

**2.3 2022/23 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 (QRG).

***KEY CONSIDERATIONS/ISSUES***

Monash Council is committed to supporting local community groups and individual creative efforts that have arisen outside of the normal funding cycle of the Monash Community Grant Program (MCGP) to assist in strengthening the community and building cohesion.

Five applications were assessed between the period of 20 December 2022 to 1 March 2023. Funding of \$10,138.04 has been awarded to three successful applications.

***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

The Quick Response Grants program is funded from the existing 2022/23 Monash Community Grants Program budget.

The Quick Response Grant program has an allocation of \$111,587.66, of which \$10,138.04 has been allocated in this period. Including these decisions, the total allocations made to date are \$50,210.31, with a remaining budget for the program of \$61,377.35.

***CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION***

The Quick Response Grants successful recipient for the period 20 December 2022 – 1 March 2023 is presented to Council within the available budget.

**2022/23 MONASH QUICK RESPONSE GRANTS PROGRAM RECIPIENTS**

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**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council notes the successful applications that have been funded through the Quick Response Grant program during the period 20 December 2022 – 1 March 2023 to a total of \$10,138.04.*

**INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the successful applications to the Quick Response Grant program (QRG).

**BACKGROUND**

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.

At its meeting in June 2020 Council endorsed the establishment of a Quick Response Grant program (QRG). The basis for this grant program was to enable the Monash community and Council to remain adaptive and agile in response to COVID and ensure that groups could continue to meet and bring the community together. This program was proven to be extremely successful.

Council, at its meeting in May 2021, endorsed the QRG as a permanent open grant program.

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 per the Guidelines that were endorsed at Council on 31 May 2022 the process is as follows:

- Applications will be submitted via SmartyGrants from 1 July 2022 until 12 May 2023, or 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
- After receiving notification of a successful application, applicants must commence the project within four weeks and complete by 30 June 2023
- 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 for up to \$5,000 in cash and/or in-kind hall hire, with the total budget allocation of \$111,587.66.

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

The grants opened on 1 July 2022 and will remain open until 12 May 2023 or until the allocations are exhausted.

The assessment criteria consists 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, to ensure the applications were considered and assessed in an equitable and transparent way. The matrix provides the assessment process with rigour and consistency.

A total of **\$10,138.04** has been awarded to three successful applications, outlined in the table below. The amount awarded was determined by the project, amount and specific items requested in the application budget.

Applicant	Project Title	Amount Awarded
<b>Shakti Mental Health Melbourne</b>	South Asian Men's Wellbeing Discussions	\$3,376.64
<b>Sirimavians in Melbourne</b>	Sri Lankan New Year Celebrations	\$3,427.98
<b>Spring Arts Multicultural Seniors' Association</b>	Spring Arts Dragon Boat Festival	\$3,333.45
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$10,138.04</b>

Details of the projects as outlined in the submissions are as follows:

***Shakti Mental Health Melbourne (2223QRG0055) - \$3,376.64***

Shakti mental health is looking to support the growing number of south Asian men dealing with mental health challenges by creating monthly south Asian men's wellbeing discussions. These discussions will give south Asian men the opportunity to share challenges they have been dealing with in a non-judgmental environment while accessing support, advice and communication that will hopefully increase their own wellbeing. Because of cultural stigma, history of shame and keeping things private, south Asian men sometimes find it difficult to open up and share depression, anxiety, isolation, loneliness and other challenges with family and friends. Our men's circles will bring south Asian men together to share experiences, develop friendships, advocacy and continued support through discussion topics.

***Sirimavians in Melbourne (2223QRG0058) - \$3,427.98***

We are a group of ladies who went to the same school in Sri Lanka. We have planned to celebrate the Sri Lankan New Year which is falling on the 13th and 14th of April each year. This is a very important cultural event for all the Sri Lankans as there's certain traditional activities that we take part in.

Sri Lankan New Year marks the beginning of the traditional calendar according to astrology. The new year celebration signifies the reaping of the harvest and the social customs especially of the farming community. Majority of the Sri Lankans live in the south-eastern suburbs of Victoria mainly in the city of Monash. Our plan is to reunite the Sri Lankans in Victoria and celebrate the Sri Lankan new year and build cultural connections with the local businesses and enhance cultural diversity in Victoria. This will be an open event to the public and we have received a significant (200-250 people) interest for this event through social media already. We will have traditional games for the kids and the adults. There will be traditional Sri Lankan cultural performances and traditional food will be served (i.e., Traditional sweets and milk rice). Coming out of Covid and due to inflation, the costs have increased, and we would appreciate that this grant is approved so that we can carry out this event. By encouraging the kids and the adults to take part in the traditional games, we plan to create a healthy competition among individuals and to enhance group work, team building spirit and unity.

***Spring Arts Multicultural Seniors' Association (2223QRG0051) - \$3,333.45***

The program will be launched in April. After 4 months of rehearsal and preparation, we will hold the "Monash Chinese Community Dragon Boat Festival Variety Show and Chinese Traditional Culture Exhibition" on June 11, 2023. The content of the program includes wind music performance, dance, chorus, solo and other vocal performances, magic and so on. There will also be activities such as the exhibition of Chinese traditional culture and art and the tasting of rice dumplings in the performance venue. We plan to rent a theatre that can accommodate about 130 people. The audience is mainly Monash residents, and other ethnic communities are also attracted to participate.

This Chinese Dragon Boat Festival celebration is conducive to carrying forward the traditional Chinese culture, allowing the elderly in the Chinese community to express their homesickness, and promoting the concept of multiculturalism in the 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 community 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 QRG program enables Council to be adaptive to the community's needs and for many community groups to respond effectively and innovatively for their members and local community.

***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

The 2022/23 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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The Quick Response Grant program has an allocation of \$111,587.66, of which \$10,138.04 has been allocated in this period. Including these decisions, the total allocations made to date are \$50,210.31, with a remaining budget for the program of \$51,377.35.

***CONCLUSION***

The Quick Response Grants successful recipients for the period 20 December 2022 – 1 March 2023 are presented to Council within the available budget.