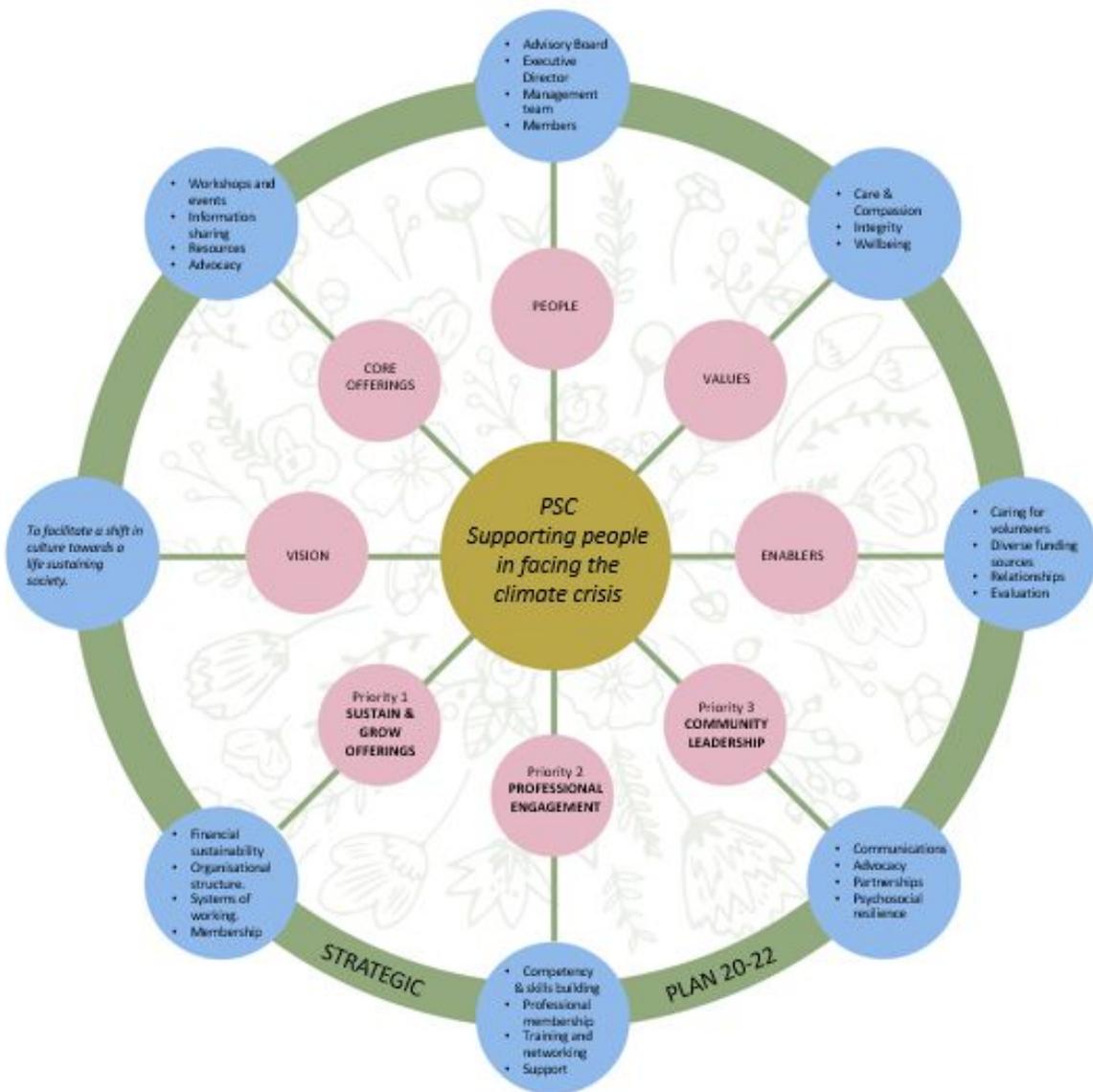


PSYCHOLOGY FOR A SAFE CLIMATE STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2022



ABOUT PSYCHOLOGY FOR A SAFE CLIMATE

Recognising that emotions are often what leads people to act, it is possible that feelings of ecological anxiety and grief, although uncomfortable, are in fact the crucible through which humanity must pass to harness the energy and conviction that are needed for the lifesaving changes now required.

The Lancet: Planetary Health, July 2020

Founded in 2010, Psychology for a Safe Climate (PSC) is an incorporated not-for-profit Melbourne based organisation, formed to foster emotional engagement with climate change in response to the lack of individual and community commitment.

Since inception, PSC active group members have been limited to around 8-10 people. These individuals have taken on multiple roles, being committee members, as well as engaging in the planning and delivery of our activities, including writing, speaking, workshops, newsletters. All activities have been volunteer based, with a committed leader who was able to coordinate the organisation and invest a significant amount of time.

A need for significant change was identified with growth in demand for our work. We need to expand our availability by having a larger team of people to share the responsibility. In support we need to build a more secure financial base to secure a shift to funding a part-time CEO and support staff. We have a facility to offer DGR by channelling donations to us through the Climate Action Network of Australia (CANAN), and are in the process of applying for DGR status ourselves. At the September 2020 AGM we will move from a committee governing structure, to an Advisory Board structure.

PSC has developed this strategic planning document in order to articulate the pathway towards that vision of our work.

OUR PURPOSE

Our work is founded on supporting people in facing the reality of the climate crisis.

We aim to build people's capacity to respond constructively to this crisis by promoting and strengthening mental health and well being.

We engage with

- those working on climate change
- the caring professions
- the broader community

OUR VALUES



Figure 1. PSC Values

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Our strategic planning with three key action areas, each connected to our goals for the next two years, are outlined in Table 1, and described in more detail following.

Table 1. Summary of PSC strategic action areas, goals & activities

Strategic Action	Goal	Activities
1. Sustain and Grow Our Offerings	Enable our organisation to respond to the growing demand and needs in community and organisations, and to deliver our core offerings in a sustainable and strategic manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Financial sustainability ● Our organisational structure ● Our systems of working ● Membership support
2. Professional Engagement	Create a strong network of engaged psychologists, psychiatrists and counselling professionals across Australia who can offer support to their own local communities in engaging with the climate emergency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Competency & skills building ● Build professional membership ● Training and networking ● Support
3. Community Leadership	Build our leadership role in the community, and advocate psychosocial wellbeing as essential to transformational action on climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communications ● Advocacy ● Community partnerships ● Building psychosocial resilience

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: SUSTAIN and GROW OUR OFFERINGS

Mental health is widely recognised as a growing issue across Australia, and climate change is a known challenge to mental health, and a stress amplifier. A growing number of climate activists, scientists and policymakers are suffering from anxiety, climate grief and burnout. The short and long term psychological and social impacts of extreme weather events, such as bushfires, is increasingly recognised. The landscape for this is complex, both individually and culturally. It is significantly influenced by the experience of the direct impact of climate change, the witnessing of ongoing ecological loss, and the continuing inaction on the climate emergency at a federal and global level.

Individuals, local governments, and climate advocacy organisations (both national and local) have been reaching out to PSC for support in growing numbers. Over the last year we have increased our workshops from an average of one per month to up to three a month. For the first time we created a waiting list for workshops as we cannot keep up with the demand.

Our core “always available” offerings include:

- Signature PSC workshops on grief, eco anxiety and burnout.
- Bespoke workshops & talks tailored to organisations and community groups.
- Communication sharing through social media and a monthly PSC newsletter.
- Resources available through our website e.g. publications.
- Public speaking and advocacy such as submissions to inquiries, responding to media requests and speaking invitations.

Our goal for this action area is to enable our organisation to respond to the growing demand and need in organisations, and in the community, and to deliver our core offerings in a sustainable and strategic manner.

Key activities for Priority 1:

- a. Financial sustainability.** Consolidate and implement an organisational funding strategy.
- b. Our organisational structure.** Clarify and reform our organisational structure to respond to our growing needs.
- c. Our systems of working.** Strengthen processes and systems that support the delivery, impact and evaluation of our work.
- d. Membership support.** Grow and support our membership so that they feel informed, engaged and included.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

As the demand and recognition of benefits of emotional engagement grows, so too does the need for professional support and skills. The development of key emotional literacy and wellbeing skills requires expertise, and these skills are not widely available or well-integrated into the everyday functioning of most organisations and groups that work on climate change.

Psychologists, psychiatrists and other counselling and health professionals play a critical role in building these psycho-emotional skills, and are in positions of significant influence given how trusted they are in the community. Yet many professionals need greater education and training on climate change to see how their work is critical to an effective response.

Our vision is that Australia has climate engaged psychologists, psychiatrists and counsellors, who are proactive in advocating and building the emotional awareness, psychosocial support and resilience of individuals and communities in systemic, connected and culturally appropriate ways.

Through this action area we aim to enhance capacity across Australia for therapeutic health professionals to respond to the growing numbers of individuals, groups and communities impacted by climate change - including but not limited to ecological grief and eco-anxiety, as well as impacts from extreme weather events.

Here, PSC becomes a trusted hub for building professionals' capabilities to join creatively with their knowledge and experience of psychosocial wellbeing.

Our goal for this strategic plan action area is to create a strong network of engaged psychologists, psychiatrists, and counselling professionals across Australia who can offer support to their own local communities in engaging with the climate emergency.

Key activities for priority 2:

- a. Competency & skills building.** Develop a competency framework that outlines key knowledge, skills and capabilities therapeutic professionals require to respond to climate change in their work with individuals, couples and groups.
- b. Building our professional membership.** Develop an engagement strategy that outlines how psychologists, psychiatrists and counselling professionals can learn more and get involved, including ways to be involved with PSC, their workplace and their local community.
- c. Training and networking.** Deliver opportunities for training, mentoring and networking. Create opportunities for sharing of experiences and practice around responding to climate distress in their work and community.
- d. Support.** Develop a peer supervision and/or community of practise model for psychologists and therapists to engage in peer support.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Using our professional knowledge, our aim is to increase understanding and emotional engagement with climate change. We hold a systemic worldview and acknowledge that mitigation and adaptation to the climate emergency will require a transformational political and systems level response.

We advocate that psychosocial wellbeing is an essential part of transformational action on the climate and biodiversity emergency.

Our goal is to further our community leadership role, our public communications and governmental submissions.

Key activities in Priority 3:

a. Communications. Use of our internal channels like the PSC newsletter & social media. Contributing to media and other forms of communications such as, podcasts, publications, documentaries, in response to requests.

b. Advocacy. Maintain and grow our capacity to respond to external opportunities for advocacy . This includes panels, roundtables, and governmental submissions.

c. Community partnerships. Review our process for strengthening our relationships with chosen community partners. Develop a plan around engagement and opportunities for collaboration around new ventures aligned with our shared vision.

d. Building psychosocial resilience. Consolidate our model for psychosocial resilience as groundwork for application in community and organisational groups.

ENABLERS

Elements that support this strategic plan, enabling our work to continue and grow include:

- **The generosity and expertise of our volunteers.** We need to care for our core group of active volunteers and ensure we engage in ways that are sustaining and satisfying.
- **A diverse range of funding sources.** To enable us to meet the growing demand we need the stability of funding and donations in order to have security to employ staff on a regular and growing basis.
- **Strong relationships with key individuals and groups.** This enables us to learn together, in participation with the community and tailor our offerings.
- **Evaluating our impact.** This ensures we have integrity, learn as we go and are responsive to developing needs.

CONNECT WITH PSC

Thank you for reading our strategic plan. We hope this offers insight into our work, and inspires you to prioritise social and emotional wellbeing in your life as we navigate the climate crisis together.

If you are interested in learning more and staying updated:

- Explore our [Website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages. There you will find resources, publications, talks and upcoming events.
- [Join our newsletter](#). Here you will find out about upcoming PSC activities and helpful resources around psychology and climate change.

Would you like to join or support our PSC community? We would love that!

There are many ways you can join and/or support our work.

- Become a PSC member. As a member you are not only financially supporting our work, but you can apply to become active in our work by joining a working group, doing administrative work or joining our workshop team.
- Give a [donation](#) to help our work to continue and expand in reach.
- Sponsor our work. If you are an organisation connected to health, wellbeing or climate change, and would like to endorse or sponsor our activities, please [email](#) us.

If you think your group or organisation would benefit from our workshops, talks or consultation, connect with us through [email](#).

Finally, we really value your input, so if you have any questions or feedback about our Strategy Plan 2020-22, [contact us here](#).