

2.1 2021/22 MONASH QUICK RESPONSE GRANTS PROGRAM RECIPIENTS

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of successful applications to the Quick Response Grant program that includes two streams of funding, being the General Quick Response Grants (QRG) and the Community Resilience & Recovery Quick Response Grants (CRR).

KEY CONSIDERATIONS/ISSUES

Monash Council is committed to supporting the community to continue adapting positively to the challenges of COVID-19. In 2021/22 Council has made two streams of funding available. The QRG is designed to support local community groups and individual creative efforts that have arisen outside of the normal funding cycle of the Monash Community Grant Program (MCGP), whilst the CRR is designed to help the Monash community recover from the impact COVID-19 has had on social connections.

Three (QRG - 2, CRR - 1) applications were assessed between the period of 4 February 2021 to 9 March 2022. Funding of \$7,152.18 has been awarded to two successful applications in the QRG stream and \$4,716 awarded to one successful application in the CRR stream.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Quick Response Grants program is funded from the existing 2021/22 Monash Community Grants Program budget.

The General Quick Response Grant program has an allocation of \$60,000, of which \$7,152.18 has been allocated in this period. Including these decisions the total allocations made to date are \$38,102.84, with a remaining budget for the program of \$21,897.15.

The Community Resilience & Recovery Quick Response Grant program has an allocation of \$50,000, of which \$4,716 has been allocated in this period. Including these decisions the total allocations made to date are \$16,307.79, with a remaining budget for the program of \$33,692.21.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

The Quick Response Grants successful recipients for the period 4 February 2022 to 9 March are presented to Council within the available budget, recognising the implications on future Council budgets given the impact of COVID-19 and the social distancing measures currently in place.

These projects have demonstrated how resilient, adaptive and caring the Monash community is during this challenging time.

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the successful applications that have been funded through the two streams of the Quick Response Grant program during the period 4 February to 9 March 2022 to a total of \$11,868.18.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of successful applications to the Quick Response Grant program that includes two streams of funding being the General Quick Response Grants (QRG) and the Community Resilience & Recovery Quick Response Grants (CRR).

BACKGROUND

Monash Council is committed to supporting the community to continue adapting positively to the challenges of COVID-19. In 2021/22 Council has made two streams of funding available:

- **General Quick Response Grants** are designed to support local community groups and individual creative efforts to assist in strengthening community and building cohesion and whose project, program or issue may arise outside of the normal funding cycle of the Monash Community Grant Program.
- **Community Resilience & Recovery Quick Response Grants** are designed to help the Monash community recover from the impact COVID-19 has had on social connections. Projects or programs funded through this stream should focus on helping our community recover from the pandemic and reconnecting vulnerable or socially isolated people. Funding will be provided to build the capacity of people impacted by COVID-19 and to strengthen community resilience. Projects or programs should ideally occur over a period of time (not a once-off event or activity) to ensure that meaningful and sustainable connections are fostered.

Monash Council has one of the largest community grant programs in Victoria and is proud of its commitment in supporting and valuing the dedicated community groups and organisations within our municipality. The continuation of the Quick Response Grant Program has enabled Council to continue to support the local community groups and artists to remain agile and innovative as they respond to the impacts of COVID-19.

As per the Guidelines that were endorsed at Council on 25 May 2021 the process is as follows:

- Applications will be submitted via SmartyGrants from 1 July 2021 until the allocation has been exhausted
- Applications will be assessed by an internal Council Officer Panel
- Applicants will receive a response from Council within six weeks of the application being received
- Once receiving notification of a successful application, applicants must commence the project within four weeks and complete by 30 June 2022
- All successful applications will be formally acknowledged at the next applicable Council meeting

DISCUSSION

The QRG provides an opportunity for groups or individual artists whose idea, program, or issue falls outside of the normal grant round and previously had no opportunity to apply for funding through Council. By providing this source of funding it ensures that Council is continuing to remain adaptive and agile to community needs. Community groups and artists can apply in this stream for up to \$4,000 in cash and/or in-kind hall hire, with the total budget allocation of \$60,000.

Given the impacts and ramifications that COVID has, and will continue to have throughout the community, Council committed to support resilience and recovery in 2021/22 by providing an additional stream of funding. The CRR is to assist with programs and projects that directly respond to the community's response to recovery and resilience from COVID. In this stream Neighbourhood Houses, community and service organisations are able to apply for up to \$10,000 in cash and/or in-kind hall hire, with a total budget of \$50,000.

It is important to note that Quick Response Grants were developed for the community to provide innovative projects and are not to be a duplicate of an existing program, whether funded through MCGP or other avenues.

The QRG have been promoted through multiple Monash platforms, including:

- Monash Bulletin
- Monash social media – Facebook, Instagram and twitter
- As part of a mail out to current grant recipients
- Art & About e-newsletter
- Sustainability e-newsletter

The grants opened on 1 July 2021 and each stream will remain open until the allocations are exhausted.

Three applications were assessed between the period of 4 February to 9 March 2022. Of these three, two applications were for the QRG stream and one for the CRR stream.

The assessment criteria consisted of the following:

1. Addresses an evidence-based community need or opportunity
2. Relevance to Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
3. The number of Monash residents that will benefit
4. The capacity of the organisation/community/individual to undertake the project
5. Budget expenditure

An evaluation matrix was developed, taking into consideration the guidelines, ensuring the applications were considered and assessed in an equitable and transparent way. This provided the assessment process with rigour and consistency.

A total of **\$11,868.18** has been awarded to three successful applications, outlined in the tables below. These amounts were determined by the project, amount and specific items requested in the application budget.

General Quick Response Grants

Applicant	Project Title	Amount Awarded
Kieran Carroll	Enough is Enough	\$4,000.00
Club of Chinese Seniors in Monash	Club of Chinese Seniors in Monash	\$3,152.18
TOTAL		\$7,152.18

Community Resilience & Recovery Quick Response Grants

Applicant	Project Title	Amount Awarded
Peter Vadiveloo	Chadstone Drumming Circle	\$4,716.00
TOTAL		\$4,716.00

Details of the projects as provided by the applicants are as follows:

Kieran Carroll (2122QRG0056) - \$4,000.00

Enough is Enough is a 70 minute play examining problem gambling in our local areas and the deep ramifications it has on all socio-economic strands of our communities. The play was performed in November 2021 at the Shirley Burke Theatre in Parkdale and the Chelsea Activity Hub to a powerful reaction and was supported by Gambling Reform Alliance.

Problem gambling via poker machines and TABS is a large social problem across the City of Monash which needs to be discussed with new solutions to curb the large financial losses that many people in the Monash community suffer from. The funding will be used for a full production of “Enough is Enough” on Sunday 1 May 2022 at the Oakleigh Hall.

Club of Chinese Seniors in Monash (2122QRG0022) - \$3,152.18

The project provides support and advice to Chinese seniors migrants for settlement and to promote Chinese culture and tradition. Members are encouraged to merge into the multicultural society & the mainstream in Australia, obtaining well-being and a healthy life. By attending the regular meetings members will build up the spirit of harmony, friendship and unity in the Chinese community, and with other communities.

Peter Vadiveloo (2122QRG0047) - \$4,716.00

The Chadstone Community Drum Circle has been running weekly for over 8 years. Although it is a drumming program, the Circle is really a mental health initiative.

COVID has put a great strain on the overall mental health of the community. Recent medical studies have shown that participation in community drumming results in improved mental health outcomes.

Those research findings are consistent with feedback from Chadstone Drum Circle participants who attest that the drum circle has been beneficial for their mental health. They report that the

circle has created for them long-term connections with other community members, and has helped with their feelings of loneliness and isolation (see attached document).

The drum circle is led by master percussionist and long-term music educator Peter Vadiveloo, who grew up in Monash and is a resident there.

The circle runs on Wednesdays 1.30-3.00pm in Chadstone and is open to the whole community.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Monash Quick Response Grants program is a subset of the Monash Community Grants Program Policy that has been implemented with the intention of supporting the Council Plan as well as Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan and other relevant strategic documents.

The Program encourages community connectivity and participation, as well as focusing Council's support on the groups most in need. The MCGP Policy is reviewed annually to ensure that it meets the changing needs of both Council and the community.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Monash community sector has a rich history of innovation and promoting community participation. The continuation of the Quick Response Grant will enable Council to be adaptive to the community's needs and for many community groups to respond effectively and innovatively to the impact that COVID-19 has had on their members and local community.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The 2021/22 Monash Quick Response Grants Program addresses the four key themes: freedom, respect, equality and dignity of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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CONCLUSION

The Quick Response Grants successful recipients for the period 4 February to 9 March 2022 are presented to Council within the available budget, recognising the implications on future Council budgets given the impact of COVID-19 and the social distancing measures currently in place.

These projects have demonstrated how resilient, adaptive and caring the Monash community is during this challenging time.