

MONTHLY MEMO

EMERGING FUTURES COLLABORATIVE MARCH-APRIL 2021

You will have noticed that you did not receive a *Monthly Memo* at the end of March: between Easter and the fact that we had no new information to share with you at that point, we decided to make a joint March-April edition.

Just this week progress towards the establishment of the new company -Emerging Futures Collaborative Limited- has really ramped up and we have much information to pass on to you. Peter Carroll fms in his Communique after the last CRA Council meeting noted that CRA Council is satisfied that the objects of the proposed company Constitution capture the role of EFCL as different to that of CRA. CRA Council has resolved not to be a company member, stating the decision *respects the original concept of the Company and its name: it is to be a collaborative of Religious Institutes, seeking support and offering services, quite separate in structure and purpose to CRA. Each Religious Institute will need to undertake its own individual due diligence to see if EFCL is appropriate for its needs.*

Emerging Futures began in a workshop about the role and work of CRA in August 2016, as the state bodies that formerly supported religious institutes were wound up. At that workshop there were discussions about what committees should exist to support leaders, teams and personnel over the next few years. At the heart of the discussion was the belief that the future of religious life in Australia was an incredibly important work. And so the Emerging Futures Committee was born and during 2017, 2018 and 2019 worked to identify the needs of religious institutes around the country. One result of the work was the commencement in March 2020 of the CRA Governance Collaborative (CRAGC), funded by contributions made by religious institutes to CRAGC in July 2019 and in following months up till today.

We are now preparing to establish Emerging Futures Collaborative Limited, a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee.

Our draft Constitution is with Josephine Heesh of Carroll & O’Dea for finalizing. Josephine noted that *this document is the result of much consideration already and reflects how Emerging Futures wishes to function.* EFC offers heartfelt thanks to the members of the Constitutions Group of the EFC Governance Working Party: Gabrielle McMullen AO (Chair), Sue Fabian and Eileen Ann Daffy rsm. Their ability to capture the essence of EFC, to work under pressure and on fast turnaround and their dedication to advancing the agenda is amazing.

We are appreciative too of the work of the EFC Finance Working Party, especially Chris Townend and John Spillane, who with Greg Costello, our very part-time Finance Manager, refined and refined our business plan and our 2021-2022 budget. EFC is essentially a start-up, operating in a new space in both corporate and church worlds and as such, the creation of a business plan and a budget needed understanding, creativity and constant revising. Gratitude seems not enough to offer those who have been part of this journey.

Eight religious institutes have remained in the journey to becoming company members and after we received CRA Council’s decision we have begun to work with these institutes to have them look into the Constitutions and then hopefully give consent to act as a company member and to appoint

a member representative. Once the member representatives are appointed, a meeting will be called to nominate the first Board Directors. Once company members, member representatives and board directors are in place, Josephine Heesh will apply to ASIC for company registration. EFC will operate under ACNC and will be part of the Catholic Church GST Group.

We hope to have the company open on July 1, 2021 dependent on being able to negotiate all the deadlines for company registration. EFC has been guided to this point by the Transition Committee and those members have given great support and worked hard in the just twelve months since our first meeting in April 2020. We thank Anne Lane pbvm (Chair); Catherine Brabender rndm; Monica Cavanagh rsj (Deputy Chair); Bobby Court; Gabrielle McMullen AO; Gabrielle Morgan pbvm; Clare Nolan rsc; Des Powell AO; John Spillane; John Thompson fms and Stancea Vichie mss.

During 2020 CRAGC reported each month the progress made towards providing support to our three initial service partners: Presentation Sisters Tasmania, Missionary Sisters of Service and St John of God Brothers. Our three pilot service partners are different in structure being pontifical, diocesan and international; are found in different states and are of different sizes. In 2021 five more religious institutes have engaged with EFC: two in Victoria, two in NSW and one in Queensland. These institutes are different in size -ranging from the small Sisters of St Joseph of Cluny to the larger Sisters of Mercy, Parramatta. They range between international and Australian-based pontifical institutes. So we now have eight service partners and expect to have three more before the end of 2021: placing EFCL well on the way to a sustainable financial future.

Religious institutes engage with EFC because they have a need, whether it is for canonical governance or shared services, or both. Our work with religious institutes is tailored to the needs of the group: we can begin with addressing the Congregational Will and Distribution Plan, detailing how the members of the institute wish to live out their lives and the legacy they wish to leave behind. Or if there is a pressing need for a service to free up the members of the leadership team to consider other issues, we begin with service delivery. The point is that EFC is a not a *program* that religious institutes are joining, but rather a support service customized to each different group.

There is one issue mentioned by each institute with which we engage: the issue of protection, storage and management of archives into the future. EFC is resolved to assist our service partners to secure their archives in the short and medium term. For smaller institutes, whose archivist may not be professionally qualified, we are offering a webinar on Zoom with Kylie Rees of The History Company on May 10 from Noon-1pm. Kylie has been a Senior Archivist with The History Company since 2001. She has general oversight of a staff of 7 and 25 client sites/collections. Her area of specialization is Collection Management Plans and Retention Schedules. Her clients include private schools, religious orders, golf clubs, non-profit organizations and university residential colleges. We have many registrations already, but if any leader wishes to nominate personnel, just send a name and email address to sharon.price@cragc.org.au We also plan to engage a project officer to identify short and medium term needs to ensure archives facilities/services are in place for our service partners.

I hope I've covered all the areas needed to bring you up to date with all that has been happening at EFC: I'll get back on track reporting each month this year -it's very hard to do two months in two pages! We exist to be of service to religious institutes, so please contact either Judy Lawson on judith.lawson@cragc.org.au or me on sharon.price@cragc.org.au if we can assist in any way.

Sharon Price rsm
Transition Manager
April 26, 2021