

THE SOCIAL STUDIO

Annual Report 2014



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Farah Farouque

More than five years ago, I received a 'cold call' by way of an email outlining plans for the birth of a social enterprise to harness the design potential and hospitality flair of young people in Melbourne from refugee backgrounds. At the time, I was working as a journalist at The Age and the note in my inbox - canvassing my interest in joining the founding board of The Social Studio - was so engaging in its content, so positive in its message, that I felt compelled to put aside my journalistic dispassion and get involved. Now, having marked its fifth birthday, the Social Studio continues to bristle with the ambition, energy and innovation that has always been among its strengths.

The Social Studio does not stand still - anyone popping into our cafe for a coffee or our fashion shop to purchase a striking outfit will discover this. In this spirit of vitality, 2013-14 has seen significant change in key personnel. In February, founding CEO Dr Grace McQuilt-en stepped down from her position to take up a full-time role in academia. She has been a remarkable force for the Studio - a creator, a nurturer, a writer of irresistible emails - and she continues to be involved both on the board and as an advisor to her successors. The transition has been seamless because we have been so fortunate to secure a dynamic duo to lead our operations in our new CEO Susan Yengi and General Manager Andrea Philippou. I would like to thank them for their hard work and, equally, the passion they bring to the 'office'.

I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of a founding board member Raphael Kilpatrick who left us this year: his legacy lives on, not least, in the beautiful long table he crafted which takes pride of place in the cafe.

Situated in the ever-busy and increasingly trendy Smith Street precinct, The Social Studio and its 'product' enjoys a unique competitive advantage. The winning formula can be distilled to this truth: our social enterprise model and achievements of our students, who have had to overcome many barriers to secure their success, serve as a strong badge of hope for our diverse community - the pages of this report confirm it.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Susan Yengi

2014 marked a significant milestone for The Social Studio and one that I was honoured to be a part of. At just 5 years, the Studio has achieved some remarkable things, from launching its Certificate III & IV training programs in partnership with RMIT to expanding its revenue generating operations and finally seeding the start-up of emerging community enterprises such as Twitch Women's Sewing Collective & The Social Outfit in Sydney to name just two. And those who have been with the Studio since the early days can testify to its momentous growth and constant evolution as it battles a rapidly changing political landscape, economic environment and consumer trends. Yes 2014 was indeed a special year for The Social Studio, one in which over 100 studio staff and students participated.

Of course the past 5 years would not have been successful if not for the dedication of our founder Grace McQuilten together with our dynamic Board, our determined staff members and loyal supporter base including the many foundations, customers and trusts who continue to keep The Social Studio vision alight.

We look forward to celebrating our 10th birthday with you all!

MESSAGE FROM THE GM

Andrea Philippou

In 2014 we were taken on a journey of new and exciting ways to celebrate The Social Studio. We travelled through time to explore the prehistoric era with our Land before Time collection. Our textile design students examined dinosaurs and illustrated their own interpretations of these creatures, the results exceeding all expectations. The vibrancy was captured only too perfectly by our digital print studio, creating a range of printed silk and lycra that popped on the catwalk.

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Our first ever block party proved to be the best type of an event to showcase our collection as we always seem to deliver loud, bright eye popping prints perfect for a park party! The block party delivered a fantastic day of music fashion and food and we celebrated our community of extraordinary local talent by putting on sensational live acts.

Lisa Minogue of Liberation Images has documented these moments over the past year, dedicating endless amounts of her own time to photograph our fashion and our community and as a result these images have captured the attention of many and allowed us to share our story.



OVERVIEW

This year has been an exciting year for the Social Studio, to say the least!

We celebrated our 5th birthday – a HUGE milestone in the world of social enterprise, we launched our Certificate IV program, we established new partnerships – including an after school fashion program for young teenagers aged 12-15 through Yarra Youth Services and celebrated the promotion of our new CEO & General Manager.

Moreover, the continual transformation of our Fitzroy/Collingwood neighbourhood has not only resulted in increased business for The Social Studio, but an influx of socially conscious & well informed residents. This is enabling the Studio to reach new audiences and to better advocate for and raise awareness about new migrant and refugee communities.

Our class-rooms continue to expand with over 30 new enrolments as well as 35 additional participants in our Saturday social sewing program.

In a climate of rising youth unemployment, which has unfortunately reached its highest level in 12 years, we were very grateful to have generated new employment opportunities for young people and hope we can continue to increase this on a yearly basis.

“The Social Studio for me is people, working with people from different cultures and learning from everyone”

Staff Member



TSS FASHION LABEL

Retail and Manufacturing

The Social Studio fashion label has received an overwhelming amount of attention & coverage from renowned stylists, bloggers and photographers to fashionistas including big names such as Will I Am.

Our social media support continues to increase at a rapid speed, once again broadening exposure to new audiences; the result of which has been increased sales, followers, fans and media coverage.

In November 2013, the Social Studio was invited to participate at the opening ceremony of the Melbourne Now exhibition at NGV. The success of which led to us being invited to curate a program for the closing ceremony – comprising of a vibrant fashion show by the Social Studio, Twitch Women's Sewing Collective and a live performance by La Descarga.

In April 2014, The Social Studio fashion label featured at the Mercedes Benz Fashion Week in Sydney as part of The Clean Cut runway showcase alongside iconic Australian labels such as Desert Designs to name a few.

Our recent collections are all made using both reclaimed fabrics and our digitally printed fabrics which have proven to be a successful way of creating cohesive collections as well as incorporating student artwork into printing. An important aspect of our work is being able to showcase the talents of our students and emerging designers.





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Our fashion school has been a hive of activity this past year, with two full-time programs running out of our cosy training space upstairs at our Smith Street home. We have continued to offer courses in Fashion (Cert. III in Clothing Production & Cert. IV in Textile Design and Development) both through our training partner RMIT University.

In the Clothing Production program we have maintained a strong student capacity, and a high retention rate of 95%; with 21 students studying in our full-time program.

Students graduating from this course are equipped with skills in garment construction and pattern making, and can sew their own clothing and accessories using industrial machines.

Our Textile Design and Development program is in full swing, with 10 students participating in the full-time program. In this practical, hands-on, studio based program, students develop colour, drawing, design and computer skills to plan, develop and produce textiles for a variety of applications. Students create designs for knitted, woven and printed fabrics or textile products for fashion, interiors, home wears, craft, and other commercial applications.

Print designs created by students in our Cert. IV program have been used to create striking digitally printed fabrics that are used in our collections in-store, and have been an exciting way to introduce our students to the commercial aspect of textile design, as well as injecting some colour and fun into our retail space.



THE PRINTING STUDIO

The Printing Studio continues to grow from strength to strength with a steady stream of commercial clients. In the last 12 months, the Digital Print Studio experienced an exponential growth of 84% YOY.

14 Integration of the Print studio alongside student training in the Certificate IV Textile Design & Development has proven to be successful with a 95% retention and attendance rate. The current cohort of students expected to complete their training by December 2015.

The Cert IV is delivered on-site at The Social Studio with some 2015 units to be delivered on campus at RMIT Brunswick, to take advantage of their Knitting studio and Computer Labs.



THE CUTTING TABLE CAFÉ

The Cutting Table café plays a pivotal role in connecting the general public with the Social Studio and its programs. This year we have continuously attracted more than 50 new customers per week to our space. The café has continued to withstand competition from new & trendy local set ups whilst also generating additional employment opportunities for young people. This year we also ran a successful work experience program for an additional 12 people.

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We also delivered the Certificate I in Hospitality program in partnership with our training partner William Angliss Hospitality Institute for 8 young people experiencing barriers to mainstream employment & training.

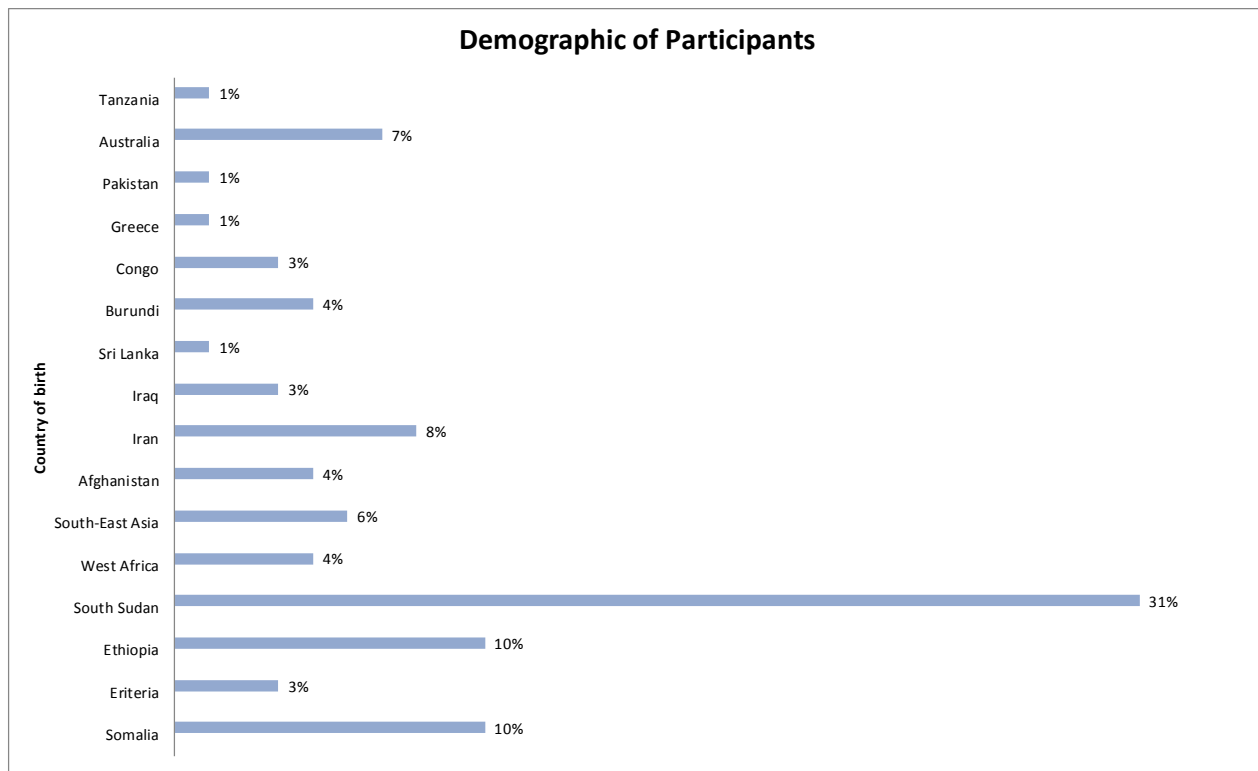




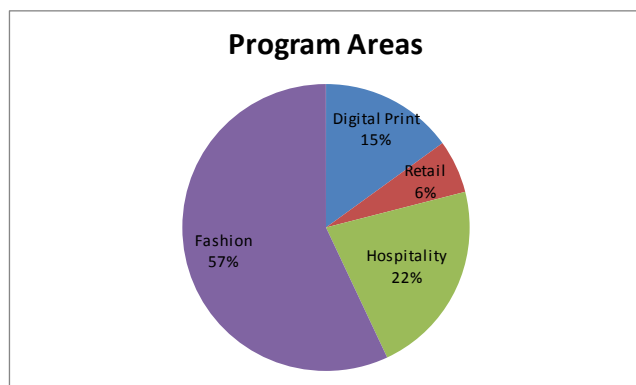
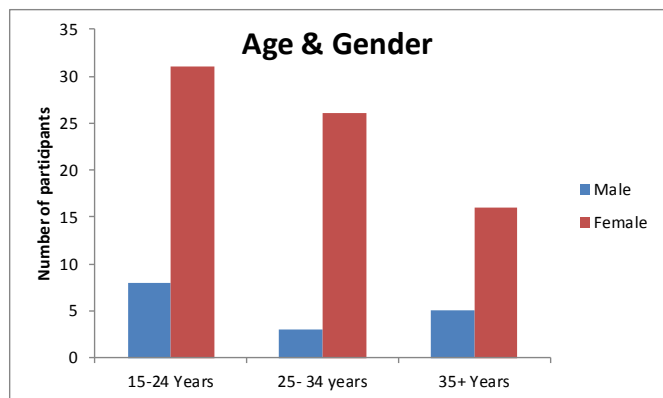
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In the last 12 months, The Social Studio has continued to actively support the communities we work with through informal mentoring, financial literacy, advice and counselling. We have continued to incubate and support the development of social enterprises based on our model. The Twitch Women's Sewing Collective in Dandenong has continued to develop and grow, and is now rolling out the Certificate III in Clothing Production through our partnership with RMIT. In 2014, The Social Outfit in Sydney opened up their doors in Newtown and have begun doing some amazing work with local new migrant and refugee communities. Most recently we have been working with a new Congolese community in Shepparton Victoria.

FACTS AND STATS



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OUR STAFF

Staff

Listed alphabetically by first name

Café Team

Alek Nyok, Almaz Gebru, Cederic Kadile, Korlu Zarwue, Mohamad Nazari, Mu Mu, Thaw-Su, Stephanie Kabanyana

Manufacturing Team

James Mbonimpa, Evariste Congera, Helen Sheferaw

Office Team

Zarah-Sheik Hussein

Management Team

Susan Yengi, Andrea Philippou

The Printing Studio

Anna Sassi, Andrea Komninos

Retail Team

Almaz Gebru, Alek Nyok, Atong Joseph, James AO, Cedric Kadile

Teaching Team

Fozia Akolo, Janelle Magee, Mathanarajan Sinnathanby

Volunteers

Padma, Gabby, Jodi, Katie, Ruth, Adriana, Leisel, Frances, Eva, Anita, Beth, Amelia, Iggy, Hussein

OUR BOARD

Board Members

Farah Farouque (Chair)

Senior Advisor, Public Affairs and Policy, the Brotherhood of St Laurence and our media and policy advisor.

Tamara Veltre (Director)

Director of Lulamae Clothing, fashion label and retailer in Melbourne, providing expertise in business, retail operations and fashion.

Lew Hess (Director)

Western Regional Programs Manager for Foundation House (The Foundation for Victims of Torture and Trauma).

Alberto Furlan (Director)

Alberto is a Senior Programs manager at the Ian Potter Foundation.

Grace McQuilten (Public Officer)

Grace has an extensive background in community development, and is an Honorary Fellow in the School of Culture and Communications at the University of Melbourne.

Tristan Perry CA (Financial Advisor)

Tristan is a Manager at Mutual Trust and provides independent financial management oversight and advice.

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

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Australian Communities Foundation

Baker Foundation

George Hicks Foundation

Ian Potter Foundation

Igniting Change

Inner North Community Foundation

May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust

RE Ross Trust

Perpetual Trustees

Streetsmart

Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust

Westpac Bank – Fitzroy Branch

The City of Yarra

Yarra Youth Services

The Funding Network

The Gandel Foundation

The Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation

The Scanlon Foundation

The JackBrockHoff Foundation

Supporters – The Social Studio & Twich Women’s Sewing Collective

English Foundation

Igniting Change

Pro Bono Support & Donations

Assemble Studio

Australian Ballet

Club21

Chris Christophorou

Dominion Private Clients

Foundation House

Liberation Images (Lisa Minogue)

Manfax Paints

Mariana Hardwick

Neighbourhood Justice Centre – Collingwood

RMIT School of Fashion

Scalzo Foods

William Angliss Hospitality

Kit Willow

Northside Records

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INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

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	Note	2014 \$	2013 \$
Income			
Revenue	2	765,560	594,857
Changes in inventories of finished goods and work in progress		(710)	(3,180)
Raw materials and consumables used		(72,331)	(57,904)
Expenditure			
Advertising expenses		(175)	(21,216)
Auditor's remuneration	3	(2,750)	(2,500)
Commissions paid		(1,295)	-
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		(17,469)	(16,324)
Employee benefits expenses		(416,790)	(308,672)
Other expenses		(198,414)	(206,866)
		<u>55,626</u>	<u>(21,805)</u>
Profit (Loss) for the year	4	<u>55,626</u>	<u>(21,805)</u>
Total comprehensive income for the year		<u><u>55,626</u></u>	<u><u>(21,805)</u></u>

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2014

	Note	2014 \$	2013 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	136,361	69,010
Trade and other receivables	6	15,823	15,566
Inventories	7	9,870	10,580
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>162,054</u>	<u>95,156</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	8	114,281	122,640
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>114,281</u>	<u>122,640</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>276,335</u>	<u>217,796</u>
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and Other Payables	9	24,487	30,724
Provisions	10	15,522	6,372
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>40,009</u>	<u>37,096</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>40,009</u>	<u>37,096</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>236,326</u>	<u>180,700</u>
EQUITY			
Retained earnings	11	236,326	180,700
TOTAL EQUITY		<u>236,326</u>	<u>180,700</u>



THE SOCIAL STUDIO

Buy our label, order our catering, make a tax deductible donation or simply learn more about our work at www.thesocialstudio.org