

2.3 2021/22 MONASH QUICK RESPONSE GRANTS PROGRAM RECIPIENTS

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the successful applications that have been funded through the two streams of the Quick Response Grant program during the period 10 March to 27 April 2022 to a total of \$14,550.00.

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 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 communities' response to recovery and resilience from COVID. In this stream Neighbourhood Houses, community and service organisation 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.

Six applications were assessed between the period of 10 March to 27 April 2022. Of these six, four applications were for the QRG stream and two 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 **\$14,550.00** 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
Glen Waverley Hawks Football Netball Club	Committee Education Workshop for Grassroots Community Club	\$2,000.00
Pratibha Madan	The Scripted Art Collective	\$2,900.00
TOTAL		\$4,900.00

Community Resilience & Recovery Quick Response Grants

Applicant	Project Title	Amount Awarded
Power Neighbourhood House	Creating Post-COVID Connections	\$9,650.00
TOTAL		\$9,650.00

Details of the projects as submitted are as follows:

Glen Waverley Hawks Football Netball Club (2122QRG0068) - \$2,000.00

An engaging, interactive online ZOOM x 2 training workshop to upskill club volunteers. A total of approximately 16 members of the Committee to be involved.

The workshop covers the key elements of club administration and running a grassroots community club to a strong 3-5 year strategic plan. The committee will have a simple and proven roadmap to take the club forward. Supporting the club to avoid volunteer burnout, which can lead to a drop in professionalism, performance and revenue, and have negative impact on many of the other things we love about our club.

Project Phase 1 - Initial review: Clubmap will undertake a Health Check of our club's entire management processes to provide a critique of the Club's administrative practices. This report focuses on 11 key areas and provides an immediate and longer term plan of actions. The 11 areas are Planning, Committee, Volunteers, Finance, Governance, Sports Operations, Revenue Categories, Sponsorship, Fundraising & Fund saving and grants.

Project Phase 2 – Implementation: A workshop, involving key Club personnel will be undertaken to develop and bring to life an action plan to implement the agreed changes. Some changes could be relatively immediate while others might be over the remainder of the year

Pratibha Madan (2122QRG0071) - \$2,900.00

This project aims to create a collaborative artwork by community members, especially from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. It will result in a community based art activity that will celebrate cultural diversity, support artistic expression and strengthen community. Participants will be asked to contribute by painting and writing small stories/sayings connecting them to their culture. The proposed artwork on a large canvas will present a landscape painting with stories/sayings by participating members, written in their language scripts. These stories will be translated to English and documented after the art activity is over. Completed artwork, along with the document brochure will be donated to local Art Society, MONCAS.

This art activity will be conducted over 5 consecutive sessions of one hour each on same day (Sunday, 26 June). Each one-hour session will accommodate 10-12 participants, will be open to all and encourage creative expression through art. This activity will be centred on the stories, art and cultures of our local diverse communities.

Power Neighbourhood House (2122QRG0061) - \$9,650.00

This project will be working to reconnect and allow for two specific cohorts to get active, reduce isolation and bring back some of the pre-covid feelings of togetherness and community that have been lost from two years of isolation and lockdowns. There will also be an intergenerational element that would allow for a deeper sense of interaction and experiences between young and old.

There has been a loss of our ordinary lives resulting in many not having the capacity to feel comfortable with others and now craving social connection again. We have seen and heard first hand that the Primary school aged children, particularly those from vulnerable families and also many seniors in our area have had a particularly difficult and lonely couple of years and we believe this project will go a long way to restoring some of the negative effects resulting from the pandemic.

The project is planned as a three component project. One component will be the weekly Dance therapy and movement fun classes for our local seniors. The second component will be the creative sessions for our local Primary aged school children and lastly, we will have combined sessions for the two cohorts to join together to share their dances and creative expressions sharing skills, knowledge and experiences with each other with the outcome of gaining intergenerational understanding and respect.

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

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 \$4,900.00 has been allocated in this period. Including these decisions the total allocations made to date are \$43,002.84, with a remaining budget for the program of \$16,997.16.

The Community Resilience & Recovery Quick Response Grant program has an allocation of \$50,000, of which \$9,650.00 has been allocated in this period. Including these decisions the total allocations made to date are \$25,957.79, with a remaining budget for the program of \$24,042.21.

CONCLUSION

The Quick Response Grants successful recipients for the period 10 March to 27 April 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.