OUR VISION: Within 10 years, we will equip 1000 women in STEM from around the world with the skills to lead, influence and contribute to policy and decision-making as it informs the future of our planet.
You can’t solve a problem if you don’t face into it. There is no question that people all over the planet are endeavouring to create the future we all want. Homeward Bound is a small but important contribution in this space.

We live in complex times. Human ingenuity is prodigious, the resultant change exponential and the rapacious use of the earth’s resources unquestionable. Climate change, habitat and species degradation, damage to our oceans, urbanisation, political unrest and, together with population growth, concerns about food and water security – these are reported daily in one form or another in the global media. Technology is transforming our world; yet, some of our most intransient problems remain just that.

The need we address

The world is reacting by losing faith in current leadership. How have we got where we are today, and what is happening in the practice of leadership that would permit the order of challenge we are now facing?

It would seem that the challenge of gender equality, the visibility of women as leaders, an elevation of their evident contribution to the whole, would be common sense. Abundant research* suggests women (whether a result of context or genes; evident, nonetheless) are more inclusive, collaborative, have a legacy mindset and can be trusted with assets (money and people). Thoughtful leaders faced with very tough challenges would choose best talent to work together, and best talent would seemingly include having women present in equal numbers in boardrooms, parliaments, executive teams and the broader community. But common sense is not common practice.

At best, women comprise approximately 20% of senior leadership roles in the world today. Change is glacial (although evidence in Antarctica would suggest the metaphor is no longer appropriate).

Homeward Bound was born out of significant leadership expertise, broad experience working with women, and frustration at their persistent absence in areas where their voices are needed.

Why women in science particularly? Because science has shaped every part of how we have evolved to this point in time, and is our best (some might say only) means by which we will solve our toughest problems. In a world that is challenged by ‘fact’ and confuses data/patterns and good research outcomes with strongly held opinions or beliefs, women as leaders plus women as scientists seems to be a crucial combination to help.

Dr Jess Melbourne-Thomas (Homeward Bound co-founder), Dr Justine Shaw and Dr Mary-Anne Lea were all instrumental in helping craft the focus of Homeward Bound and its ability to reach the desired audience. Scientists all, these brilliant women have chosen to pursue science, motherhood and leadership with grace, courage and clarity. From them I learnt to deeply value the scientific voice, but to also laugh and find space to keep the magnitude of our challenge in context.

The 2016 inaugural group spent 10 months working through key leadership challenges, deep-dived on how their stories helped/hindered their progress as leaders, and built a bond that we hope endures for many years to come.

Following our December 2016 voyage to Antarctica, they were collectively instrumental for reviewing the project, providing some 62 recommendations to improve it (a whole new level of peer review), developing a Funding Toolkit, Risk Assessment Strategy and a Code of Conduct. They have established a collective called The Convergence, for sharing insights, collaborating, tracking the impact of Homeward Bound and helping successive generations of women prepare for the Antarctic component of the program.

In March 2017, the first group helped to find and enable the second group (80 in total) who will go to Antarctica in February of 2018.

Looking ahead

This is a 10-year initiative to reach 1000 women – to enable them as leaders, to build a global collaboration and to have an impact on the world.

In November 2016, Homeward Bound was named by ‘Fortune’ magazine as the sixth-most constructive initiative globally for women. As of May 2017, some 500 million people had heard about Homeward Bound.

There are many people around the world to thank for this outcome: our major sponsors – Kathmandu, iNexus, Human Synergistics, Dattner Grant, Elmwood Studios; our many volunteer coaches; our global filmed faculty (world-leading experts in their field); and crowdfunding everywhere (I believe in 2016 there were some 40 different participant-led campaigns).
Thanks

My greatest thanks go to the small, passionate, visionary team who spent two years pulling the first project together, and who joined together on the delivery – Marshall Cowley, Kit Jackson, Julia May, Sarah Anderson, Justine Shaw, Mary-Anne Lea; AC Agency who did so much to get Homeward Bound seen and heard in the media; the wonderful and courageous Hayley Young, administering the project almost entirely on her own; and the lovely Songqiao Yao, who was our Hayley on-board the ‘MV Ushuaia’.

And last, but by no means least, thank you to our expedition leader, Greg Mortimer AOM – so blessed to have him on board (the program and the ship!)

This initiative is undoubtedly the combination of right purpose, right people, right outcome, right time.

Mother Nature Needs Her Daughters.

* Bloomberg, Korn Ferry, DDI, Zenger & Folman, McKinsey

LSI Lifetime Accredited coaches:
Andrew Gross, Anita Payne, Catherine Duvel, Fernanda Afonso, Graciela Szwarczberg, Jenny Krasny, Jo Comick, Jo McAlpine, Karen Devlin, Kerryn Velleman, Mandy Holloway, Margaret Parkinson, Margit Mansfield, Marion Stanway, Michael Peacock, Peter Ivet, Ross Anderson, Simoni Osborne, Steve Cartledge.

Global accredited MSCEIT coaches:
Angela Chapman, Caryn Cridland, Frieda De Ley, Garry Trotter, Jenny Postlethwaite, Juraj Ondrejkojvic, Justin O’Brien, Karen Gothelf, Kate Chaffey, Kerryn Velleman, Margaret Burnsie, Michelle Morrison, Muffy Churches, Nad Philips, Nancy Hromin, Nerolie Golder, Nicole Norris, Paulette Awais, Robert Gordon, Shawn Price.

**FINANCIALS**

**TOTAL EXPENDITURE**
$1,161,801

- **Ship charter**
  $950,000 (81.8%)
- **Admin / Project mgt**
  $57,706 (5%)
- **Travel / Venue hire**
  $19,380 (1.6%)
- **PR / Comms**
  $47,008 (4%)
- **Global faculty filming / Production**
  $44,654 (3.8%)
- **Program materials**
  $13,053 (1.1%)
- **Sale of gaitors**
  $1468 (0.1%)
- **Participant fees**
  $1,155,000 (99.5%)

**TOTAL REVENUE**
$1,161,083

- **Participant fees**
  $1,155,000 (99.5%)
- **Global faculty filming grant**
  $4615 (0.4%)
- **Sale of gaitors**
  $1468 (0.1%)

**Note:**
Amounts are in USD$.
Figures show a net loss of $718; however, as some revenue and some costs were incurred in AUD$, and an averaged conversion rate has been used to calculate those figures to USD$, the actual difference between revenue and expenditure may be somewhat different.

It is worth noting, nevertheless, that revenue and expenditure are, to all intents and purposes, equal; so, as we are running this initiative as a non-profit social enterprise, we have achieved this in the first program.

**Per person value**

Note: these figures represent both in-kind contributions based on commercial daily rates, and actual product values, converted to USD$.

Donated value-add
$9,917 (38.3%)

Program fees paid
$16,000 (61.7%)

**TOTAL PER PERSON VALUE**
$25,917
Participants

Australia:
Briony Ankor
Nancy Auerbach
Margaret Barbour
Aimee Bliss
Amanda Blythe
Sarah Brough
Sarah Charnaud
Molly Christensen
Sarah Conolly
Amanda Davies
Renata Egan
Leanne Everingham
Belinda Fairbrother
Colleen Filippa
Lindy Fitzgerald
Ashton Gainsford
Tracey Gray
Samantha Grover
Samantha Hall
Fern Hames
Britta Denise Hardesty
Marianne Harvey
Karen Hawke
Nicole Hellessey
Charlie Hindle
Elanor Huntington

New Zealand:
Sharna Jamadar
Niina Kauto
Sandra Kerbler
Christina Kirsch
Ida Kubiszewski
Robyn Lucas
Ruth Luscombe
Kate MacMaster
Merryn McKinnon
Nina McLean
Cathy Moir
Meredith Nash
Holly North
Kerry O’Brien
Deborah O’Connell
Kathleen Patrick
Ghislaine Platell
Elvira Poloczanska
Jessica Reeves
Andrea Robinson
Lauren Sando
Christina Schroeder
Amanda Sinclair
Johanna Speirs
Cristina Venables
Nicole Webster
Jennifer Woodgate

USA:
Phoebe Barnard
Anne Christianson
Lauren DuBois
Andrea Fidgett
Melissa Haeflner
Dyan de Napoli
Heidi Steltzer
Betty Trimmel
Joanne Young

Canada:
Shelley Ball
Joana Picoto Correa
Carol Devine
Glenna McGregor
Wynet Smith

UK:
Alison Davies
Raeanne Miller
Deborah Pardo
Lindsay Stringer

Costa Rica:
Monica Araya

To view participant profiles, click here.

Program Snapshot

I had a dream ...

HB is born
(mid-2014)

Voyage to Antarctica
(2-21 Dec 2016)

Pre-voyage media launch
Government House Tasmania dinner
(Nov 2016)

LSI diagnostic and coaching
Global faculty filming
(Aug–Oct 2016)

4MAT diagnostic
Elmwood’s HB branding launched
(Oct 2016)

MSCEIT diagnostic and coaching
(Apr–Jun 2016)

Round 2 applications open
(Aug 2015)

Round 1 applications open
(Jan 2015)

Greg Mortimer OAM signs on as expedition leader
(mid-2015)

I had a dream ...

HB is born
(mid-2014)

Expressions of interest sought – 200 received
(Nov 2014)

Participants meet at opening dinner in Ushuaia, Argentina
(1 Dec 2016)

Participants selected and announced – 76 from 107 applications

Monthly participant calls begin
(Oct/Nov 2015)

Post-voyage participant calls
The Convergence created
Governance Framework and Risk Management Strategy significantly updated following feedback
(Feb–Aug 2017)
The program comprised lectures, exercises, personal coaching and extensive open-forum discussion, project teams focussing on areas of interest and triads (learning teams of three), and even a Symposium at Sea!

Participants met monthly with the leadership team via remote-conferencing technology Zoom; 13 calls in total, which included updates about the program and from participants as they progressed through, presentations across the four streams (Leadership, Visibility, Science and Strategy), briefings and debriefings about the diagnostics administered during the program.

Leadership team met as required, also largely via Zoom; 6 formal meetings in total during the program, to prepare for participant calls and discuss any ongoing program developments.

Participants collaborated in small groups on a research project of their choice. The groups started working on their project at the start of 2016, and presented these, complete with A1 posters, on-board the ship. Themes were a reflection of participants’ key concerns, areas of interest and expertise, as follows:

- Education outreach
- Engagement of organisations involved in research and/or business activities making a positive environmental and/or social impact on the world
- Engagement of a selection of organisations that have a significant global footprint and a low representation of women in leadership
- A longitudinal study on the leadership experiences, skills and networks of women in science: A case study of the Homeward Bound faculty
- Climate science communication
- Managing contributions of participants to the film
- In-country or regional projects of concern
- Contributing to the leadership content; leadership of women with a science background
- The influence of women in climate change policy
- Engagement of family
- Developing and leading transdisciplinary science programs to address global change priorities
- Carbon offset
- While on the ship, a science/voyage-inspired art project also emerged! Participants brought as well as made their contributions.

Throughout 2016, we interviewed the following globally recognised experts in their field exclusively for the Homeward Bound voyage. We thank them for the generosity of their time.

- Dr Jane Goodall – Primatologist and highly influential environmental campaigner
- Franny Armstrong – Filmmaker behind ‘The Age of Stupid’, one of 100 most influential women
- Dr Sylvia Earle – Marine biologist, explorer, author and lecturer
- Christiana Figueres – Former Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- Dr Amy Edmondson – Novartis Professor of Leadership and Management at the Harvard Business School
- Dr Susan David – Co-Founder/Director of the Institute of Coaching, awarded speaker and coach, Harvard A-lister
- Clare Bowditch – Award-winning Australian singer, and activist
- Dr Robert Kaplan – Developed strategy mapping, The Balanced Score Card, on behalf of Dave Norton and himself
- Valerie Taylor – Shark expert, known for her conservation advocacy and films

The University of Tasmania funded a three-year research program, led by participant Dr Meredith Nash, to explore Homeward Bound’s the impact on the leadership and effectiveness of participants. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire prior to starting the program and following the voyage, all were also interviewed and a number of alumnae will be followed up over the three-year research timeframe.

A documentary (working title ‘Beautiful Minds’), exploring the web of obstacles women and girls face in STEMM and beyond, saw a concept designed to support the HB vision become reality in a film due for theatrical release in 2018. The on-board film crew (director Ili Baré, Kess Broekman-Dattner, Dale Cochrane, Pieter de Vries and Gary Laroix) captured really spectacular visuals and inspiring content.

Testament to the power of HB’s vision was Greg Mortimer’s joining the program as expedition leader. Greg is an Australian mountaineer, has led close to 100 expeditions to Antarctica, was one of the first two Australians to successfully climb Mt Everest. Greg trained as a geochemist and geologist, has worked as a survival-training instructor and as Scientific Affairs Adviser for the NZ Antarctic Division. He is the recipient of a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) and three Australian Geographic Society medals. Greg’s calm and supportive guidance and wisdom have been central in making Homeward Bound such an amazing experience.
The education program of Homeward Bound 2016 consisted of four integrated streams, each designed and led by experts in that arena – delivered over the year prior to the voyage, onshore in Ushuaia and on-board the ship.

Leadership development

This component aimed to provide insight into participants’ leadership mindset and style, and the impact this has on their ability to act as a leader in our world. A range of diagnostic tools were used – Life Styles Inventory™, 4MAT and MSCEIT – supported by dedicated coaching. Participants worked on developing and articulating purpose and values, explored motivation for leading, emotional intelligence and how to manage difficult conversations.

Personal visibility

A key gap between the will to lead and the ability to lead is finding and projecting your voice – being visible, which means networking, presenting, public speaking, speaking up in meetings, using social media, writing, media engagement and influencing. Participants were guided to visualise themselves in the future, and to create a new narrative around their professional and personal visionary goals. From this, a visibility plan was developed and aligned with their personal strategy map.

Science collaboration

A key objective of Homeward Bound is to establish a global community to collaborate towards impactful outcomes. The science component of the program provided education to enable a shared understanding on particular topics, including the Antarctic environment. The program leveraged the collective knowledge and expertise of the participants to collaborate on chosen projects. Participants also learned about each other through the ‘Symposium at Sea’ presentations that each participant made on board.

Strategic capability

This component provided an understanding of how to map strategy in order to clarify and communicate it, and then prioritise and align resources to make strategy happen. Strategic capability was explored in both an organisational and personal context. The personal strategy map was used as the framework to bring together the learning from the whole program, to establish a basis on which to make the conscious choices required to live a more purposeful life, and to embed new behaviours into habits.
Leadership

My first involvement in Homeward Bound came as the dream (literally) that was the genesis of the project, first started to merge from the realm of possibility into reality. With the ship secured and participants selected, the job of developing content and curriculum for the Leadership stream became something I shouldered with Founder, Fabian Dattner. Given the breadth of responsibilities she carried for the project as a whole, as a long-time collaborator, my design role quickly morphed into one of on-board faculty.

There were several key challenges to be addressed in creating the leadership development experience we’d envisaged for the inaugural group of participants:

• The sheer logistics of connecting participants from around the world to each other over the course of the year prior to departure, in ways that would facilitate the type of peer support and coaching that would be essential to the long-term goals of Homeward Bound

• Translating the transformational leadership initiatives that we have routinely delivered to groups of 15 – 25 people, into a meaningful onshore and on-board experience for 80+ people. This meant overcoming the relatively tight quarters of working in the public spaces of the ‘MV Ushuaia’ and dealing with the “Whales off the starboard bow!” factor, i.e. the constant pull of the extraordinary environment that is Antarctica during program delivery

• Holding a safe space, where people could process their response and reflections on their learning. We did not set out to teach them about leadership, but rather to create an environment where participants could learn about themselves. This had to be done, of course, in one of the world’s most remote environments, cut off from contact with the outside world, among strangers who were quickly becoming lifelong friends and collaborators.

Expeditioners departed Argentina for the Antarctic Peninsula, knowing what technical and cognitive abilities they possessed and how these equipped them to excel in their various disciplines. They arrived back in Ushuaia with a clearer understanding of how these abilities were mediated by:

• The beliefs they held about themselves (Life Styles Inventory™)
• Their own internal compass (personal purpose and core values)
• Their learning and communication styles (4MAT)
• Their emotional intelligence abilities (MSCEIT).

More than anything, it helped create self-awareness and understanding of how these characteristics may enable or, at times, inhibit their ability to provide leadership wherever it is needed and what they could do about it.

My own learning from Homeward Bound has been incalculable, through both the formal and informal feedback and evaluation processes we have pursued since the conclusion of our maiden voyage. I’ve learned a great deal about how to deliver transformative experiences in arguably the most inspiring and inhospitable environment on the planet. But, more than anything, I have learned and been humbled to witness what’s possible when a group of intelligent, passionate women come together in shared humanity to a common purpose.

– Marshall Cowley (Senior Consultant, Dattner Grant)
Visibility

Visibility – being seen and heard, by yourself and others, through purposeful communication – is a key leadership ability. Storytelling is and always has been the most powerful way to engage others, to shape arguments, to paint a picture, to change lives, and to transcend the everyday to achieve something more powerful and enduring. To lead effectively, first we have to know our own stories and choose those that help us step forward with courage. Then we have to be able to engage others by communicating purposefully, authentically and meaningfully, in order to effect change.

Women make up 50% of the population, but only 10% of voices in the media. While communication is seen as the most important attribute of good leaders by both sexes, women are more likely to perceive this in terms of listening and engaging in dialogue, while men focus on broadcasting messages.* Women will be disproportionately more affected by climate change, but, of the most 15 most influential people on climate change, only three are women, according to the International Council of Science. The current leadership paradigm is masculine, and therefore the prevailing style of communication has been informed by men. What got us to this point, however, won’t serve us into the future: a new Age of Women – in leadership and, therefore, in communication – is urgently needed.

During our careers as communicators (Sarah in corporate communications, marketing and digital strategy; Julia as a journalist, communications strategist and coach) we have seen, over and over, what happens when accomplished, passionate women struggle to communicate. They freeze in the limelight – or shy away from it in the first place. They aren’t heard in discussions, get trapped by limiting beliefs or cultural pressure, and the world therefore misses out on their critical contributions. Or, tragically, when they do take up a platform, their mighty efforts – in science and other sectors – fail to have the impact they deserve, because they have never learned how to be visible as leaders, and strategically and masterfully engage people.

Homeward Bound presents a powerful opportunity to challenge the invisibility of women by helping each cohort understand how to think purposefully and strategically about being a visible leader. The Visibility program starts with an audit of the women’s existing communication strengths and challenges, then moves into an articulation of what they’d like to achieve in the future as a visible leader. The core strategic pillars – audience, messaging and channels – are a bridge to that destination. We then support the women with practical skills-building: developing a short, sharp elevator pitch that describes who they are, what they do and their future vision. We add modules around honing messages – using tools like social media, public speaking, media and strategic networking to engage an audience – and, importantly in climate change, persuasive communication: engaging with people who disagree with them.

In the 2016 program, we discovered how challenging it can be for scientists to balance the appetite for data and facts with constructing an engaging narrative; to include the ‘why’ and ‘who’ of their work as well as the ‘what’ they do, and then to be considered and creative in crafting and delivering their messages.

Nevertheless, it has been a unique pleasure to watch the first cohort of women find their voices, individually and collectively, and project them out into the world. For many, this was their first foray into a mainstream public sphere. They’re demonstrably more visible in the media: we’ve had literally hundreds of articles and segments in which the women have described their work, Homeward Bound experiences and insights as a woman in science. They have presented at their workplaces and given hundreds of presentations at conferences, schools and community spaces. They are championing one another and collaborating. Most importantly, however, they’re bringing together the learnings of the leadership program, in which they understand themselves better, with the concept of Visibility. They’re showing up to themselves and seeing themselves as the leader they can be: choosing new and more helpful stories to help them achieve their potential.

– Julia May and Sarah Anderson (Directors, Visibility Co)

Science

Currently, the attrition rate of women in STEMM fields is higher than 60%. Science leadership is suffering. By focusing on female scientists, we hope to change global leadership and the face of science.

The HB Science stream takes a multi-pronged approach: delivering critical information on global change, in the context of the Antarctic, through a series of lectures and videos; providing opportunities for enhanced visibility and clarity of research messages for participants, as well as for new collaborations and large-scale science initiatives stemming from the voyage.

A major component of the program (and one of the most popular on-board activities) was the ‘Symposium at Sea’. Here, each woman gave a speed- (or lightning!) talk about her work or her findings. The speed format is becoming more and more prevalent in science communication, with postgraduate students and many conferences focusing on this ‘elevator pitch’ style of information delivery. There was much discussion on how to format and structure the talk to have the maximum audience impact. The Symposium covered a vast array of topics. From the role of marine microbes in ocean food-webs and biochemical cycles, to effecting change through conservation messaging (“focus on love, not loss”), to new insights in malaria research. We heard from women who’d worked in the White House on how to talk to policymakers about your science, to learning how Costa Rica is shifting to totally renewable energy sources. Beyond the sharing of science and purpose, the Symposium at Sea presented a unique and inspiring opportunity for everyone to get to know each other and plan for the future together.

The Science team (including, remotely, Jess Melbourne-Thomas) gave targeted on-board lectures on Antarctic ecology, ecosystem management, global change and conservation, ocean dynamics and health. Not to mention the ad-lib lectures on wildlife, botany and geology from time to time! Information exchange continued throughout the journey with Antarctic science classes being taken ‘on land and amongst the icebergs’. Another high point of the science program was the unique opportunity to learn about the Antarctic from scientists at Carlini (Argentina) and Palmer (US) Station bases.

The aim overall was to inform participants about contemporary science relevant to their journey, and also the context of the Antarctic with respect to climate and global change, and to encourage broader discussions on how to effect change.

– Dr Justine Shaw (Research Fellow – Centre for Biodiversity & Conservation Science, The University of Queensland)

– Dr Mary-Anne Lea (Associate Professor – Marine Predator Ecology, Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, UTAS)
Climate change is one of the most strategic issues facing our future on this planet, and the role that the scientific community has to play in influencing and shaping our decisions is fundamental. When Fabian approached me in 2015 to contribute my expertise to her extraordinary vision over a 20-day expedition to Antarctica, it was an easy decision to commit to being part of the on-board faculty. From my long experience of working with leaders, regardless of the strength of the vision or strategy, it’s the ability to execute that makes the difference.

It quickly became clear that Fabian’s dream was gaining momentum to become a global collaboration with a self-managing community of contributors to the cause, and we needed a framework to help us execute successfully. We started by developing our own Homeward Bound strategy map, which ensured that, as a leadership team, we were aligned on the HB purpose and the priorities to deliver it, and this was used as a basis to communicate and manage. Having this as our foundation really helped us pull together from across the globe, balancing our many commitments outside of HB with the increasing demands of the program itself, and media activity, as it developed and gained traction.

The faculty all invested their expertise in not just providing pre-existing content into this initiative; a program was designed that would be more relevant to equipping women in science with the leadership and strategic capability to have a greater personal and professional impact. For the strategy component, this meant developing new methodology around personal strategy that involved Prof. Robert Kaplan, the co-creator of The Balanced Scorecard.

There is value in taking a holistic approach to the different aspects of life and recognising the trade-offs that are being made between them. Just as in organisational strategy, personal strategy is all about the conscious choices that you decide to make, resulting in desired outcomes congruent with purpose and values. Having clarity as to what our purpose and aspirations are, and the strategy to get us there, is immensely powerful, especially when we are in a period of transition, feeling overwhelmed with our multifaceted demanding life, or being underwhelmed by our ability to be our true selves. The execution of a strategy comes from the resulting set of decisions, from the fundamental life-changing decisions, to the choices that we make every day, on how to allocate our most precious resources – our time, energy and funding. We used the personal strategy map as a framework to encompass the leadership learning and personal insights, and then articulate our priorities going forward. This framework was as important for the participants as for the faculty, to surface personal aspirations and work through the choices to make the strategy happen.

Developing a personal strategy map takes time, and being in Antarctica was a perfect environment to create both the mental space for reflection and to challenge current thinking and conversations. Antarctica is one of the last wildernesses on the planet; a harsh and spectacular place with a magical quality that has been both delightful and arresting to experience. I could not have imagined a better backdrop.

In the final days of the voyage, hearing the expeditioners describe their personal strategy was incredibly inspiring. Even more inspiring has been hearing how these extraordinary women have been putting their strategies into practice and realising the benefits at work, at home and for themselves. And for the Homeward Bound movement, this global collaboration of women with a science background are better equipped to have an impact and uplift the whole of society’s understanding and approach to the way we handle the strategic issues facing our planet for future generations.

– Kit Jackson (Founding Partner, Strategy Together)
I have been an expedition leader in Antarctica every summer since 1990, except for one. When asked to join Homeward Bound I thought, “Surely an expedition of world-leading women needs a female expedition leader?” But Fabian Dattner is a force to be reckoned with, hard to say no to, and a wise and willing risk-taker.

We spent three weeks on-board the ice-strengthened, Argentinean-flagged, 80-person vessel ‘MV Ushuaia’. From the port of Ushuaia, we sailed south of fabled Cape Horn, across the famed Drake Passage, to the northern tip of the Antarctic Peninsula – a long, thin spine of land, like the tail of a stingray against the plump, round body of the main continental land mass of Antarctica.

We had time to explore in detail the eastern side of the Peninsula, the northern corner of the Weddell Sea, and to 65 degrees south on the western side of the Peninsula.

The Antarctic Peninsula is, to my mind, one of the two or three most beautiful places on Mother Earth. Travelling there can be an intense emotional and physical experience. For most people, it is an end in itself. But, in the Homeward Bound vision, Antarctica was merely the backdrop, the canvas for imprinting leadership skills on women who can, and probably will, change the world.

Therein lay the risks and the challenge of the inaugural Homeward Bound voyage. We did not know at the outset if the combination of Antarctica and a strong leadership program would be too much to bear, too heady a brew. In hindsight, we came close to the edges at times, but, physically we were always safe.

Despite a lifetime of Antarctic travel, I will always cherish our HB time walking on sea ice in Wilhelmina Bay and gliding across Andvoord Bay on water so smooth that silvery-grey sea and cloudy sky were one. We were flying; all the while, the captain and officers sitting on the bridge listening to Mozart. But, above all else, I will remember having a privileged seat watching impressive women communicate and blossom.

– Greg Mortimer

2 – 21 December 2016:
We often refer to Homeward Bound as a movement. However you see the community of Homeward Bound, the numbers tell a compelling story. From an idea literally born of a dream by Fabian Dattner and birthed out of Tasmania in Australia, a global initiative has unfolded and attracted a following of hundreds of thousands of people.

Potentially millions more have read about Homeward Bound as our story – and those of the participants – has been written up in newspapers, magazines and blogs the world over. Our amazing and inspiring ‘Mother Nature Needs her Daughters’ campaign, designed and produced by Elmwood Studios, won the Best Social Design award at London’s Design Week Awards in June 2017; Homeward Bound played a significant part in Dattner Grant winning both a Merit Award in the Education category, as well as the Overall Champion Award at the #TechDiversity Awards in August – sending even more ripples around the globe. Homeward Bound has captured the imagination of people everywhere – through that powerful combination of right purpose, right people, right outcome, right time.

Our community engagement approach has played a significant role in creating this attention. High-profile media and social media strategies have successfully built a global community that wraps around the purpose and the people of Homeward Bound, making us stronger and moving us toward our 10-year vision.

During our inaugural voyage, we created a rich sensory digital experience so our community could join participants on the journey to Antarctica. Thanks to Songqiao Yao for being our on-board social media liaison, taking some beautiful photos and despatching these to Sarah Anderson for sharing. The impact was seen in Facebook engagement rates that saw us reach more than 200,000 people without any paid promotion during the voyage – a rarity that speaks to the impact of Homeward Bound.

The campaign also attracted the voices of global influencers, including Sheryl Sandberg’s LeanIn.org (184K followers on Twitter, 1.4M on Facebook ‘Things we love’), HuffPost Women (320K followers on Twitter), Chelsea Clinton (12M followers on Twitter, 13M on Facebook) and Amy Poehler’s Smart Girls (1.5M followers), who posted their support on social media and received huge engagement from their millions of followers.

Most importantly, our engagement strategy has built a platform through which the women of Homeward Bound can build their profile, create greater influence, recruit new women to the project and ultimately contribute to policy and decision making as it informs the state of our planet. And they have been pursuing this with gusto.

In the coming months, we plan to make new additions to the Homeward Bound platform: we unveil impact stories from the women of the 2016 cohort, showcasing what they have gone on to deliver in the world post-program; we launch podcasting to start telling the stories of Homeward Bound to new audiences; and we share the leadership lessons learned through the first phases of this 10-year initiative. Subscribe to our newsletter so you don’t miss a thing!

We are so grateful to have such a passionate, inspired, willing and active Homeward Bound community, online and offline. Thank you to each and every one of you for your voices and contribution – they all play a part in making this big dream possible.

The world is listening

There are over a hundred media items on Homeward Bound 2016 and its participants on the HB website (here) – articles, audio recordings and videos – and they’re just the tip of the iceberg, so to speak!
“The Homeward Bound Program has given you the vision, purpose and global perspective to be even more of an advocate for women in STEM than you naturally were. It has been magnificent to see you share your new knowledge with your colleagues and bring new ideas back to our business. Even more so, it has been an honour to see you give back to the communities we work in, by role modeling to school students what it means to be a scientist in the modern world.”

– James Pirozzi, Manager to participant Johanna Speirs

“Work has been so much easier to deal with post-HB. I have learned a lot about who I am and why I do what I do. This makes it easier to make decisions within the workspace about what matters and how to interact with people more meaningfully to achieve objectives.”

– Holly North, participant

“Lauren has always shown a natural tendency towards leadership/mentoring. The Homeward Bound experience has empowered her to be an active leader by first steering her through a process of self-reflection and analysis; and then equipping her with tools to enable her to share her visions and learnings, and to more confidently accept professional challenges.

... I believe that the remoteness and sensitivity of the environment in which the course was run allowed complete focus on self-awareness and empowerment. This, in the company of high-calibre participants and facilitators, facilitated significant self-development.”

– Bridget Maitland, Manager to participant Lauren Sandon

“Discovering the Antarctic continent – the size, sounds, shapes, colours, movement, history of ice in such isolated conditions – left no doubt to the action that needs to happen globally now.”

– Deborah Pardo, participant

“For me, the main impacts of Homeward Bound have been quieter things ... For example, I’ve really been working on being a better co-worker, friend, teacher and supervisor – aiming for deeper impact on a few people. One of our fellow HBers talked about how it made them a better parent and how they’re noticing pleasing changes in their children’s behaviour and anxiety levels. Quite a few of the people I’ve talked to have found themselves generally calmer and happier since coming home.”

– Glenna McGregor, participant
How you can help us realise the vision

**Become a participant**
If you’re a current or emerging leader in STEMM, take this opportunity to make a difference to yourself, your workplace, your planet!

We plan to launch an HB program at least once a year. Register your interest on our website, here.

**Sponsor a participant**
For each program, we hope to provide up to 10 scholarship places for applicants in need, from the most climate-affected countries. To enable this, we rely on the kindness of strangers making a donation – every contribution, however big or small, will help.

Donate via our Chuffed campaign, here.

Direct donations/enquiries can be made by emailing hayley@homewardboundprojects.com.au

**Spread the word**
Media enquiries to Susie Dobson, AC Agency.
E: susie@acagency.com.au Ph: +61 2 9356 4700

Share our social media to your networks, via