



Australian Men's Shed Association
SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

How to Start a Men's Shed



Condensed Version

An Australian Men's Shed Association Resource

December 2015

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1. INTRODUCTION

What is a Men's Shed?

Men's sheds are community-based, non-commercial organisations that address social inclusion, participation and community capacity building. They have become vital community assets and, in many regions, the main or only focal point for positive male engagement and activity.

The modern Men's Shed is an updated version of the shed in the backyard that has long been a part of Australian culture. If you visit a Men's Shed you may see a number of men restoring furniture or bicycles for a local school, making Mynah bird traps, young men working with the older men learning new skills, tea-bags, coffee cups and a comfortable area where men can sit and talk. You will also probably see an area where men can learn to cook healthy low cost meals, make contact with their families by computer, crafts such as lead lighting or woodturning.

Members of Men's Sheds come from all walks of life - the bond that unites them is that they are men with time on their hands and would like to undertake something meaningful. A good Men's Shed has a safe and happy environment where men are welcome to work on a project of their choice in their own time and where the only 'must' is to observe safe working practice- all in a spirit of mateship.

So what is so special about this new type of Men's Shed?

'It has been found that male participants were less willing than female participants to attend health education sessions, were less interested in information on illness prevention and were less willing to have an annual health check or to seek advice from a medical practitioner'. *Extract National Male Health Policy 2010*

The Men's Shed is one of the most powerful tools we have in addressing health and wellbeing- it is an obvious solution to overcome difficulties in reaching males and provide men friendly information and services in settings which are frequented by males.

"What has been lacking in the past is a unified approach to men's health by health and service organisations. More emphasis needs to be placed on community based groups such as Men's Sheds which research suggests are vehicles better able to address men's health and well-being needs."

Relationships Australia- extract from submission to Senate Enquiry into National Men's Policy 2009

Good health is based on many factors including feeling good about yourself, being productive and valuable to your community, staying connected to friends and maintaining an active body and mind.

Becoming a member of a Men's Shed gives a man that safe and busy environment where he can find many of these things in an atmosphere of old-fashioned mateship. And, importantly, there is no pressure. Men can just come and have a yarn and a cuppa if that is all they are looking for.

Men's sheds value the role of males at different stages of their lives and foster wellbeing by providing opportunities for older males to contribute through sharing knowledge and participation.

What is AMSA?

The Australian Men's Sheds Association (AMSA) is the national peak body representing member Men's Sheds and is one of Australia's largest community development organisations. The organisation has over 950 Men's Shed members representing an estimated 100,000 individuals and employs 5 full time staff.

It recognizes a Men's Shed as any community-based, non-profit, non-commercial organization that is accessible to all men and whose primary activity is the provision of a safe, friendly and healthy environment where men are able to work on meaningful projects at their own pace in their own time in the company of other men. A major objective is to advance the well-being and health of their male members and to encourage social inclusion.

The AMSA prioritizes the wellbeing of all men by valuing the role that Men's Sheds play in the prevention of social isolation and by providing a welcoming place for men to work on projects and contribute to their wider community. AMSA endeavours to always address the needs of Men's Sheds, to advocate on their behalf and to source further funding and resources for the direct benefit of sheds.

Men's Sheds registered with the AMSA are to maintain an open door policy and conduct themselves in a non discriminating manner, have a minimal membership or joining fee, ensure and observe safe work practices and aim at improving the wellbeing of all men and support their community.

As part of the Australian Men's Shed Associations Funding Agreement with the Federal Government, the Association is committed to providing practical support for existing Sheds, provide assistance in the development of new Sheds, attract and secure corporate sponsorship, raise awareness of Men's Sheds, encourage participation and improve the health and wellbeing of all men.

AMSA recognises that not all Sheds are exclusively for men and that some Sheds choose to call themselves 'Community Sheds' as these Sheds may be open to female members. The decision to have female members is entirely a local one. For the purposes of this document, the term 'Men's Shed' is used to cover all member Sheds. Upon application, AMSA may admit to membership, a Shed that conforms to the above definition in all respects. *Refer to AMSA Membership By Law –Adopted 23 July 2013*

The Men's Shed concept was an Australian initiative from very humble beginnings; the idea has now spread internationally with a significant number of Sheds being operated by health authorities in New Zealand, Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Netherlands with other interested groups in North American and Japan.

“Men's Sheds are not just fixing furniture and building toys, they are helping men and building communities”



2. HOW TO START A MEN'S SHED

Initial Idea

It is important to realize that there are many different types of 'Men's Sheds'. Some operate from within their own facility, others share spaces with community organisations and we are also seeing the emergence of the 'mobile Shed' to meet the needs of those who are living in more remote areas.

AMSA also recognises that not all Sheds are exclusively for men and that some Sheds choose to call themselves 'Community Sheds' as these Sheds may be open to female members. The decision to have female members is entirely a local one. For the purposes of this document, the term 'Men's Shed' is used to cover all member Sheds.

Upon application, Men's Sheds seeking registration with The Australian Men's Shed Association must conform to the benchmark standards and definition in all respects. Men's Sheds are to maintain an open door policy, be non-discriminatory, have a minimal membership or joining fee, ensure and observe safe work practices, aim at improving the wellbeing of all men and support their community.

Refer to AMSA Membership By Law –Adopted 23 July 2013

Benefits

A Men's Shed is a vital community investment delivering programmes and activities that foster community spirit, connections and contributions to building a more inclusive Australia.

Groups and individuals seeking to establish a Men's Shed must consider a range of issues:

- what facilities are needed in the local area?
- are there adequate activities available for local men?
- discuss the proposal with Local Government, community organisations, health services, service clubs, seniors groups.
- assess the level of support for the proposal-there is no point in undertaking extensive planning and establishing a Men's Shed if there is no community support or benefit.
- what does the local area currently offer that could be advantageous?
- are there opportunities to collaborate with other services?
- consider your demographics and the people in your area who may become members.

Will the Shed reflect the needs of these members?

- what potential partnerships could be forged with local organisations such as Local Government, community service clubs, sporting clubs, welfare and community services, health service providers?
- liaise with your Local Council, in particular the Community Development Officer (or equivalent)
- review the Local Government Social Plan- does a Men's Shed fit within this plan?
- liaise with State and Federal Members of Parliament- inform them of your proposal.

Who is the Men's Shed for...

- ❖ Is it for a group of like-minded individuals who want a Shed that is in response to their own personal needs?
- ❖ Is it for a community group that would like to sponsor a Men's Shed in response to client need and to also enhance their existing services?
- ❖ Is it for a community group that would like to sponsor a Men's Shed in response to community need?
- ❖ Is it an already established group that would like to become involved with the broader national Shed network?
- ❖ Is it the proprietors of a retirement village who would like to provide a new activity for the residents?
- ❖ Is it within an aged care facility?
- ❖ Is it a mix?

All of these are valid reasons for developing a Men's Shed –all are viable ways of addressing the social isolation of men within their community and encouraging social engagement and participation- the primary objectives of all Men's Sheds.

It is important to establish the aims and objectives of the Men's Shed proposal early in the planning stages.

Keep an open mind and have a clear focus on the desired outcomes of the proposed Men's Shed.

Venue

Do you already have a location that would be ideally suited for a Men's Shed project? If not managed well, this method can be one of the hardest Men's Sheds to get established.

It is extremely important to put the men before the Shed. They need to invest and have ownership from the outset. It can be ineffective in having a Shed with no members – providing the Shed before community engagement may not sanction ownership for its members. The Men's Shed must always belong to the members involved and reflect their needs.

Encourage the men and community to be involved in all stages of planning.

However, having a potential Shed/facility is a great start- generate interest and commitment from the community, recruit enthusiastic volunteers and form a Steering or Planning committee- you are now well on the way to achieving your goal.

Many Men's Sheds have targeted the refurbishment of an existing facility as their first major Shed project- this will guarantee active participation, teamwork and a sense of ownership from the start.

Timeframes

All Men's Sheds are different and the timeframe to develop a Shed varies on individual circumstances, local demographics and the resources available. How much time and energy do you have to put toward this project?

AMSA was established on the principle of freely sharing information between Sheds and this has dramatically lessened the average timeframe in establishing a Men's Shed.

It can be very time consuming and requires hard work and commitment- it can also be frustrating and requires a great deal of energy, lateral thinking, patience and dedication but it will as equally rewarding.

There are many potential obstacles depending on the level of resources available, support from within the community, local government requirements and their subsequent support, funding opportunities and personalities involved.

Generating interest and receiving a commitment from the community, recruiting enthusiastic volunteers and forming a Planning Committee will assist you to achieve your goal.

Research

Researching the idea to start a Men's Shed may significantly reduce your workload. You may find that there is already a Men's Shed in your area or a group of Sheds who regularly communicate and work together. These Men's Sheds will be able to assist you with your project.

There may already be a group/s within your community who have committed to start a Men's Shed.

Start your investigation by contacting AMSA who can assist in locating the closest active Men's Sheds in your area or visit the AMSA website and access the 'Shed Locator'.

'Shedders' love to share information and will be more than happy to help and provide any support they can.

Visit existing Sheds – 'shedders' are welcoming and enjoy showcasing their activities. They are also willing to provide advice, information and an overview of their Shed's development. This would be one of the most beneficial activities for your group to undertake.

Research and Shed Locator: www.mensshed.org

Public Consultation

This is a very important step as the more community support you attract the easier the job will be. A wide variety of enthusiastic supporters can also provide a wide range of skills and experiences.

Often an initial 'show of interest' meeting can progress the idea and will motivate people to get involved. By holding a public meeting you will not only find potential members but organisations and businesses who may want to support a Men's Shed and its activities within the community. They may be also able to supply information concerning the needs of the local area and be interested in partnering or sponsoring a Men's Shed within the community.

These supporters can also become potential members for the Shed and may also donate equipment and services.

This is the ideal forum for the project to really start to gain momentum after having identified the potential needs of the community.

From this initial meeting it is also possible to form a Steering Committee and get the community involved at an early stage.

Planning

- try to find a free venue in which to hold an initial meeting.
- contact the local Council to see if you can use a Community Hall or the Library.
- Church organisations or local Clubs may also be able to provide a meeting room.
- identify a key person to facilitate/lead the meeting.
- develop an Agenda for the meeting
- will you invite guest speakers?
- how will you advertise the event? Will you need to develop some posters for display throughout the community, place a notice in the local newspaper?
- make a list of what you may need such as a whiteboard, PA system, pens, catering
- contact AMSA who can provide information and some resources
- contact local businesses for some initial support to cover the expenses of catering- a simple sausage sizzle after the meeting can be a very effective way of ensuring the participants engage with each other and share ideas- informal discussion is just as important.

Promotion & Invitations

- place posters in shop windows and on community notice boards
- contact your local newspaper as they will often provide a Public Notice at no charge
- your local newspaper may also be prepared to support the event and write an article.
- ask your Local Council to place a notice on their website
- talk to as many people as possible- use word of mouth
- discuss with Community Centres, Library staff and advertise within their facilities
- contact the local radio stations
- place notices in Doctor and Dental surgery waiting rooms as well as local pharmacies
- notify local Service Clubs such as Lions, Rotary
- discuss with and invite local Senior Groups
- discuss with local health service providers such as the Community Nurse or Community Health Centre

It is important to have input from as many diverse organisations as possible so be sure to specifically invite individuals and representatives from local organisations and groups such as your local:

- Council
- Members of Parliament
- Aboriginal Elders
- Service Clubs such as Lions, Rotary
- Health services
- Sporting clubs e.g. Bowling Club
- Seniors groups
- Members of the general public

Invite members of another Men's Shed who can contribute invaluable information and be part of a Q & A session.

However, it is most important that you attract as many men as possible who will be your potential members. You cannot have a Men's Shed without the men.

This meeting is the ideal occasion to recruit your first Interim Men's Shed Committee or Steering Committee.

Running the Meeting

- open the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance.
- If the facilities allow, play the 8min AMSA promotional video that provides an overview of the concept of a Men's Shed- this is a great introduction.
- present your idea for a local Men's Shed, your rationale and outline any research you may have undertaken to date.
- if possible, have a representative from an established Men's Shed to speak about their activities and history.
- open the floor to discussion and suggestions - please ensure that you have someone assigned to record accurate notes of ALL suggestions.
- invite volunteers to establish a Steering Committee to advance the project. This may include volunteers with previous experience in working with project committees, Accounting, Secretarial and computer skills.
- endeavour to meet again with the Steering Committee as soon as possible to maintain the momentum.
- use the opportunity to recruit potential new members.
- be sure to get the names and contact details of all attendees for future reference-keep them informed of any progress and ask for help if required.
- set a date for the next meeting- in these early stages it is crucial to meet either formally or informally again in the near future to maintain the momentum and enthusiasm.
- some Steering Committees have organised day trips to nearby Men's Shed. This social interaction is the real beginning of a Men's Shed.

Steering Committee

The newly formed working group or Steering Committee will guide the Association through its initial stages of establishment. By appointing a Steering Committee you can share the workload by allocating specific roles and responsibilities. You are now a team with the same goals, moving in the same direction and utilising individual skills and experience.

- define roles such as Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and Publicity.

- ensure you have a communications strategy that has a strong focus on promotion and publicity- it is extremely important to inform all those interested in your progress and maintain continuous contact with your local media especially the newspaper.
- make sure that all meetings are documented and minutes distributed.
- to ensure that the Committee makes the best use of its time, make certain that everyone has an opportunity to speak.
- endeavour to reach decisions on issues that are discussed and ensure that everyone understands what the decisions are.
- try to produce a small newsletter that can be circulated throughout the community.
- be visible and keep everyone informed!

Incorporation

Choosing a legal structure

When setting up a non-profit organisation, it is important to choose an appropriate legal structure. The 'legal structure' you choose will affect the way you hold meetings, the minimum number of members, reporting requirements, tax obligations, cost and other considerations.

AMSA cannot advise which structure you should choose.

Incorporated Associations

An Incorporated Association is a legal entity separate from its Individual members. Associations are incorporated under the State or Territory legislation in which they operate. They are restricted to operating within that State or Territory. An incorporated association can continue regardless of changes to membership. It also provides financial protection by usually limiting Personal liability to outstanding membership and subscription fees.

As legislation varies from state to state, you should contact or visit the website of the relevant state or territory authority to learn more about The requirements in that State or Territory.

If you have registered a name and formed an incorporated body you can now demonstrate your serious commitment and also obtain an A.B.N. This identifies your Men's Shed as its own official and legal entity and it now has the ability to apply for and perhaps obtain a more diverse range of funding.

<i>State/territory Relevant authority</i>	<i>Website</i>
Australian Capital Territory	
Office of Regulatory Services	www.ors.act.gov.au
New South Wales	
Office of Fair Trading	www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/business/associations.html
Northern Territory	
Consumer and Business Affairs	www.justice.nt.gov.au
Queensland	
Office of Fair Trading	www.consumer.qld.gov.au
South Australia	
Office of Consumer & Business Affairs	www.ocba.sa.gov.au
Tasmania	
Office of Consumer Affairs & Fair Trading	www.consumer.tas.gov.au

Victoria

Consumer Affairs

www.consumer.vic.gov.au

Western Australia

Consumer and Employment Protection

www.docep.wa.gov.au

Constitutions

A necessary step in becoming incorporated is to adopt a Constitution. You are well advised to seek legal advice when developing your Constitution.

Constitutions:

- explain to members and non-members the aims and the objectives of the organisation
- provide guidelines for the overall management of your group
- help to manage internal problems.
- are a legal necessity if your group wishes to become incorporated.
- can assist in seeking resources from other organisations, such as a government agency.

AMSA has developed a general 'Shed specific' Constitution for Men's Sheds to utilise or alternatively many emerging Sheds initially adopt and modify 'Model Rules' defined by their specific State Government department/body.

Committees are advised to contract their State/Territory Authority to obtain more detailed information and instruction.

Incorporation Process

An incorporated association can continue regardless of changes to membership. It also provides financial protection by usually limiting personal liability to outstanding membership and subscription fees.

As legislation varies from State to State, you should visit the website of the relevant State or Territory Authority to learn more about the requirements.

In general, the basic steps to incorporate your Association:

- five or more individuals authorise an application for incorporation/registration that includes:
 - a statement of the *Association's objects*
 - a copy of the Association's *proposed constitution*.
- reserve a name by lodging an *Application for Reservation of Name* form together with the prescribed fee, with your relevant State/Territory Authority .
- to find out if a name is already registered call your relevant State/Territory Authority.
- apply for incorporation by lodging an *Application for Registration* with the prescribed fee and documents at the office of your relevant State/Territory Authority .

Auspice/ Sponsor Bodies

You may decide not to form an incorporated body but have a sponsor or auspice body. A sponsor body is an incorporated organisation that can become an overseeing body for a non-incorporated group. Examples include a local Neighbourhood Centre,

Local Government, Community groups, Health Services, service clubs such as Lions, local church groups, clubs or welfare agencies.

All Men's Sheds who have a sponsor body are encouraged to develop a Memorandum of Understanding that governs the terms and conditions or the partnership between the parties.

The MOU should outline the roles and responsibilities of each party. Elements should include insurance, financial and operational management, Men's Shed health & safety, grievances and complaints.

If the sponsoring organisation receives any funding money on behalf of the unincorporated group, it is responsible for ensuring the funding is distributed, that the project is completed and the money accounted for (acquitted).

Having a sponsoring body can sometimes provide more credibility to any funding applications in the early stages of the Men's Shed development.

To find a sponsoring body, start by thinking about what other organisations may share the same interest in your project or initiative then make approaches to discuss further.

Taxation

Men's Shed committees are well advised to consider and investigate all aspects and the implications of taxation and concessions.

Please discuss these with an Accountant or Solicitor or contact the Australian Taxation Office.

ATO Website www.ato.gov.au/nonprofit

You can also phone the ATO information line on **1300 130 248** from 8.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday for help with matters specific to non-profit organisations.

Aspects include:

- ABN
- GST registration
- Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status

Charities must be endorsed by the ATO for various exemptions. Before an organisation can apply for endorsement, it must have an Australian Business Number (ABN).

If your organisation is a charity, you must also be registered with the ACNC to apply for endorsement to access charity tax concessions.

Visit the ATO website to access the Non Profit Guide:

https://www.ato.gov.au/Non-profit/Guides/In-detail/Fact-sheets/Income-tax-exemption/Endorsement-to-access-charity-tax-concessions/?page=1#About_this_guide

Membership with AMSA

The number of Men's Sheds across Australia is growing rapidly but in the movement's early days there was no central body or reference source. This led to a great deal of duplication and 're-invention of the wheel'.

In April 2007 The Australian Men's Shed Association (AMSA) was set up to act as a resource centre for all Men's Sheds with one of its main objectives to support the establishment and sustainability of Men's Sheds around the country.

AMSA is the national peak body representing over 950 members and is recognised as Australia's largest male-focussed Community Development Organisation.

Through strategic partnerships, AMSA aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Men's Shed members and the communities in which they live.

The combined knowledge of hundreds of Men's Sheds is available by contacting AMSA and visiting the AMSA website.

Information, advice, resources, templates, research, introductions to other Sheds and access to Shed networks are available by contacting AMSA on 1300 550 009 or visiting www.mensshed.org

Benefits

AMSA is the collective voice of Men's Sheds in Australia.

Membership with AMSA entitles you to:

- Resources- AMSA is proactive in developing and providing new and useful resources (management, operational, health & safety, health)for Men's Sheds that are at various stages of development
- Communication-AMSA is a central reference point for all registered Men's Sheds to access and share information and news.
- 1300 number- responding to all enquiries, requests for information and resources, Shed locations, management and operational matters.
- Insurance- AMSA has effectively used its expertise and resources to gain the most relevant and cost effective policies for Men's Sheds and their members- Shed specific policies are available through the AMSA Group Insurance Scheme
- Advocacy & Representation- AMSA continually collates information on Shed needs and their benefits, presents it to government and independent bodies in order to increase awareness as well as lobby for further funding and support.
- Promotion- AMSA works to raise the profile of Men's Sheds and their benefits to individuals and communities. We promote awareness and understanding to make it easier for members to gain greater levels of support.

Corporate Support- through its strategic collaborations, the AMSA has been able to offer Men's Shed a variety of corporate benefits and assistance. Examples include product giveaways, direct financial support to Men's Sheds, competitions and sponsorship.

Registration Process

To register with AMSA you must be a legal incorporated entity or be sponsored/auspiced by an organisation with an Incorporation Number. Men's Sheds registered with the AMSA are to maintain an open door policy and conduct themselves in a non discriminating manner, have a minimal membership or joining fee, ensure and observe safe work practices and aim at improving the wellbeing of all men and support their community.

You can apply for membership on line by visiting: <http://www.mensshed.org>.

Click on the *JOIN AMSA* tab and this will direct you to an application form that you can complete and submit online.

Alternatively you can contact AMSA for further information

- Phone: 1300 550 009
- Email: amsa@mensshed.net
- Postal Address: PO Box 793 The Junction NSW 2291

Insurance

Overview

Insurance is a vital element for all Management Committees to consider when setting up a Men's Shed.

All Men's Sheds registered with AMSA must have Public & Products Liability and Association Liability Insurance as a minimum. Volunteer's Personal Accident Insurance is also strongly recommended as is Property Insurance for the Shed building and all tools and equipment housed within the Shed.

Men's Shed insurance requirements vary. For example, some Sheds are sponsored and insured by a larger body such as a Church organisation, Local Council, Retirement Village or local Service Club.

It is important to obtain a Certificate of Currency from these sponsoring bodies stating the cover that exists for the Men's Shed.

A copy of the Certificate should be retained in the Shed's files and a copy sent to AMSA.

If a Shed has to purchase insurance this can be obtained from any reliable Licensed insurance broker and the Committee must ensure the insurance is placed with an APRA approved insurer who is financially sound and reputable insurance company.

Alternatively, Sheds can participate in the AMSA Group Insurance Scheme that has been specifically tailored for Men's Sheds.

AMSA has arranged, through an insurance broker, a broad range of Insurance covers to protect Sheds. These are outlined more fully on the AMSA website or by contacting 1300 550 009.

While insurers will pay for genuine, covered claims, there are several situations where claims will not be paid. These are called 'policy exclusions' and they are set out in the insurance policy –they need to be read and fully understood.

Some policy exclusions exist because a different type of insurance policy applies to the situations described or, the situation described is illegal for the insurer to cover.

For example, medical insurance in Australia can only be covered by a Registered Health Fund – it is illegal for a General Insurance Company to provide such cover.

Also, fines and penalties cannot be covered in an insurance policy.

Insurance companies expect the insured to take reasonable care and to comply with the law in running their affairs. Ignoring the law and /or behaving irresponsibly may reduce the amount payable for a claim to zero.

Duty of Disclosure

When working with the insurance company, such as the filling in an application form, claims form or advising of major changes to the risk which is insured, the policy holder has a 'Duty to Disclose' the truth to the Insurer.

As a member of AMSA and the AMSA Group Insurance Scheme, the Men's Shed would be required to advise AMSA who will, through the broker, disclose issues to the insurer. The insurance policy sets out what is required to be disclosed.

Types

1. Associations Insurance- This insurance is designed to cover the voluntary Directors, Committee Members and Office Holders of an Association for the cost of investigating and defending any actual or alleged 'wrongful' act in the discharge of their duties- except for acts involving proven dishonesty, fraud or misconduct up to a nominated amount.

Please read the full coverage and exclusions in the Policy wording carefully.

2. Public & Products Liability-This policy covers situations where the insured (Men's Shed) and others with an interest is found to be legally liable for Personal injury and/or held liable for damage to someone else's property. (Many Local Governments and Funding Bodies now require an insured sum of \$20 million).

Example 1:

A Men's Shed may have a BBQ where a member trips over and strikes the BBQ resulting in severe burns. The injured party may sue the Men's Shed for negligence and if upheld by a court, the Shed will have to pay damages to the injured person. This policy is designed to pay for such situations.

Example 2:

At the same BBQ, a person buys a sausage sandwich (product) and becomes seriously ill with food poisoning. This policy is designed to pay damages to the injured party.

Please read the full coverage and exclusions in the Policy wording carefully. Seek expert advice to ensure clarity of all aspects of this type of Insurance.

3. Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance- This insurance protects Shed member volunteers who are injured when performing activities on behalf of the Men's Shed on a voluntary basis. The cover is for volunteers to a certain age and includes coverage for an injury while travelling to and from a voluntary activity of the Shed. The cover cannot legally cover situations such as medical costs that are normally covered by Health Funds, but other related costs such as walking aids, cost of modifications to a dwelling may be covered.

Amounts are also payable for what are termed 'capital amounts' resulting in death or serious injury. For example, if a volunteer loses a limb or becomes blind from an injury while doing voluntary work on behalf of Men's Shed. Please read the full coverage and exclusions in the Policy wording carefully. Seek expert advice to ensure clarity of all aspects of this type of insurance.

4. Building & Contents- This insurance is designed to protect Men's Sheds against losses that occur to the Shed and its contents. In many cases the owner of the Shed takes out the insurance and the Shed is only required to insure the contents. The Shed committee needs to assess what is required for their Shed. Property insurance policies vary in what is covered so if a policy is much cheaper than another, chances are the cover is different – for example, the cheaper one may not cover the Shed for glass breakage or flood cover.

AMSA has arranged its Group policy specifically for Men's Sheds and it provides a broad cover including fire, burglary, storm and tempest, the replacement of glass at replacement cost and cover for floods – which is otherwise very difficult to obtain.

For information about pricing and other insurance aspects contact AMSA through amsa@mensshed.net or 1300 550 009

General Note to Management Committees

When comparing insurance premiums, please take into account the differences in coverage of each similar policy option and how each suits your situation before making a final decision.

Please read the full coverage and exclusions in the Policy wording carefully. Seek expert advice to ensure clarity of all aspects of this type of insurance.

Venue

In order to start a Men's Shed you need a location. It may initially be a place for regular meetings or you may have already identified a potential site. As word spreads that you are starting a Men's Shed, donations of tools and machinery may be offered.

You do not want to reject any offers so it is important that you have adequate facilities in which to store them.

The search for a suitable workshop area needs to be considered as early as possible in the planning process. It can be time consuming and frustrating.

- where will the Shed be located in your local area? - this can affect funding as many local organisations are required to limit their donations to their immediate area.
- is there public transport access? -some men choose to travel by bus for local travel when they retire.
- convenient car parking - cars are also used to transport tools, materials and finished goods so good access is critical.
- suitability for members with disabilities - wheelchair access and ramps will probably be required together with disability toilets.
- could neighbours be affected by the operation (e.g. noise and dust)? The number of days that the Shed is open needs to be considered.
- the types of projects that are planned and whether a number of activities will be occurring at the same time, could affect the choice of building.
- are the necessary and adequate services available (electricity, water and sanitation)? If a Shed is successful, growth will include new activities and therefore it is important to consider adequate services.
- storage space is essential, both in the work area and outside. There is never too much storage for materials, finished goods and tools.
- a major aspect of 'Men's Sheds' is to promote socialisation and the layout of the building should include a 'chat and eating' area.
- is there an existing building that could be used?
- unused or under-utilised buildings on Church or Local Government sites or those belonging to an sponsoring body have been used by a number of Men's Sheds. Often this means that the building insurance cover is included.
- Men's Sheds have been offered disused Scout Halls located on Council land.
- some Men's Sheds have been offered unused Fire or Ambulance Stations
- consider Showgrounds or Sporting Grounds
- some Men's Sheds have started in converted shipping containers.
- you may even consider a Mobile Shed that can travel to different locations.
- be proactive- drive around the community and flag any potential buildings or sites- do your research

- have discussions with Local Government, Members of Parliament, local organisations, businesses.

The ideal scenario is to purpose build a workshop specific to your requirements. There is no set rule as to the size of your Shed. However, do not overreach- the 'mega' Shed is not necessarily the best Men's Shed.

Each Shed has its own specific needs by way of size, storage, access and shape as required by members. A significant benefit is that the proposed activities will also influence the need to customise each Shed to the specific requirements of its users. For example, do you need garden space, designated metal areas, spray areas.

Consult with members to prioritise their needs and requirements, liaise with local government and adapt what you have for what you need.

Who do I ask?

- AMSA
- your Local Council
- your State Department of Lands (or your State equivalent)
- RSL Club Committees
- your Local Members of Parliament
- Church Groups
- Retirement Organisations
- Service Clubs e.g. Lions, Rotary
- Community Groups
- Community Organisations
- local Business community
- Sporting Clubs
- Showground Trusts

Promotion

There is nothing wrong with a bit of shameless self-promotion and initially this can be one of the most beneficial tools you have. When starting up your Men's Shed and later when the Shed is operational, it is very important to get as much publicity as possible.

This is extremely important when seeking Grants, sourcing an income through fundraising, sponsorship, donations of materials, recruiting members and establishing partnerships with community organisations.

Types

Media- Your local newspapers, television and radio stations are always looking for excellent stories from their Community- in particular, human interest stories.

You can utilise their services by:-

- explaining what the Men's Shed is about, its benefits and membership
- providing an update on the current status of its establishment.
- profiling particular projects that help the community e.g. donation of toys to hospitals.
- profiling particular personalities in the Men's Shed
- publicise special events like Open Days, fundraising activities or community projects.

Invite the media to a social event such as a BBQ.

Branding- A good name and logo can be an incredible marketing tool. It makes your Men's Shed recognisable and noticeable. It is something that your members can wear with pride and it will also unite members. Consult with the members and give it a lot of thought - try to get it right the first time.

A logo can last for generations. If you can afford to, it is best to get a logo professionally designed to ensure there are no copyright breaches. Perhaps you could try to get a donation?

What to brand?

- Men's Shed signage
- Letterhead
- Brochures
- Banners
- Website
- Shed uniforms- Hats and Shirts.

Try to source a sponsor/s for your uniforms- offer to include their business logo on the design? Some Sheds have 'sold' sections of the shirt such as the sleeve or back. In other instances local service clubs such as Rotary have sponsored the shirts and caps.

Website- An excellent strategy both in the start up phase and when your Shed is operational is to **communicate regularly with the community**.

- this allows you to provide updates, information and requests.
- it also enables those who may want to support you or be involved with the project to make contact.
- your website need not be too complex at the start but can be a work in progress and usually be a hobby for one of your members.
- keep the information updated and provide regular stories on your progress.

Contact AMSA on amsa@mensshed.net for further information

Print- AMSA provides a specific Shed brochure that is available by contacting amsa@mensshed.net. Flyers and brochures are an effective way of providing details about your Men's Shed. You can distribute them throughout the community or leave them in prominent areas where you would most likely find new members such as Doctors surgeries, hardware stores, pharmacies, local clubs, library, seniors groups

Be sure to have details of your:

- website
- phone number
- location/Address
- opening days and hours
- activities

Business cards are also effective - you can distribute them during networking functions or meetings.

Being Active

Starting to get active in the community can not only keep the momentum of your group going but can be invaluable in promoting the Men's Shed. You can use these activities to raise some beneficial funds and support.

It is never too early to start getting active. It is important to involve all members in interesting activities while you are planning for your Men's Shed.

If you do not have a physical Men's Shed this should not deter you from meeting and undertaking social and community activities as a Men's Shed Group.

Shed Visits

All Sheds are different in their aims, organisation, activities and layout. Many of the newer Men's Sheds have learnt from the experiences and difficulties encountered by the more established groups.

A great deal of valuable information can be gained by visiting as many Men's Sheds as possible. Members are usually very proud of their Shed- they will be welcoming and willing to offer help and advice.

As most Sheds are relatively new, they can also provide information on the problems they encountered in their early days.

Many established Sheds have 'mentored' developing Sheds during those potentially difficult early stages.

Shed visits are also great day out for the men!

The AMSA website www.mensshed.org has a 'Shed Locator' that provides details of member Sheds all over Australia as well as their contact details.

Fundraising

Fundraising can be undertaken over the short and long term.

Short term activities can be irregular, generate quick income and could include community BBQs, selling scrap metal, garage sales.

Long term requires time, extensive planning and can generate better returns. This could include developing partnerships with local businesses and service clubs, major raffles to coincide with significant events such as Father's' Day.

- *Host a BBQ at your local hardware store or other business venues*
- *Host a BBQ at other prominent community events or community facilities.*
- *Ask your local butcher and bakery to make a donation!*
- *Organise a charity golf/bowls day or other fun events that can attract community support.*
- *Become actively involved in community events or organise one.*

Fundraising not only helps the bank balance but also gets you known throughout the community. It is an ideal opportunity to promote your Shed, attract donations and sponsorships as well as new members. It also instils a sense of ownership and forges new connections for the members.

Community Donations & Support

Many Men's Sheds have found that there are a variety of jobs within the community that are too small for local handymen. In some cases, people have found it difficult finding someone to help out. Think of it like the Scouts 'Bob a Job Week'.

Example: A new Shed in Belmont NSW would water the plants along the main road once a week for their Local Council wearing their Shed shirts with logo. This not only got them a small income but the whole community got to know them.

However, you cannot accept work that entails legislative requirements for licences as per government regulations.

Speak with community organisations and make enquiries about potential work.

Successful Men's Sheds have developed valuable partnerships with local organisations.

Whilst your Men's Shed is being established, you can assist other community organisations with some of their projects?

- the local pre-school may need some play equipment or some raised garden beds?
- the local Golf Club needs some seating benches on the course?
- the local tennis courts or sporting fields may require Some refurbished seating?

Funding

The costs involved in setting up a Men's Shed can be significant and funds may be required for:

- infrastructure & initial set up
- renovation & refurbishment
- Modifications to existing buildings to meet legislative requirements
- connection of or upgrades to utilities- power, water
- installation of disabled facilities such as ramps, toilet
- tools and equipment
- office & kitchen equipment
- materials and consumables
- compliance with Men's Shed Health & Safety standards

Sheds also require funds for ongoing expenses such as:

- Insurance
- materials and consumables
- utilities such as electricity
- internet & phone costs
- member activities
- member amenities

It is highly recommended that Management Committees undertake a Strategic Planning process and develop a Business Plan including short term and long term budgets.

Grants

There are four main methods that not-for-profit organisations can employ to raise income:

- donations, sponsorships and fundraising
- providing services
- the manufacture and selling of products
- grant funding from Federal, State and Local Government sources as well as other corporate and philanthropic organisations.

Grants can be a valuable source of income for your Shed but applying for grants requires patience and perseverance.

Some grants are not available for organisations that do not have an ABN so if you are not an incorporated body (legal entity) you will need to have a sponsoring body who will apply on your behalf.

However, Men's Sheds are encouraged to expand their fundraising strategies and not be solely reliant of community grants and/or government funding as the sector becomes more competitive for these limited resources.

AMSA has a variety of resources that can assist you in your grant writing endeavours so visit the website for the appropriate links.

Comprehensive information is also available on some government websites to assist organisations access funding such as www.communitybuilders.gov.nsw.au; www.community.grantready.com.au

AMSA can also assist you to access this information

Generating Income

A Men's Shed should be committed to take on regular fundraising activities throughout the year to ensure that purchases of consumables, utilities, insurance, capital equipment and capital works, if required, can be undertaken and adequate funds are available to meet the ongoing costs of the project.

The Management Committee should ensure that a nominated figure is embedded into their annual budget to guarantee that fundraising is a priority. All members should be encouraged to make a commitment to and participate in fundraising activities to ensure the project's financial viability and future sustainability. Generating income requires commitment and effort on the part of all members.

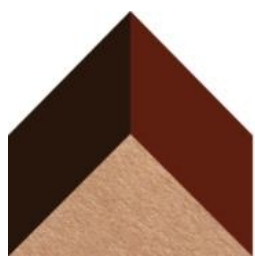
Management Committees are well advised to develop a Fundraising Policy as well as Strategic and Business Plans to ensure that their Men's Shed is sustainable and able to offer activities to all members on an ongoing basis.

Talk to established Sheds to share ideas and operational best practice.

Income includes donations, funds received through grants, income derived from items that you produce, sponsorship, attending the local markets, fundraising through special events such as raffles and BBQs as well as charging membership fees.

Whilst generating an income the Men's Shed can:

- showcase activities and in particular the Shed's work being undertaken within the community
- promote ways in which the community can support your Men's Shed
- generate media support for the event and the project
- offer a social activity open to all members
- offer an opportunity to network with local agencies and services generate excellent profits



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