



Welcoming Partnerships

The Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice was founded in 2006 by Dr Venkat Pulla, to support approaches that promote resilience as opposed to dealing with deficits. A small robust group of believers in strengths approaches and Gandhian principles of 'self-reliance' manage the activities of the Institute. The first group or that constituted the board came from a range of professional backgrounds such as social work, psychology, media, accountancy and digital art. Although, Brisbane based and Australian, the Institute's true partners reside in many states in Australia and also come from the rest of the world. Professionals and lay people from various alternate therapies, health including psychiatry, Social Sciences, Human Services, biology neuro-sciences, pure sciences aboriginal people's development, education and management that believe work with and advocate strengths based practices have joined us in several of our initiatives. United Kingdom, South Africa, Malaysia, USA, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Nepal, India, Maldives, Indonesia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Netherlands, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Slovenia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Netherlands, Canada, Germany, Poland, Israel, Austria, Nigeria, Myanmar, China, Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan, and Peru are some countries that have found interactions with us through conferences and training to be meaningful to them. The networks that have built through such interactions have produced great friendships, reinforcing conversations and journeying together through strengths approach to increase coping, build hope in all societies. Since its inception the Institute has flourished offering meaningful, affordable conference and training strategies that bring together people from various NGOs, Government and Private and corporate sector, International agencies, Universities and Research Institutes together to engage in conversations that are aim to influence and create a more positive world in Australia and the rest of the world. People from diverse backgrounds are attracted to this inward looking practice. For example, teachers utilise such strategies with their students, helping professionals engage with clients to fulfil their potential, and employers and HRD Managers are deploying strength based performance appraisals with their employees— This is a growing movement. We invite you to join in.

About The Institute

The Brisbane Institute for Strengths-based Practice is a not-for profit, voluntary organisation comprised of a wide variety of professional people with many years' of experience working in varied endeavours and human service organisations. The range of experience to be found within the Institute's members currently includes social work and community development, academic expertise in the social sciences, accountancy, disability support, graphic art, public sector management, Indigenous cultural education, business analysis and project management. This range of expertise is extended through the various networks of each of the Institute's members. It is an organisation of good founded by Dr Venkat Pulla and his friends that donate their time and skills to the institute and its projects pro bono. The Institute was originally incorporated in the year 2006 in Queensland and currently it functions under changed status as a private institute with social responsibility and continues to keep its character as a Not for profit entity, functioning from 5

Mandell Close, Coopers Plains, Brisbane, Queensland, 4108, Australia.

Purpose of the Institute

The Brisbane Institute of Strengths based Practice propagates, supports and encourages strengths based human resource development and management consulting, strengths based counselling, group and community training activities and projects in the Asia Pacific region and elsewhere, through studies, visits, conferences and workshops and major training events. The principle sphere of operation of the Brisbane Institute of Strengths in the initial years has been the Asia-Pacific region; however the expertise of the Institute's members is being deployed elsewhere in the world as necessary. Current or identified areas of Brisbane Institute of Strengths based Practice projects include are in India and Nepal. Previous involvement was in Vietnam, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Nepal

Vision of the Institute

According to its founder Dr Venkat Pulla the vision of the Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice is to assist a world that moves forward in peaceful collaboration, through bringing together individuals, communities and organisations from around the world to maximise their potential. Its goals include:

Creating opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to learn about strengths based practice. The Institute, Dr Venkat Pulla, expects will

- Hold training events on strengths based practice related issues
- Promote reputable strength based trainings
- Provide consulting for organisations in areas of Appreciative Enquiry, Human Resource Development, Strategic vision, Quality and motivational Interviewing amongst others
- Provide opportunities for the practice of strength based strategies through relevant programs (e.g. AYAD)
- Undertake Projects in which the Institute may choose to become include:
 - Conferences about strengths-based strategies and community development
 - Minor fund raising for small projects that promote community development or resilience and finally creating forums where people can come together to share experiences and stories, network, be inspired, challenged, and supported.

Modus Operandi

Since the resources available to the Institute do not reside with any one individual member of the organisation, projects are undertaken in a collaborative manner with joint ownership and pooling of available resources. Not all volunteers of the Institute will directly engage with all projects; however all projects must have more than one sponsor from within the institute.

Partnership with the Institute

The Brisbane Institute contributes its member's personal and collective expertise and utilises its combined extensive professional networks as necessary to carry out strengths based projects. The Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice (Inc.) is a partner of the AusAID Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development (AYAD) program, amongst others. Over the years it has partnered with Griffith University, Australia, Sarajevo University, Bosnia and Herzegovina, National Institute of Small Industries and Extension and Training, Government of India, Ministry

of Women and Community development, Government of Malaysia through their National Family Planning Board, Doha Foundation, Government of Qatar, School of Social Work, Kathmandu Nepal, and School of Social Work Colombo Sri Lanka, Australian Association of Social Work (AASW) —Key Industry organisation in Australia amongst others. These collaborative relationships have been possible by visits of Dr Venkat Pulla, the Founder of the Institute seeking active partnerships. Often a memorandum of understanding (MOU) is developed and formalised where necessary.

Projects are undertaken in a collaborative manner with joint ownership and pooling of available resources. Responsibility charters of actions for successful implementation of the projects are exchanged. The key to collaborative partnership is communication. Most projects have one Brisbane Institute member as a project lead with inputs from a couple of other members. All communications are transparently seen and read. Where culture specific interventions are required the institute seeks a number of multi-cultural resources including consultants within Australia and also abroad.

It is quite possible that major facilitator can also be found and nominated in the partnering agency and the Brisbane Institute of Strengths would discuss this well in advance of partnerships. External partnerships therefore must realise that there are times and when the Institute will greatly rely on external project partnering organisations to contribute fiscal, and personnel resources where needed. This is crucial as the Institute depends upon primarily on the pure good will of its members and does not have a paid secretariat currently.

[How to Apply for Partnership?](#)

There are no formal procedures for presenting a proposal for partnership with the Brisbane Institute of Strengths. Proposals accepted by the Institute usually begin quite informally with an expression of interest, a series of dialogues or finding and meeting a member of the institute. This is either initiated at an existing conference or training by the Institute personnel or by the potential partnership seeker. Potential partnerships are discussed with Dr Venkat Pulla.

[MOU with partners](#)

A memorandum of understanding is drawn on the basis of consultations with the institute and the partner agencies.

[Past Projects](#)

Since its inception in 2006, the Brisbane Institute of Strengths based Practice has been responsible for a number of innovative, strengths based projects in Australia and around the world. These include conferences, training initiatives and community based projects. As a partner with the Australian Government's Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development (AYAD) initiative, itself part of the Australia's international aid program (AusAID), the Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice, has also sponsored and mentored young Australians to carry out various projects in the Asia-Pacific region. Past projects of the Institute include:

[Workshops:](#)

[Human values at work workshop August 2006](#)

The workshop addresses questions such as how do you work? How do you view your career and your contribution to the world? Does something require change? Human Values at Work focuses on how you can work in accord with your own spiritual view of life and five Human Values that are found cross-culturally in all spiritual traditions: Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love and Non-violence. A one day program on Human values at work was delivered in collaboration with University of Southern Queensland in Toowoomba, by Venkat Pulla, Rita Kugler, CA and

Management Consultant) & Dr, Coralie Graham, Lecturer University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba.

Conferences:

- 2006 – Towards Strengths Based Strategies, Hyderabad, India (in partnership with Sanghamitra- India – <http://sanghamitra-mdidp.cfsites.org>)

The inaugural activity of the Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice the Strengths Bases Strategies 2006 conference caught the attention of practitioners, researchers, academics and consumers around the world. Delegates and presenters from developed and developing countries had the opportunity to meet with and learn from significant thinkers and practitioners in HRD, counselling, community engagement, entrepreneur development, disability, mental health and HIV/AIDS. Essentially an Australian-based event, the conference was held in India to facilitate the participation of a large number of local and regional practitioners and academics.

http://www.strengthsbasedpractice.com.au/Inaugural_Conference.htm

- * 2008 – Consortium for Social Development Asia Pacific Branch-biannual Conference on Social development and Transition: Paths for Global local Partnerships is pleased to establish ICSD AP Branch Students' Forum. <http://www.iucisd.org>, <http://www.nepalschoolsocialwork.org>

This International forum was inaugurated by Dr. Venkat Pulla, on 25/11/2008

- 2009 – Coping and Resilience, Dubrovnik-Cavtat, Croatia (in partnership with the SPA – <http://www.dpp.hr/eng/onama.php>)

The Coping & Resilience International Conference Dubrovnik 2009 (C&R Dubrovnik 2009) brought together practitioners, researchers, community activists and academics working in the trans-disciplinary area of human coping with diverse challenging life circumstances and interested in the capacity of human resilience to most adverse life events. The conference aimed to advance evidence-based practices in resilience promotion and hope building. It examined the interplay of individual, family, community and social responsibility factors in resilience and to provide directions for future practice and research.

http://www.strengthsbasedpractice.com.au/dubrovnik_conference_2009.htm

2010 – Coping, Resilience and Hope Building, Brisbane- Australia, (in partnership with the Griffith University

The Coping, Resilience and Hope Building International Conference Brisbane 2010 (CR&HB Brisbane

2010) brings practitioners, researchers, community activists and academics working in the trans-disciplinary area of human coping with diverse challenging life circumstances and interested in the capacity of human resilience to most adverse life events. The conference brought in evidence-based practices in resilience promotion and hope building. The commitment of over 120 paper presenters was very overwhelming for us as organizers.

<http://www.strengthsbasedpractice.com.au>

- 2010 – Sarajevo: Introduction to strengths based practices and Coping, Resilience, Hope Building activities in Sarajevo, Tuzla and other cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina (in partnership with the Vive Zene, Tuzla, Front models, Sarajevo and the University of Sarajevo-
- Sarajevo they proudly say 'never dies'. It rejuvenates. It is this hope process that needs

strengthening. Using an opportunity of friends and professionals who have attended our previous conferences and at their invitation it was decided to utilise May 19-24, 2010 to assist some skill acquisition seminars in the field of individual, family,

community and social development Over time the Brisbane Institute of Strengths will follow it up with specific project work in Sarajevo that would benefit.

<http://www.strengthsbasedpractice.com.au>

- 2011– Strengths Based Management of Social Change: with special reference to Transition Countries in partnership with Sarajevo University Sarajevo
- Sarajevo Conversations 2011 [http://strengthsbasedpractice.com.au/Sarajevo Conversations Conference 2011.htm](http://strengthsbasedpractice.com.au/Sarajevo_Conversations_Conference_2011.htm)

2012 (proposed) – Re-Greening Our Lives, (partnership search is on) Further discussion is taking place about the venue

Training Initiatives

- Current Training Initiatives are offered through consulting organisations such as Impetus Global, Brisbane Australia
- 2007 - The Strengths Approach: Principles and Processes
- A two day workshop was held on introduction to strengths based practice with Brisbane Institute's Consultant Mr Wayne McCashen April 2007 Wayne is author of the books The Strengths Approach: a strengths-based. A friend of the Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice (Inc.), Wayne McCashen is author of the books The Strengths Approach: a strengths-based resource for sharing power and creating change and Communities of Hope: a strengths-based resource for building community and co-author of the card-based resource Name the Frame: reminders for building respectful socially just decisions. Presently he is Education and Training Coordinator for Family and Community Services in the Northern Territory, Australia, and was until recently the principal trainer and consultant for St Luke's Anglicare (Bendigo, Australia) in strengths-based practice to a diverse range of organisations throughout Australia and New Zealand. This was the first in a series of training events to be offered to the Queensland community, by which the Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice (Inc.) intends to build on an opportunity to promote strengths based strategies for community and personal development.

2007 – Walking Besides –Irene* Strengths Based Strategies for the Individual

Training provided at the request of the Brisbane-based Anam Cara organisation. The aim was to facilitate a strengths-based discussion on an appropriate form of service provision that identified and nurtured the service user's strengths while identifying and nurturing the strengths of the team who provided her support. (A pseudo name to hide the real identity of the person)

2009 – (Peter Binyon training) Strategic planning, Quality frameworks for counselling for Australian Counselling Network.

AYAD initiatives

The Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development program (AYAD) places skilled young Australian volunteers, aged

18-30, on short-term assignments of between 3-12 months, in developing countries throughout the Asia Pacific region. The program offers young people a wonderful opportunity to contribute to development while at the same time learning about other cultures. Youth Ambassadors work with Australian organisations and their overseas counterparts in a broad range of areas that include health, environment, rural development, gender, governance, justice, education and infrastructure development. Youth Ambassadors use their skills and expertise to actively contribute to international development. They gain an increased understanding of the development needs of our neighbouring countries and broaden their experience by living and working in a cross-cultural environment. The Brisbane Institute of Strengths based Practice has great pride in being one of the partners of this initiative.

- 2008 – Vietnam, Micro-finance development support
- Promotion of a Vietnamese Institute member to the AYAD selection committee as a suitable candidate for the AYAD program in Vietnam. The member spent a year in her native land utilising her banking sector skills to assist a small micro-finance NGO to maintain its existing programs and to expand its operations in outlying areas and in the north of the country.
- 2008 – Sri Lanka School of Social Work, Colombo

Promotion of assistance of teaching and field work supervision at the National Institute of Social Development. Two young Ambassadors were selected for Sri Lanka. Due to continued insurgency the Australian Government made a decision not to send young Australian Ambassadors for that year.

- 2010– Nepal, Kadambari Institute of Science and Management, Kathmandu,

Promotion of assistance of training and field work supervision at the above Institute has been accepted by the Brisbane Institute of Strengths. Nepal AYAD scheme was approved for 2012

2011–2015 And 2016- ongoing Phase:

[Nepal School of Social Work](http://www.nepalschoolsocialwork.org) (a joint Venture of Kadambari Memorial College, Nepal College of Development Studies and Tulsi Mehar Memorial College) Shankamul, Ganesh Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal
www.nepalschoolsocialwork.org

Community Development Initiatives:

2007-2012 – Sri Lanka School of Social Work development initiative

As part of the Conference two delegates from the School of Social Work of the National Institute of Social Development, Sri Lanka was invited. Professor Ranavera Amaravamsa and Mrs Shamini Attanayaka presented an overview of the training and faculty development needs of the School of Social Work. This meeting was attended by Professor Parasuram, Director of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Professor Lesley Chenoweth, of Griffith University, Amanda Vos of AASW, Heads of the Departments of Indian Schools of Social Work such as Professor Uma Vennam from Tirupathi Mahila Vidyalayam University, Professor Hazel Lima Director Roshini Nilaya, Mangalore University, Dr Mrs Miriam Samuel Madras Christian College, Professor Janki Andharia, and several other academics. The meeting was convened by Dr Venkat Pulla and a number of immediate action plans to assist the Sri Lanka school of Social Work were drawn up.

2009 – Soul Gypsy initiative

Soul-Gypsy is a multi ethnic group arts promotion of the Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice. Dance for Development is a nurture strategy to advance community preservation of arts and culture. “Musicians by nature, not by reason” is how Soul Gypsy describes itself. The group is comprised of 10 extraordinarily talented musicians and singers from a range of Balkan and Eastern European states, all of which have a recent history of ethnic and religious tension. These musicians have discovered a common love of Romany Gypsy music and together have created an extraordinary showcase of how people formerly at war may use a common interest and their strengths to forge an exciting collaboration for peace. The project includes plans to encourage younger musicians to participate also in a concerted program for peace promotion.

Promotion of assistance of training and field work supervision at the above Institute has been accepted by the Brisbane Institute of Strengths. Selections of volunteers is ongoing.

Partnerships

Previous and ongoing partnerships and collaborations include:

- * Sanghamitra – India
(<http://sanghamitra-mdidp.cfsites.org>)
- * National Institute for Small Industry Extension Training (NISJET)
(<http://www.ndparking.com/nisiet.com>)
- * Bala Vikasa Social Service Society
(<http://www.balavikasa.org>)
- * Oxfam Australia
(<http://www.oxfam.org.au>)
- * AUSAID and AYAD (Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development)
(<http://www.usaid.gov.au>; <http://www.usaid.gov.au/youtham/default.t.cfm>)
- * National Institute of Social Development, Colombo, Sri Lanka (<http://www.nisd.lk/nisd>)
- * Centre for Strengths Based Strategies, Michigan, USA (<http://www.buildmotivation.com>)
- * Society for Psychological Assistance, Zagreb, Croatia
(<http://www.dpp.hr/eng/onama.php>)
- * The Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development
(<http://www.fsd.org.qa/>)
- * The Community Connections, Canberra, <http://www.comcons.org.au>
- * National Institute of Social Development, Department of Social Welfare, Government of Sri Lanka, <http://www.nisd.lk/nisd/>
- * Kadambari School of Science and Management, Kathmandu, Nepal
(<http://www.nepalschoolsocialwork.org>)
- * Not for Profit Network, Australia, (<http://www.nfpn.com.au/>)
- * Australian Association of Social Workers, (<http://www.aasw.asn.au>)
- * Rural Social Workers Action Group- Victoria, (<http://www.aasw.asn.au/>)
- * Icongong, (<http://www.icongong.in/>)
- * Anamcara, Centacare, Brisbane, (http://www.centacarebrisbane.net.au/disability/anam_cara.php)

Further Information

For further information about the Institute, its members or its project collaborations, please contact Director of the Institute

Dr. Venkat Pulla
5 Mandell Close
Coopers Plains Qld 4108
Tel: + 61-422 345 982 dr.venkat.pulla@gmail.com