

# Engineers Without Borders is now established in Australia

The enthusiasm and determination of young engineer Daniel Almagor was behind the establishment of charity organisation Engineers Without Borders in Australia. In this article Almagor describes the process of setting up the organisation and invites new members to join.

**WHILE STUDYING ENGINEERING** and business at RMIT I knew I wanted to do something a little different with my degrees.

I have always been passionate about working with people in need and knew that after I finished university I wanted to travel and do some work in a developing country. However, many attempts at finding organisations that catered for what I wanted resulted in me deciding that there was a massive gap, and a huge opportunity.

This gap related to young engineers and engineering students, like myself, who wanted to get engineering experience working in developing communities. I, and a few engineering friends who shared these ideals, decided that we needed a framework through which many more engineers could get involved. Such an organisation would be more than just an overseas placement network, it would be a community of like-minded people who were inspired to learn about new things and ready to get out there and make a difference.

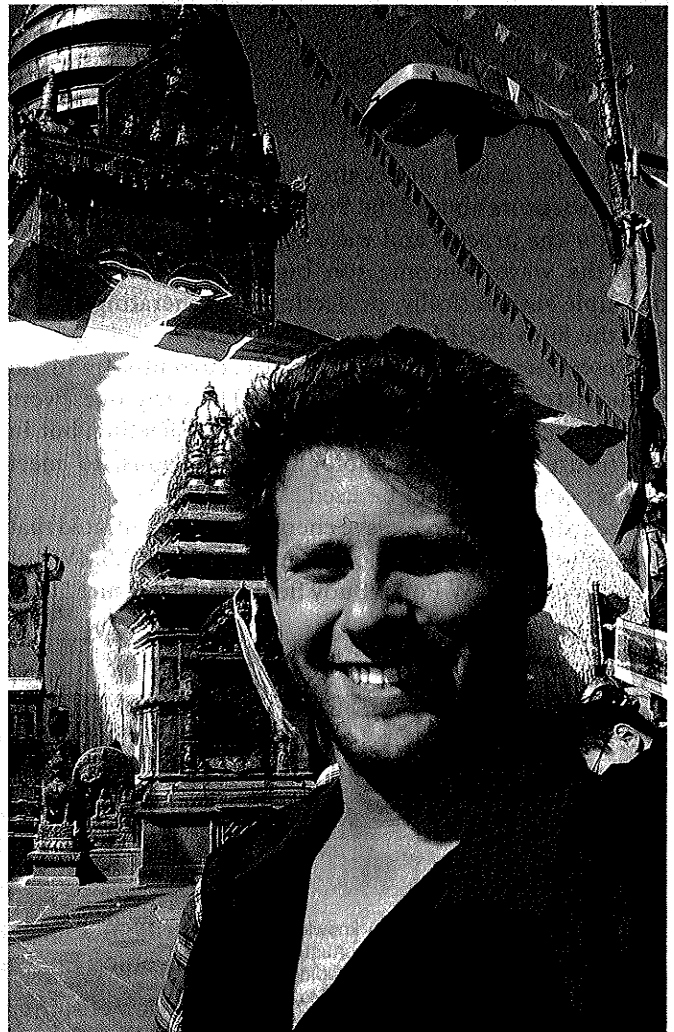
In April 2003, Engineers Without Borders Australia was established with the help and mentorship of (EWB) in the USA, which had started only a few years earlier. In May that year I joined an EWB-USA program in Thailand to observe how they organised and implemented their projects. The experience was invaluable for EWB Australia and upon my return the small group of founders decided that we must find our own projects. We found a few possibilities but soon realised that our lack of resources limited our abilities.

Later that year, I was awarded a Churchill Fellowship which allowed me to travel to North America, Europe, North Africa and Nepal to speak with and learn from other EWB organisations around the world. It also gave me the opportunity to make contact with many other like-minded development organisations.

Upon my return to Australia EWB Australia formally opened its door to members and has since experienced incredible growth, now boasting more than 200 members.

EWB chapters have begun to spring up in universities around the country and professional chapters are soon to come. We are now organising this year's events calendar and are in the planning stages of a number of exciting development projects.

While in Nepal, I managed to source EWB Australia's first project, working with the University of Kathmandu to design and build micro wind power generators for rural communities. We expect to send our first volunteer there in May. Other projects on the horizon are situated in East Timor, Bangla-



Engineers Without Borders Australia founder and president Daniel Almagor visited Nepal late last year. The visit has led to EWBA's first project – working on a wind turbine at the University of Kathmandu.

desh, Indonesia, Nigeria and Australia but we are always looking for more.

Although EWB Australia is designed to give younger engineers an opportunity to be involved in engineering development, it needs the experience and input of more advanced engineers and nonengineers. I perceive the organisation as a place for sharing knowledge and experience, between communities and between individuals.

To find out more visit the EWB website at [www.ewb-aus.org.au](http://www.ewb-aus.org.au) and become a member. Let's make a difference. ■

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