identifying the need to change, while others seem to reminisce the past, identifying with a Club that was. The history of the Club and its traditions should not be forgotten; however, the past seems to hold captive several members who do not wish to move out of their comfort zones. Therefore, while they understand the challenges the Club is facing and identify that strategies need to be put in place to face those challenges, they do not wish to commit to substantial change within the structure or format of the Club. This resistance to change is causing concerns and frustrations amongst Club members who identify that the Club needs to change and adapt not only to grow but survive.

Table 6: Survey findings- Club members

The current perspective of the Club
In the survey questionnaire one of the key questions that was asked was to describe the Rotary Club of Brisbane in one sentence. The question was meant to identify how Club members presently perceived the Club. Close to 61% of members identified the Club as needing renewal, with Club members using terms such as "tired", "archaic", "looking for direction" etc. to describe the Club. The balance responses reflected terms such as "premiere", "central/parent", "old and prestigious", "good and small", "solid" etc. to identify the Club.

### Initial motivators to join the Club

Identifying what initially led Club members to join the Club can be a starting point in understanding the value drivers of the Club. Of the responses received, 48% of Club members joined the Club to give back to the community or social service, 39% joined to meet people within the community or different industries, 4% for networking and the balance 9% for other reasons which include continuing from another club.

### Service or business club?

Understanding whether the Club was considered a service club, or a professional business club helps to identify the motivations behind the viewpoints of Club members. From those surveyed, 65% of Club members believed that the Rotary Club of Brisbane was more a service organisation, compared 26% who thought it was a business/professional club and 9% who thought it was both a service and business Club.

### Exclusive or Inclusive?

The question of "Exclusive" or "Inclusive" was asked to identify who would 'best fit' with the Rotary Club of Brisbane. The majority of 61% of members surveyed wanted the Club to remain "Exclusive", 35% wanted the Club to be "Inclusive" and 4% did not offer a response to the question. Of the members who responded as "Exclusive" many seem to identify "Exclusive" as membership by referral, where membership is restricted to likeminded individuals from business and professional backgrounds, who can contribute to the Club. However, there were also several members who associated "Exclusive" as being "Elite" or high profile.

### Altering the format of the Club

The majority of 83% of Club members identified the need for changing the present format of the Club. Some of the respondents who saw the need to change, were broad in their comments, stating that they were pro change, if it leads to attracting new members. Of those who elaborated on this question, all members referred to the weekly meetings. Concerns varied on areas such as meeting venue/cost, meeting times, traditions such as saying grace, toasting and singing the national anthem to guest speakers. The meeting venue/cost seem especially a contentious issue, with members interviewed being approximately divided 50/50 on this issue.

### Change of demographics and diversity

There was consensus observed amongst Club members in supporting a change of demographics and diversity within the Club. The term "diversity" was left open for interpretation by respondents. The majority of members presented views on attracting more women members, while several identified diversity in professions within the Club.

### Pace of change?

Club members were asked for their opinion on the pace of change of the Club. This was to identify whether they perceived that there has been attempts for transformation occurring within the Club, given dwindling membership numbers. The majority of 65% of members indicated that the pace of change was either "slow" or "very slow" or "no change", 22% noted that changes are occurring, while 13% of the responses received by Club members were unclear.

### The strength of current projects and ability to network

Though the majority of Club members identified the Club as being a service Club, 83% believed that the current projects undertaken by the Club are weak in its impact on the community. Some of the comments made by Club members also noted how current Club projects were not as strong as Club projects were in the past.

Similarly, even though 26% of Club members identified the Club as a business/professional club, the overwhelming majority of 91% of members identified that the Club does not offer professional networking opportunities (35%) or that some opportunities are provided but not at Club level (56%).

### Long term perspective

The question of how Club members view the Club performing over the next 5 to 10 years was asked to understand the belief of Club members on the future of the Rotary Club of Brisbane. Of the members surveyed 57% were concerned of the future growth and existence of the Club, 30% were positive of the future, expecting the Club will grow, 9% didn't know what the future held for the Club and 4% did not respond.

### Continuing as a member

Of the members who responded to the survey, 5 members stated that they do not strongly believe that they would remain a member of the Rotary Club of Brisbane in the future. These members through their responses had all indicated the need for change within the Club and many indicated their frustration with the lack of positive change observed.

### Ex-Club Members- Key Findings

Of the ex-Club members surveyed, the majority of ex-members indicated the Club not living up to their expectations, as the key reason for leaving the Club. There seemed to be consensus amongst all ex-members, of the Club being "Old school". The Club was described by ex-members as being steeped in tradition and having an aversion to change. The majority of ex-members also commented on the difficulty to relate to the service projects or lack of it in the Club and not feeling engaged within the Club.

Questioned on what changes they would implement if they had the ability, all ex-members mentioned that they would reduce the cost of membership and offer cheaper venues and meals. Other comments made by ex-members on this topic were "put into action meaningful projects", "do away with grace and the Australian Anthem (other than on appropriate event days)", "collaborate and build teamwork", "have better fundraisers that are more inclusive than a Golf Day", "subsidise young members", "rebuild membership", "increase diversity" and "merge".

Many of the ex-members surveyed were openly frustrated with the Club for not implementing change and all ex- Club members identified the need for change within the Club. One ex-member indicated the willingness to re-join the Club if the Club were to embrace change. On the question of how they felt the Club would perform over the next 5-10 years, the majority of ex-members had a bleak view indicating that if the Club were to stay on the same path, it most probably will be non-existent.

### Potential Club Members- Key Findings

In seeking their viewpoints QUT Business School alumni were viewed as potential members of the Rotary Club of Brisbane. The response rate of QUT Business School alumni to the questionnaire-based survey stood at 60% of those surveyed. Of those who did not respond to the survey, one QUT Business School alumnus commented on the inability to be involved



in the survey as a potential member, due to not wanting to be a member of the Rotary Club of Brisbane. The reasoning provided for not wanting to be a member of the Club was that the Club had no clear value proposition, it is extremely costly and that it was old fashioned. It should be noted that the QUT Business School alumni contacted for the survey were involved in the "Ideas Factory" for the Rotary Club of Brisbane and therefore were privy to the issues currently faced by the Club.

Supporting the comments made by the Business School alumnus, 100% of the QUT alumni who responded to the survey, noted that the cost attached to the membership of the Club, including weekly meetings was excessive. The survey also questioned views on preference when it came to weekly meetings. Of the respondents none of alumni felt that a lunch meeting was convenient, 67% were in favour of an evening meeting, while 33% favoured a breakfast meeting. The alumni were also asked to rank what they felt were key motivators in joining a Club such as the Rotary Club of Brisbane. Those who responded noted fellowship, leadership development and networking as their key motivators, with giving back to the community being noted as a secondary motivator. On the topic of whether the alumni wanted to be involved in a Club which was "Exclusive" or "Inclusive", 83% of respondents picked wanting to be involved in a club that was "Inclusive". In terms of preference for a service project, 60% picked an international project, with the balance responses equally split between preferring a local and a regional project.

### Members of suburban Clubs- Key Findings

The main aim in interviewing two members of suburban clubs was to identify the differences and/or similarities of those clubs in terms of club format, projects and challenges they face compared to the Rotary Club of Brisbane. In terms of format, one of the clubs was a club where members met in the evening, while the other was a breakfast club. While suburban clubs were meant to find it easier to find local projects, both clubs also focused on international projects. Furthermore, members of these clubs were not only donating funds but were also donating their effort in terms of projects. One of the clubs had a relatively younger demography in its membership than the other and the key attraction was said to be the fun, humour and fellowship which was brought into events, fundraises and meetings that were organised. Though not to the extent of what is observed at the Rotary Club of Brisbane, both clubs noted challenges in attracting new members. On this point, both clubs seem to lag on areas such as mentorship, networking etc. and a city club such as the Rotary Club of Brisbane seem to be better placed in creating opportunities for itself in this space.

## Insights- Key Research Findings

In analysing the research findings of the study similarities could be observed between what has been revealed through secondary research and primary survey data. Key amongst these commonalities were:

- The importance placed on diversity; and
- The emphasis for flexibility

All those surveyed unanimously agreed that diversity was required within the Club. However, with the majority of Club members indicating their preference to remain "Exclusive", by restricting membership to business and professional individuals, the diversity sought by the Club seemed mostly limited to attracting younger demographics and women members and may not broaden to encompass a diversity in the occupational mix of Club members. Nevertheless, as ABS statistics seem to confirm, professionals and managers have a higher propensity to volunteer than any other occupation.

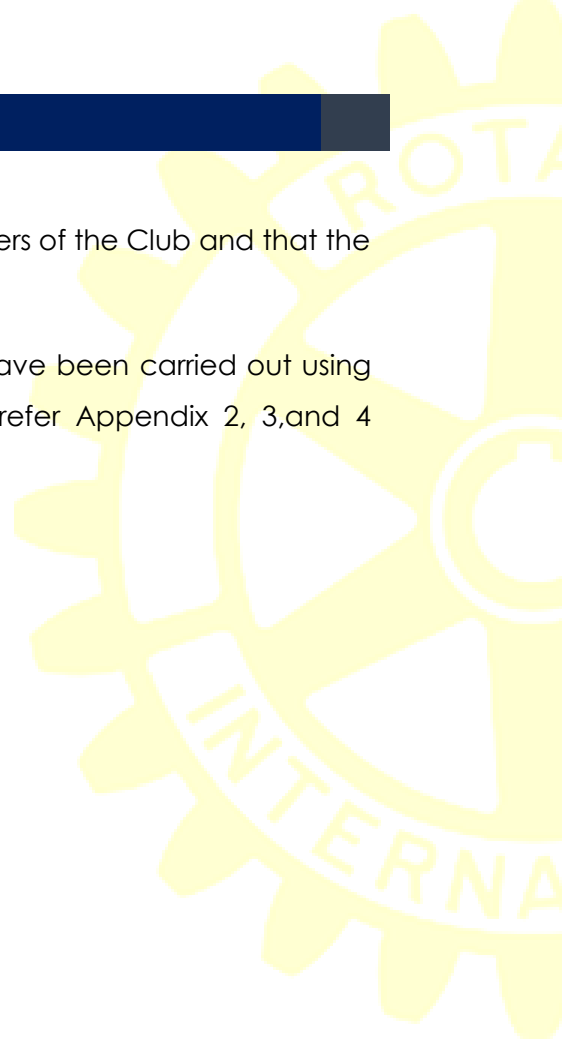
The slow pace of change seems to be an issue faced not only by the Rotary Club of Brisbane, but Rotary clubs in general with Rotary International survey findings indicating that a significant percentage of Rotarians globally are frustrated with the pace of change. The pace of change of the Rotary Club of Brisbane directly links with the need for change and the degree of flexibility offered by the Club. This is also associated with perceptions identified by many of those who were surveyed of the Club being ancient, old school or steeped in tradition. Research findings revealed time and cost associated with volunteering as key constraints for younger demographics.

In terms of the need to change and the offering of flexibility, the survey data of Club members indicated a clear divide of viewpoints. While some were advocating radical change, several others did not identify the need for change or flexibility being offered. Complex reasons seem to surround those who resist change and flexibility, the need to hold on to traditions as it's felt that it defines what the Rotary Club of Brisbane is, assuming inflexibility is somehow linked to "Exclusivity" in that only those who possess flexibility can be a member of the Club, the need to stay within the comfort zone of what has felt comfortable for years and simply believing that, as the Club survived over the past, it will survive into the future.

For the Club to move forward, compromises will need to be made, not only on the part of those who resist change but also on the part of those who expect radical change. However, many members and ex-members who wanted change, viewed that the

balance of power in making decisions was with senior members of the Club and that the voice for change is not being fully heard.

Further analysis and consolidation of the reserach findings have been carried out using frameworks such as PESTEL, SWOT and CATWOE analysis (refer Appendix 2, 3, and 4 respectively).





## SECTION 3

### THE SOLUTIONS

## Research Outcome- The Recommendations

### The Value Proposition

In surveying Club members, the question of what differentiates the Rotary Club from other service organisation was the most difficult question for the majority of members to provide a cohesive answer towards. While some members had little knowledge of what other service organisations offered, many others believed that there was no unique value proposition that the Club offers which differentiates it from other service clubs.

It is important to identify that there is a clear value proposition (Table 7) that the Rotary Club offers and the 'uniqueness' comes from the service projects that members can be involved in. A member of a suburban Rotary Club that was interviewed, elaborated the value proposition of Rotary in a nutshell as "Fun, Fellowship, Foundation and Fulfilment". However, there is more the Club can offer as a value proposition, based on what would motivate especially younger members to join the Club.

Table 7: Value proposition

Fun:	Fun stands for the fact that providing service to the community need not be boring or tedious but 'fun'. Projects and fundraisers and events can be organised in such a way that the element of fun is built into these activities and families where possible can volunteer together.
Fellowship:	Being part of Rotatory, members have the opportunity to meet and build connections with people, who have a passion to make a positive change through service projects. Furthermore, Rotary also offers "members who share a common interest in recreational activities, sports, hobbies, or professions" to connect through 'Rotary Fellowship'. Rotary Fellowship functions independently to Rotary International and "helps participants make lasting friendships outside their own club, district, or country" (Rotary International, n.d).



Foundation:	Foundation refers to the ability to be part of the Rotary foundation which has donated over 3 billion dollars to worthy causes around the world and be part of a leading international humanitarian organisation, which has been described as one of the “greatest non-profit, non-religious, non-governmental organisation in the history of the world” (Pulley, 2016).
Fulfilment:	Fulfilment refers to the many ways that members can volunteer within Rotary, through its 5 areas of service; Community service, International service, Vocational service, Youth service and Club service. It also identifies the uniqueness that Rotary offers by allowing the opportunity for members to propose their own projects that are close to their heart, which if successful can not only gain support from the Club but also the foundation.
Leadership and personal development:	Rotary offers its members a pathway to leadership, from club Level to district Level to international/zone Level. Members not only have the support of senior members but have access to a range of interactive courses through the Rotary Learning Centre to develop their leadership skills and to prepare them for new Rotary roles. Furthermore, young professionals have the opportunity for personal development through club programs on communication, leadership styles, time management, goal setting, teamwork etc. The club also provides forums to expand world understanding by organising guest speakers from diverse backgrounds.
Professional Networking:	Rotary offers a variety of opportunities at club and district level for business and professional networking, through Rotary fellowship events, fundraisers and forums organised.
Mentorship:	The membership of Rotary is diverse and includes business, professional and community leaders who have extensive knowledge and expertise. Young entrepreneurs and professionals can gain from their mentorship, which forms part of vocational service, for senior club members.

The above value proposition describes what the Club can offer its general membership. However, with the Rotary Club of Brisbane also attempting to roll out Corporate membership, a well-defined value proposition is critical to attract Corporate members to the Club. Therefore, the following describes the value proposition that the Rotary Club of Brisbane can offer its Corporate members.

Table 8: Value proposition-Corporate members

Local and international projects:	The Corporate has the ability to be involved in meaningful and impactful service projects both local and international that can form part of the Corporate's CSR initiatives. Amid the Rotary Club of Brisbane having the ability to be involved in an array of service projects, the Corporate can choose a project that it could partner with the Club to sponsor.
Project expertise:	The Corporate can leverage on the Club's extensive experience in managing service projects, to assist the its own CSR projects and initiatives. If the Corporate has an idea for a CSR project, but is unsure of how to get it off the ground, the Club can assist by providing the acumen that is needed in planning, managing and delivering this project.
Brand exposure:	The exposure the Rotary Club of Brisbane can bring is not only limited locally. Rotary is a leading, internationally recognised brand for humanitarian services. Therefore, through partnering with the Club, the Corporate can gain brand exposure by being associated to one of the largest service organisation's in the world.
Leadership & Personal Development:	By associating with the Club, the Corporate can offer its staff members opportunities for leadership and personal development. The Club leveraging on the Rotary Learning Centre and its membership, can offer customised programs for leadership and personal development.
Community engagement:	The Rotary Club of Brisbane is involved locally in the Brisbane CBD and can provide opportunities for staff members to be involved in community-based fund raising, events and projects allowing them to better engage with the community and gain consumer awareness.

## The Target Markets

### The “Ideal Rotarian”

A key part of the research approach was to conceptualise the “Ideal Rotarian” who would be able to provide the most value to the Rotary Club of Brisbane.

Observing the viewpoints of Club members, while there were commonalities in attributes, opinions varied widely in terms of the age group and general perceptions on who the “Ideal Rotarian” should be. These varied preferences seemed to be linked to the members opinion of whether the Club is more a social service club or professional/business club. For those members who perceived the Club as more a social service club, the Ideal Rotarian predominantly did not possess any limitations in terms of age or status, with the focus more on key attributes such as being socially conscious, altruistic, caring in nature etc. However, for those who perceived the Club as more a business/professional club, the Ideal Rotarian was a mature individual, who had established his or her career and had the time, means and flexibility to help others by being involved in a Club such as the Rotary Club of Brisbane. However, there was a commonality in attributes, as across the board all members surveyed believed that the “Ideal Rotarian” is one that possesses qualities of helping others and giving back to the community.

In conceptualising the “Ideal Rotarian” it is important to understand the definition of the “Ideal Rotarian” as a person who encompasses characteristics that are ideal to provide the ‘best-fit’ and can derive the most value to the Rotary Club of Brisbane.

### Best fit

The socially conscious attributes of giving back to the community and being aligned with Rotary’s ethical guidelines should allow for identifying “Ideal Rotarians” with the best fit for the Club. Furthermore, as the majority of Club members surveyed, indicated their preference to remain “Exclusive” and engage with likeminded individuals with similar backgrounds, the “Ideal Rotarian” that form the ‘best fit’ with the Rotary Club of Brisbane would also need to be a business or professional individual.

### Value

In terms of deriving the most value to the Club, this would indicate individuals who have the expertise, experience, knowledge and the capacity to drive the Club towards achieving its goals. Therefore, in terms of the “Ideal Rotarian” while age may not matter, individuals need to be mature in their expertise, knowledge, experience and capabilities.

The “Ideal Rotarian” for the Rotary Club of Brisbane, therefore, can be conceptualised as below.

“A socially conscious business or professional individual, who believes in truth, fairness, building goodwill and doing what's beneficial for all concerned; who has the expertise, knowledge, experience and capacity to give back to the community, and who is willing to volunteer time and resources for social causes”.

The above conceptualisation however, should not restrict individuals who are less mature with limited experience from joining the Rotary Club of Brisbane. The “Ideal Rotarian” is the member that individuals who join the Club can aspire to become. While having a socially conscious nature and being aligned with Rotary values are a prerequisite, those who are still developing in their careers and gaining in maturity and experience should have the ability to join the Club and reach the stage of an “Ideal Rotarian”.

### Target Markets for the Rotary Club of Brisbane

According to Rotary International, ideally the Rotary club is for individuals who are above 30 years of age, with those who are younger than 30 years having the option of joining the Rotaract or Interact clubs which are service clubs for young professionals and youth. However, based on discussions with Club members, it is understood that this age limit is flexible, depending on the member who wishes to join, and is not strictly enforced.

Similarly, in identifying target markets, while target markets have been identified based on age groups, these are meant to be representative and are not meant to be used as strict guidelines.

The following target markets (Table 9) have been identified for the Rotary Club of Brisbane.

Table 9: Target Markets

<b>Age 30-49 years:</b> Developing professionals and up and coming business leaders	
This target market is representative of individuals who are still building their careers and businesses. It also is predominantly representative of individuals who are parents with dependent children. These are individuals who are socially conscious but have limited time and resources to volunteer. Therefore, they expect to gain something back for the time and resources they volunteer for the Club in terms of being mentored by senior members, building leadership potential or networking.	
Why target this market?	This target market is the future of the Rotary movement and is expected to bring vitality and creativity to the Club. By allowing members within this target group to be part of the Club, the Club will be grooming the next generation of "Ideal Rotarians".
Key Value proposition: Leadership and personal development, networking and mentorship	

<b>Age 50-64 years:</b> Established professionals and business leaders	
This target market is representative of individuals who have established careers and businesses and are getting closer to retirement. These individuals are at a stage in their life where they have relatively more capacity to take on volunteer work and want to give back to the community.	
Why target this market?	This target market has the ability to create a greater impact using their expertise, connections and experience. This is the market which has the most potential to bring visibility to the Club and is essential to provide the mentoring and networking opportunities that can attract younger members to the Club.
Key Value proposition: Foundation and Fulfilment	

**Age 65+ years:** Retired and semi-retired business and professional individuals

This target market is representative of individuals who are retired and semi-retired business and professional individuals. These are individuals who have the time and capacity to devote for volunteer work. They want to give back to the community and are also looking for fellowship by connecting with likeminded individuals.

**Why target this market?**

These individuals have the most capacity to volunteer their time, therefore they're likely to represent the most engaged members of the Club. They also possess a vast array of knowledge and experience which can be leveraged on to provide mentoring opportunities for younger members. While targeting this age group would not allow the Club to diversify itself in terms of age of Club members, this target market is a valuable asset to the Club to attract new members, given the time, the knowledge and the experience this target market possess.

**Key Value proposition:** Fulfilment and Fellowship

**Corporates:**

Australian organisations are estimated to be spending over \$280 million a year on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives (Karrikins Group, 2015). It has been estimated that Globally 84% of consumers consider CSR commitments when they look to which companies they want to do business with in their communities, 79% as to where to seek employment and 67% what investments to make (Cone Global, 2015). Rotary clubs are well placed to partner with corporates in assisting with CSR projects.

**Why target this market?**

Having corporate members can not only increase membership numbers of the Club, but also increase the visibility of the Club and can improve networking opportunities for club members. Furthermore, joint projects with corporate sponsors can be used as a tool to gain publicity, with the Club having the capacity to be involved in larger projects that can create greater impact on communities.

**Key Value proposition:** Local and International projects, Project Expertise, Brand Exposure, Staff Leadership and Personal Development and Staff Community Awareness



## Strategies for Achieving Diversity

Of the above target markets, in order to achieve diversity, the Club needs to focus its attention on attracting key segments of younger members and women to the Club.

### Attracting Younger Members

In terms of targeting younger members, the term 'younger' has been kept broad in its definition and is relative to the average age of Club members which currently stands close to 70 years for the Rotary Club of Brisbane.

Table 10: Key strategies for attracting younger members

#### Flexibility:

Flexibility is key to attracting younger members, with the cost and time of being associated with the Club expected to be key challenges for younger members. This was corroborated by the responses gained by the QUT alumni with current costs attached to be a Club member considered excessive and with potential members expecting flexibility in Club meetings. It should be noted that Rotary international has understood the importance of flexibility in attracting members and have provided freedom for clubs to vary its meeting days, times, frequency and membership types offered (Rotary International, n.d.).

- It is recommended that an evening and breakfast meetings be incorporated into the monthly Club meetings. The evening meeting can be used to increase fellowship among Club members, where members can get together in a relaxed atmosphere. The breakfast meeting should be a short to the point one-hour meeting, which talks on Club matters so that those who attend will not feel left out of Club activities, due to their inability to attend lunch meetings. This meeting if required can be kept as a supplementary meeting to the regular monthly meetings.

- Amid the membership being divided in their opinion of changing the venue of weekly lunch meetings to a cheaper option. Alternatively, the breakfast and evening meetings can be used as lower cost options for younger members.

- In terms of lowering the membership fee, it should be noted that the majority of members interviewed were not supportive of offering long term subsidised membership in the form of a junior membership for younger members.

## Identify a cause:

Younger members are attracted to social causes. Therefore, to get younger members interested in the Club, it's important to identify causes that resonate with younger members, for example causes linked to the environment or gender equality etc. While Rotary has done exceptional work in the area of eradicating Polio, for younger demographics who have not been influenced by Polio, marketing the Club based on Rotary's impact on Polio may not resonate. Therefore, identifying Rotary causes and projects the Club can undertake which relate with younger members is important. It should also be stated that younger members tend to think globally, therefore tend to prefer international projects (Lions International, 2018).

## Bring fun and family to activities:

Having an element of fun can act as an attractor in targeting younger members to the Club. Furthermore, this segment will predominantly represent people in couple relationships and who have dependent children. Therefore, having club activities where members can be involved as a family unit can not only increase engagement among younger members but will be important to attract younger members. For example, organising a fundraiser which is a "Fun Run", which is both fun and where the whole family can be involved in, is an example of an activity that can potentially feel more attractive for younger members.

## Provide value:

It is important that value is provided to younger members in volunteering, apart from having the ability to be involved in a worthwhile cause. Therefore, the Club should identify strategies to provide the key value propositions that would entice potential younger members to join the Club, such as leadership and personal development, networking and mentorship.

#### Use social media:

Social media plays a key role in engaging with younger demographics. It has been suggested that “the future success of charitable organisations, lies in ensuring the sustainable involvement of the Millennial generation through social network sites” (Paulin et al., 2014). “Solely having a profile will not in itself increase awareness or trigger an influx of participation” (Waters et al., 2009). Therefore, the Club should research into how charitable organisations effectively use social media to engage with its stakeholders and develop a social media plan. While the Club wishes to target business and professional individuals, using LinkedIn in isolation as a social media tool will not allow the Club to effectively engage with potential members.

#### Friends of Rotary:

Yet another strategy to increase the participation of younger individuals in Club activities is to allow them to volunteer as ‘Friends of Rotary’. ‘Friends of Rotary’ are groups created by Rotary Clubs “for the express purpose of utilising resources of extra persons who may be interested in assisting as volunteers at Rotary programs and activities whilst not committing to the responsibilities of membership of Rotary” (Rotary District 9800, n.d). ‘Friends of Rotary’ can be used as a stepping stone to initiate people to join as full members to the Club. Having ‘Friends of Rotary’ will benefit the Club by allowing a pathway for younger people to volunteer in Club activities and allowing potential members to gain an understanding of Club values and service projects before committing to be a member. It would also allow the Club a pathway to use social media more effectively, as ‘Friends of Rotary’ is inclusive and open to all, unlike membership which may be restricted based on certain criteria.

## Attracting Women Members

According to the ABS, more women than men participate in volunteering. More specifically in Queensland, 20.9% of women volunteered in 2010 compared to 16.4% of males (ABS, 2011). Therefore, diversifying the Rotary Club of Brisbane by attracting women members, could be key to increasing membership numbers within the Club.

Table 11: Key strategies for attracting women members

Target women through service projects:
The Club should use its service projects as attractors for women by identifying projects that directly help and impact women and girls. Similar to the International Women's Day celebrations organised by the Club they can also organise events celebrating girls such as the International Day of the Girl Child. These events will not only act as events to identify new members but can also act as publicity events for the projects that the Club is running to support women and girls and help to raise the Club's public profile and image.
Fundraise with a focus on women:
Fundraisers for projects can be used as events to attract more women members to the Club, by having fundraisers that specifically target women such as a networking dinner for women in business or an art show which showcases women artists.
Leverage on existing women members:
The existing women members where possible should take the forefront in running projects and fundraisers that target women acting as ambassadors in attracting new women members. They can also act as mentors for young women professionals, providing them guidance on building leadership skills, balancing life and career etc.
Engage:
Rather than inviting potential women members to a Club meeting. Where possible, directly engage potential members by inviting them to fundraisers and project initiatives. Allowing potential women members to feel part of a fundraiser, event or service project will be key to getting them enrolled in the Club (Lions International, 2017).



## SECTION 4

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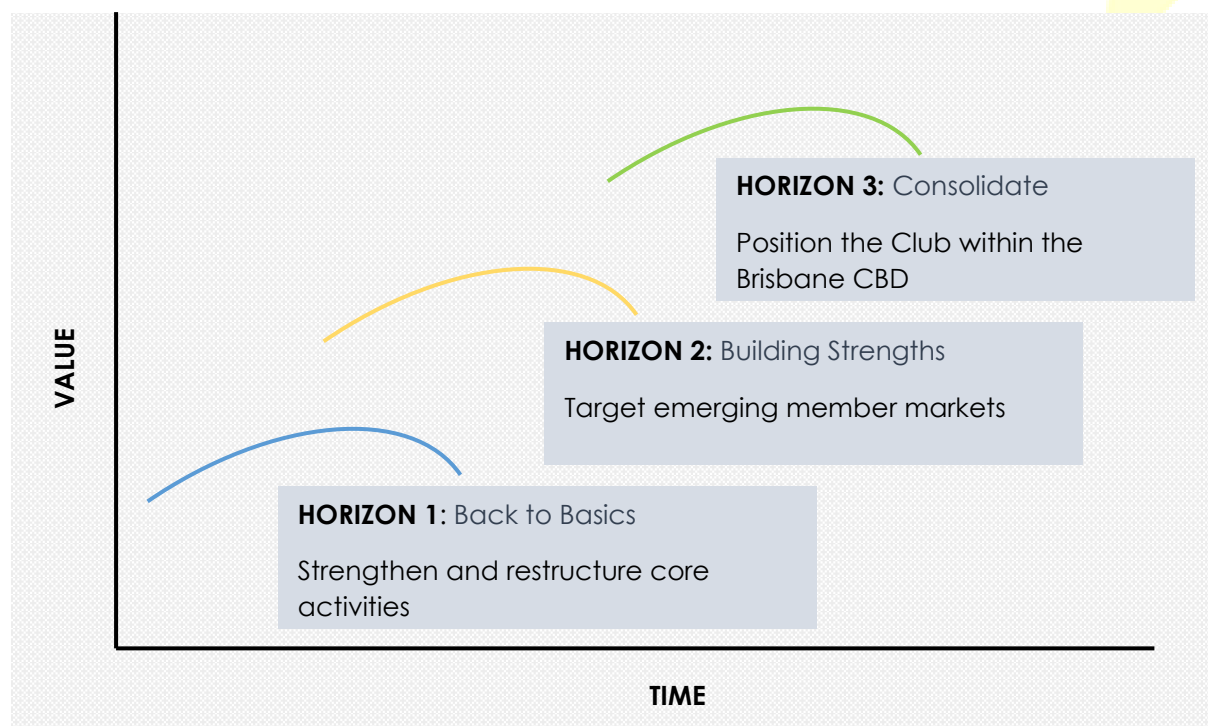
### THE STRATEGIES

## The 3-year Strategic Plan

According to Charles Darwin “It is not the strongest or the most intelligent who will survive, but those who can best manage change”. Currently the Club is in a position where “Do Nothing” is not a strategic option.

In developing the 3-year strategic plan, focus was placed on core activities of the Club, emerging markets for the Club and the positioning of the Club. Therefore, the approach in developing the 3-year strategic plan, has been similar to Mckinsey's 3 Horizons of Growth strategies (Mckinsey, 2009). Furthermore, attention was also placed on delivering on the proposed value proposition of the Club for members and Corporates and the plan needs to be viewed in conjunction with those strategies proposed previously to achieve diversity.

Figure 1: The 3-year Strategic Plan



### Year 1: Back to Basics

The strategies developed for the 1<sup>st</sup> year (Table 12) are meant to restructure and strengthen the Club in its core activities so as to ensure that the Club would not only be able attract new members but be able to retain members both existing and new.



Table 12: Year 1 strategies

### Leadership and Administration:

The change that is required for the Club needs to be driven from the top.

**Leadership:** Leadership is critical to successfully implement change. Therefore, it is essential that the Club president's role is not restricted to administration, but that both the present and incoming presidents take the forefront in driving this change. The Presidents should collaboratively develop an implementation plan with key actions, timelines and responsibilities needed to address the key strategies highlighted through the 3-year strategic plan.

**The Board:** The Club should allow younger members to be part of the Board. New thinking is important to create dynamism and vitality within the Club. While senior members within the Club have created their own legacies being an instrumental part of Club successes, it is important to allow younger members to have the opportunity to create their own legacies. The Board should therefore also look towards rotations or voting systems, so that it is not only adding members to the Board but also having a change in the voice of the Board.

**Administration:** While the Club has dwindled in size the administration of the Club has failed to change with falling Club membership. While having a strong Board to guide the Club is important, with a small membership base of 35, the Club should be more open and transparent in its decision making, allowing Club members to have a greater say on Club activities. Over 70% of club members surveyed stated that they were not fully engaged within the Club, and they could do more. Having Club members where possible, to have a say in the direction and activities of the Club, would not only lead to an increased sense of engagement and involvement but will also be key in retaining them.

**Committees:** The Club should re-look at its committees and restructure these committees so that each committee has well defined objectives and action plans which link up with the overall 3-year strategic plan. Furthermore, it should ensure that members know what their role is within the committee. Therefore, rather than having many members sit in several committees without a clearly defined role, have fewer members within each committee with defined roles.

**Potential members:** With the majority of members wanting “Exclusivity” in the Club, the Club should have a process of reviewing member applications before potential members are admitted to the Club. However, this process needs to be managed in a manner that potential members are not alienated. While the Club has been looking into a strategy of having a 6-month probationary period prior to being admitted as a member, the Club should recognise that it is not currently in a demanding position, and that there are many competing service organisations that will be happy to recruit a potential new member. Therefore, if the Club is to pursue this strategy, it is recommended that the Club offer potential members a ‘Bridging Membership’, where both parties have the ability of deciding whether or not to continue on in the Club as a permanent member. By offering a ‘Bridging Membership’ the potential member is not just placed on probation but is tied into the Club. The ‘Bridging Membership’ fee should be heavily subsidised compared to the normal membership fee for that period.

#### Club projects:

As highlighted in the survey findings, a significant majority of Club members noted that the impact of current Club projects and activities on the community are not strong and that the Club can do more when it comes to service projects. Carrying out service projects is the mission of the Club and it is the projects the Club undertakes that would allow the Club to gain visibility and publicity within the community.

**Be ambitious in projects:** The Club should not limit service projects based on what the Club can comfortably sponsor but find means to fund projects through fund raising and by collaborating with other Clubs. While the Club can have smaller projects running in parallel it needs to identify at least two large projects which it can fundraise for a year.

**Impact and visibility:** The Club should identify projects based on their potential impact and their ability to create visibility. Furthermore, projects and fundraises need to be aligned to the target market the Club wishes to tap into e.g. women members.

**Associate with a theme:** The Club can associate itself with a theme in identifying service projects, by focusing on a particular area for a period, such as environment, youth, health etc. This Can allow the Club to be more focused on the projects it chooses and will also help in its promotion and communication.

**Donate time and labour:** The Club projects need not all be ones that require funding. The Club should look for opportunities for Donations in Kind, partnering with smaller charities to offer support for planning and management or being involved in projects where Club members can volunteer their effort, for example, "Helping Hands" where members assemble artificial hands that are used in war torn communities in South East Asia.

**Members should have a say:** Rather than having close door discussions regarding projects, the Club should have open discussions on which service project the Club should undertake. The more involved Club members feel in deciding a project the more likely that Club members will rally to achieve its success. On this regard, the Club can organise an 'Ideas Day', which will be a forum where members can pitch their ideas on service projects and openly discuss the pros and cons of potential projects.

**Collaborate:** Team work is important in project activities and the burden of driving a service project should not be solely placed on the member who came up with the project idea. There needs to be a concerted effort from all Club members including the Club President to its success. Given the time poor nature of most Club members, collaboration will be key to achieving successful projects. Therefore, the Club where possible should collaborate with Rotaract Clubs and other Rotary Clubs on service projects and promote "Friends of Rotary".

#### Weekly meetings:

**Guest speakers:** Improve the variety and quality of guest speakers. Guest speakers should be limited to once a month or once in two months, where this can be made into an event and publicised. This event can act as a membership drive event for potential new members and member from other Clubs and Rotaractors should also be invited to join these guest speaker events in order to build fellowship. Given the greater numbers that can be attracted, if properly organised and publicised, quality speakers can be invited.

**Productive and Interactive:** The weekly meetings that the Club conducts need to be more productive and interactive. The weekly meeting can be used to discuss Club matters relating to service projects, membership etc. in an open and transparent manner, where members can provide their feedback. When speaking with new

members and ex-members that have recently left the Club, a key observation that was made was that there was no forum in which members could openly discuss matters. Making the weekly meetings more interactive, relevant and productive, should lead to greater engagement of Club members.

**Flexibility:** In order, to improve flexibility for younger members it is recommended that the Club have a monthly evening and breakfast meeting. The evening meeting should be a meeting of fellowship. In terms of breakfast meetings, the Club is currently testing the idea of a Breakfast Club. While this increases flexibility for members, having a satellite club such as a 'Breakfast Club' also increases the risk of the club splitting, with members feeling alienated. Therefore, it is important to incorporate the breakfast meeting as part of the monthly gatherings of the Club, even as a supplementary meeting.

### Building the Club image:

Having a proper marketing strategy is essential for the Club to build its image within the community. Understanding how to promote Club projects, events and fundraisers and how to effectively use social media will be critical for the club in its attempts to attract new members and achieve diversity. The Club should leverage on the knowledge and expertise that existing club members possess in the area of marketing and branding and develop marketing plans that can not only lift the image and profile of the Rotary Club of Brisbane but also to specifically target identified market segments.

### Fellowship:

**Social gatherings:** Fellowship is an integral part of being a member of a service organisation such as Rotary. Of the members surveyed, 87% of members identified fellowship as being important to them. Fellowship however should not be limited to mingling with Club members but should also be extended to partners and families. Having at least a quarterly social gathering where Club members can meet with their partners and/or families is essential to create a sense of community within the Club.

**Joint Club meetings:** The Club should identify opportunities to organise joint club meetings with other Rotary clubs, especially city clubs. These will act not only as fellowship opportunities but networking opportunities for club members. With limited

opportunities for networking within the club other than at district conferences, it is important to create opportunities for Club members to network at Club level. Organising a cluster event is yet another way to build fellowship among fellow Rotarians while also providing greater opportunities for networking.

#### Induction and mentoring programs:

**Induction program:** When interviewing new members and ex-members who left the Club within a short time, a key concern raised was that they did not fully comprehend what was going on in the Club. They were not fully aware of Club projects, how they could get involved in them or how the Club fits into the bigger picture with Rotary International and its foundation. The absence of a structured induction program was being clearly felt by these members and is a key area the Club should focus on.

**Mentoring and Leadership development Program:** Providing mentoring, leadership and personal development programs is a key part the value proposition of the Club. Therefore, the Club should develop programs that will not only be beneficial for younger members but also young professionals. As an initial starting point, the Club should look at pairing senior members of the Club with younger members who have similar interests in business, industries or professions and develop a structured mentoring program. Sessions should also be conducted by senior members on areas of value to young professionals such as entrepreneurship, time management etc. Properly structured programs will form a key tool in attracting potential members and can also be used as a method to increase visibility of the Club by offering programs to youth within the community.

## Year 2: Building Strengths

The strategies for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year (Table 13) focuses on building on and leveraging on the foundation that has been created through strategies implemented in year 1. Through service projects, fundraising and targeted marketing plans carried out in Year 1, the profile of the Club will have lifted with increased visibility, therefore, Year 2 strategies relate to the Club targeting new membership markets.

Table 13: Year 2 strategies

Corporate membership:
<p>In year 2, the Club should be in an ideal position to offer Corporate membership. However, prior to attempting to offer corporate membership the Club should focus on the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Set up a subcommittee, which focuses specifically on Corporate membership</li> <li>▪ Identify service projects (local or international) that are sizable and have visibility that Corporates would want to associate with. The projects need not have gotten off the ground but can be prospective projects the Corporate can partner with the Club to sponsor.</li> <li>▪ Have a clear action plan as to how the value proposition that is promoted to Corporates can be delivered.</li> <li>▪ Recognise companies the Club would want to be associated with, rather than randomly target Corporates for membership and identify means to initially connect with these Corporates through networks within the Club.</li> </ul>
Targeting professionals:
<p>The Club should attempt to build closer ties with Business School Alumni at QUT and the University of Queensland (UQ). Business School alumni consist of a variety of professionals and entrepreneurs from diverse industries and make a good hunting ground for new members. Organising joint events in collaboration with Business School alumni such as a 'Coaching Symposium' for youth and undergraduate students, sponsoring guest speakers for alumni events, or organising a 'youth Community Forum' are mechanisms through which the Club can gain opportunities to market itself within the alumni.</p>



The Club should also try to reach out to professional bodies and identify similar opportunities for collaboration and marketing. It should develop a short video clip that can be run at these and alumni events which portrays the projects the Club is involved in and the Club's value proposition of how business and professional individuals can both give back to the community and gain through mentoring, personal and leadership development.

Apart from the above being mechanisms to drive membership, being involved in these events also provide the Club the ability to raise its profile and gain visibility and publicity for its projects, allowing for better fundraising.

#### Targeting business leaders and community leaders:

Targeting business and community leaders can only be successfully carried out once the profile and visibility of the Club has been improved and the membership and vibrancy of the Club has increased.

The Club should initially invite business and community leaders to the Club as guest speakers. Furthermore, the Club should organise high profile community forums, in collaboration with the Mayor office, which discusses the future of Brisbane City and community challenges of a growing city. The forum should invite business and community leaders, the Mayor and even political dignitaries. The aim of the forum and the involvement of the Rotary Club of Brisbane will be to identify projects that the Club can support in collaboration with local authorities and businesses.

The above are possible means of creating opportunities for the Club to gain the attention of business and community leaders. While these may or may not result in the Club managing to recruit high profile members to the Club, it would however allow for high profile networking opportunities for Club members and be events that raise the profile of the Club.

### Year 3: Consolidate

The 3<sup>rd</sup> year is a consolidation phase where the Rotary Club of Brisbane attempts to consolidate its position within the Brisbane CBD by inviting other city clubs to merge with itself. Merging with other city clubs is a strategy that several Club members highlighted as a solution for the declining membership observed in the Rotary Club of Brisbane. However, the Club currently is not in a position to successfully merge without the risk of folding. Furthermore, while initial discussions have been held previously with other city clubs on the topic of merging, it is understood that there have been conflicts within members that had held back further discussions.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> year the Club should be in a position, where its membership is growing, its profile has been lifted and is involved in several high visibility projects locally or internationally. The consolidation phase therefore, builds on strategies developed for year 1 and 2. In year 1, focus was placed on building fellowship among Rotary members of other city clubs. Fellowship is important in merging between service clubs, as 'it is a merging of people' therefore membership need to feel welcome and comfortable with one another.

Given the Club's position and the fellowship it has been building with members of other city clubs, in year 3, consolidation would be a clear strategy that the Club should adopt to bolster its position within the Brisbane CBD.

## Key Risks and Limitations

In surveying Club members, it is apparent that there are conflicting viewpoints as to the strategies the Club can adopt to improve its current position. The 3-year strategies developed through this report to an extent attempts to balance these viewpoints by identifying alternative strategies and focusing attention on key issues that would be of concern to prospective members. However, given the opposing viewpoints of members, it is important that the strategic plan is debated and gain consensus amongst the Club's membership. The report therefore, should not be restricted to the Board or senior members but be discussed with Club members in an open forum. If the Club does not attempt to gain consensus and support from its Club members, the implementation and effectiveness of the strategic plan will be put at risk.

Furthermore, managing change will be essential for the success of the strategic plan. Pacing this change will be critical, so as to not alienate existing senior members of the Club. Moreover, the Club should also recognise that some of the strategies implemented, derive results over the long term. Being too hasty in seeing results, runs the risk of the Club falling back to its status quo. This links to the key limitation of continuity, amid the leadership of the Club, changing every year with a new president being inducted, unless consensus is sort among Club members, the continuity of the strategic plan will be at risk.

## Conclusion

The overarching theme of this report is "Achieving Diversity" as the challenges the Club is facing of aging and dwindling membership can only be solved by attracting and retaining diverse members. Therefore, this report attempts to answer the problem of "How can the Rotary Club of Brisbane attract and retain new, diverse and active members?", by providing solutions to three research questions of "what?", "who? And "how?". Diversity cannot be achieved without change and flexibility.

The Club needs to recognise that it is at a crucial turning point and its future survival depends on the strategies it implements today. As summarised by Rotary international director Bradford R. Howard, the competition for Rotary "is life – it's work, it's family, it's church, it's friends and its sleep. The really bad thing about that is they're perhaps the most formidable opponent we have and until we start being competitive with life, that line's always going to be on the inside trying to get out" (Pulley, 2016).

## Appendix

### Appendix 1: Content Review

The following content review attempts to identify key insights gained through the QUT “Ideas factory”.

#### Rich pictures

Rich pictures illustrate a problem situation, as it is perceived, pictorially. Analysing the rich pictures developed by the alumni groups it is evident that most perceived the Club as being out of touch or going into extinction through their use of a ‘dinosaur’ to depict the Club. The rich pictures also referenced the term “boys club” referring to restrictive perceptions of the Club. All groups seem to understand the need for flexibility, illustrating key constraints in the form of time and cost and have even mentioned the term “Friday meeting” insinuating that meeting dates and times need to be reviewed. Many also understood the need for recognising the value proposition/purpose or “why”. While others identified some of the key benefits the Club can offer in the form of networking, mentoring and also identified the importance of senior members in deriving these benefits, especially in the form of mentoring.

#### Business Frameworks`

The QUT alumni had used several frameworks to understand and analyse the problem situation, such as PESTEL, CATWOE, Value Mapping, Business Model Canvas, Strategy Diamond etc. Each of these frameworks look at the problem in different dimensions as in the external environment, world view and interrelations, the Club’s internal business model etc. In analysing these frameworks however commonalities can be identified in what they expose. The PESTEL clearly identifies the environmental factors that demand flexibility, while many other frameworks identified this requirement internally within the Club’s business model and processes, in the form of “accessible membership”, “agile organisation”, “review of membership fees” etc. The business frameworks also identified opportunities for the Club in the form of social media as a marketing tool, mentoring and networking.

#### 90 Day Strategies

Almost all groups identified defining a value proposition as the key issue that the Club needs to address at the earliest (within 60 days). Several groups also acknowledged the need to identify target markets or the “Ideal Rotarian”. The alumni also seem to

understand the importance of gaining buy-in from Club members, with strategies of several groups focused on obtaining feedback and buy-in from Club members and key stakeholders. Furthermore, several groups recognised the need to improve visibility of the Club and the role social media could play in attracting new members to the Club. Corporates were identified by several groups as a target market that the Club could tap into in increasing its membership, while attracting volunteers was also a strategy discussed with the hope of them converting to permanent members.

## Appendix 2: PESTEL

As part of the secondary data collection a detailed PESTEL analysis was carried out, as the external environment within which the Club functions has a significant impact on how it operates.

Table 14: PESTEL Analysis

<b>POLITICAL</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal policies to rationalise welfare and cutting back of social services grants (Knaus, 2018).</li> </ul> <p><b>IMPACT:</b> Increased competition for donations and greater need locally for service projects.</p>
<b>ECONOMIC</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wage growth remaining minimal, while out pocket costs such as healthcare, school fees, child care etc. increase higher than the inflation rate (ProbonoAustralia,2018).</li> <li>Household debt to income ratio ballooning with larger mortgages (Pandeby,2017).</li> </ul> <p><b>IMPACT:</b> Reduced disposable income and increased attraction for inexpensive means of volunteering.</p>
<b>SOCIAL</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater time pressure with Australians feeling increasingly time poor (ABS,2015).</li> <li>Delayed parenting, leaving Australians engaged with family commitments till later in life (ABS, 2001).</li> <li>Millennials (generation Y) considered to be more socially conscious and have a greater need for connecting with peer (as cited in Elders, 2014).</li> </ul> <p><b>IMPACT:</b> Increased flexibility sort in volunteering and greater opportunity to attract younger demographics (Millennials).</p>
<b>TECHNOLOGICAL</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rise of social media as an increasingly important channel for the non-profit sector which include service organisations (Boles, n.d.).</li> </ul>



- Mobile technology an emerging technology which can help fundraising, raise awareness and conduct outreach (Boles, n.d.).
- Newer forms of volunteering which require less cost and effort (The Conversation, 2015)

**IMPACT:** Increased opportunities through the use of technology and threat of new competition with newer forms volunteering.

### ENVIRONMENTAL

- 9/10 Millennials are concerned about climate change (AMS, 2018).
- Climate change is expected to impact Australia harder than the rest of the world (Milman, 2015)
- Public interest on climate change and global warming is most in those countries which are expected to be impacted the most (Forbes, 2015).

**IMPACT:** The environment could be a cause that could attract younger demographics (Millennials).

### LEGAL

- Requirements to comply with regulations of the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC, n.d.).
- Legislation surrounding fundraising and events (nfplaw.n.d).
- Legal implications of engaging volunteers- e.g. insurance cover (Justice Connect, n.d.).

**IMPACT:** Legal implications may offer limitations for activities and using larger numbers of volunteers.

## Appendix 3: SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis (Figure 2) collates and summarises the overall research findings, presenting the Club's current position by identifying its internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats.

Figure 2: SWOT analysis



## Appendix 4: CATWOE Analysis

The CAWOE analysis (Table 16) which is based on survey findings identifies what the Club is trying to achieve, those who are affected, the differing viewpoints of achieving the same solution and the key constraints, allowing to recognise the conflicting sentiments, key players and interrelations.

Table 15: CATWOE Analysis

<b>CUSTOMERS:</b> (users and stakeholders)	Society, charitable organisations, those in need of welfare and assistance, Club members, potential members
<b>ACTORS:</b> (those ensuring that transformation occurs)	Board of directors, Club President, members
<b>TRANSFORMATION:</b> (the changes a process leads to)	Improving diversity by attracting younger demographics and women members.
<b>WORLD VIEW</b> (the differing viewpoints or different approaches to the same issue)	<p><b>World view 1:</b> Improving diversity in the form of attracting younger demographics and women members will be key for the Club to grow its membership, and amid social/lifestyle transformations it needs to provide flexibility in membership in order to grow.</p> <p><b>World view 2:</b> The social/lifestyle transformations that are occurring are beyond the Club's control, however the Club will transcend through these transformations and rather than the Club needing to provide flexibility, it needs to focus on younger demographics and women members who have the ability and flexibility to volunteer.</p>
<b>OWNERS</b> (the decision makers)	Board of directors, Club President (existing and incoming)
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS</b> (the environmental elements that may influence and can limit or restrict)	Disposable income, time pressure, traditions and history, current club structure (including how its administered)

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