

31 August 2020

The Hon Steven Marshall
Premier of South Australia
Department of Premier and Cabinet
GPO Box 2343
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Dear Premier

In 2017, COTA SA received a significant grant from the State Government to give life to The Plug-in, a social enterprise that connects older people with businesses, government and innovation. We are delighted to report that we have just furnished DPC with the final report for the project as is required under our contract, and that The Plug-in has well and truly met expectations.

The Plug-in offers a win-win to business and to older people. For business, universities, government and innovators, it provides a community of older people matched to their requirements and ready willing and able to provide feedback, co-design and insights. For older South Australians, it is a chance to influence the directions of policy, services and products that affect them now and in the future.

The Plug-in, notwithstanding the limitations imposed in a COVID-19 world, has established itself as a reliable, efficient and effective way of connecting with older people from a variety of backgrounds, ages and circumstances.

We have completed 31 projects to date, with 3 more in progress. 5,277 older people have contributed to date and are generally representative of the 630,000 plus older people in SA –

- metropolitan, regional and rural
- aged up to 101
- living in residential aged care and in their own homes
- identifying as CALD, ATSI and LGBTI
- both digitally connected and those communicating strictly in offline formats; and
- from a wide range of incomes

The projects too have been many and varied. While many relate to aged care and health, around half have focused on topics like banking and finance, transport, improving the retail experience for older people, and living well as we age. Clients have included Weber Barbecues, NBN Co., CSIRO and South Australia's three major universities, among many others.

As part of the project we have established and communicate regularly with our "Influencer Community" made up of 1,436 older people who stay in touch online, by phone and by post.

The Plug-in has also produced its own Insights research, gathering the views of older South Australians about the bushfires, COVID-19 and technology. I have attached infographics which summarise the key findings from each survey.



We are proud of The Plug-in's achievements to date and look forward to it continuing to support older people having a say and businesses, innovators, researchers and government having access to the views, insights and needs of older South Australians.

COTA SA thanks the SA Government for its investment in The Plug-in. We look forward to your continuing support through commissioned projects and recommendations for a proudly SA innovation!

Yours sincerely

JANE MUSSARED
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

cc:
The Hon Rob Lucas MLC
Treasurer

The Hon Stephen Wade MLC
Minister for Health and Wellbeing