

7.2.1 2024/25 MONASH QUICK RESPONSE GRANTS PROGRAM RECIPIENTS - FEBRUARY/MARCH

Responsible Manager:	Fee Harrison, Manager Community Strengthening
Responsible Director:	Russell Hopkins, Director Community Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the successful applications that have been funded through the Quick Response Grant Program during the period from February to March 2025 to a total of \$3,000.

INTRODUCTION

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

COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Inclusive Services

Community development and advocacy to support the Monash community.
Deliver high performing services.
Fostering an equitable, just and inclusive Monash.

Good Governance

Ensure a financially, socially and environmentally sustainable organisation.

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, utilising the allocated funds each year.

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. An additional eligibility criterion has been added for the 2024/25 funding year stating projects that have received funding through the QRG in previous years are ineligible.

As per the Guidelines that were endorsed at Council on 28 May 2024 the process is as follows:

- Applications will be submitted via SmartyGrants from 1 June 2024 until 9 May 2025, 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 2025.
- 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 \$75,000.

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
- Monash Council's website
- As part of a mail out to current grant recipients

The grants opened on 1 June 2024 and will remain open until 9 May 2025 or until the allocations are exhausted.

Two grants have been awarded for the period of February to March 2025.

The assessment criteria consist 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 **\$3,000** has been awarded to two 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
Notting Hill Neighbourhood House	Sinhalese and Tamil New Year	\$1,500.00
Melbourne Konkan Community	Mangalorean Food and Fiesta	\$1,500.00
TOTAL		\$3,000.00

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

Notting Hill Neighbourhood House (2425QRG071) - \$1,500.00

Sinhalese New Year, planned and run by our local Sri Lankan Community. Traditional dances will be performed by professional dancers and sharing of story/history of Sinhalese New Year Traditional Sri Lankan games will be played such as Kambha Adeema (Tug of War), Banis Kema (Donut Eating competition), Gala Keteema (Pebble Balancing), Aliyata Aha Thabeema (Marking Elephant's Eye). This will be followed by a taste of traditional Hoppers (Sri Lankan Pancakes) Dinner. This event is for the local Sinhalese, Tamil and Sri Lankan community to come together and celebrate their new year, and for local community members who may not be aware of this festival to learn about the Sri Lankan community.

Melbourne Konkan Community (2425QRG069) – \$1,500.00

The Mangalorean Fiesta (Flavours of Mangalore) seeks a Quick Response Grant to support a vibrant community event in the City of Monash suburb at the Sacred Heart Church Hall Oakleigh South. The event will celebrate Mangalorean culture by bringing together local and broader communities through traditional music, dance and food. This event will be focused on fostering unity and cultural exchange, the festival will feature live Konkani folk performances, classical dances, and culinary delights from the Konkan coast. By promoting inclusivity and connecting diverse groups, the event aligns with Monash Council's goals of strengthening community cohesion. The event will provide a platform for local Mangalorean artists, performers, and food vendors to showcase their heritage while encouraging greater cultural understanding among attendees.


FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Quick Response Grants program is funded from the existing 2024/25 Monash Community Grants Program budget.

The Quick Response Grant program has an allocation of \$75,000, of which **\$3,000** has been allocated in this period, and the overall allocations for the 2024/25 year totalling **\$52,471.52**. The remaining budget for the program is **\$22,528.48**.

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.

CONSULTATION

Community consultation was not required.

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 2024/25 Quick Response Grants Program is entirely consistent with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. In particular, the program supports -

- freedom of expression;
- peaceful assembly and freedom of association;
- taking part in public life; and
- cultural rights

GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The QRG is a subset of the Monash Community Grants Program (MCGP). As these programs are both focused on having a direct and significant impact on the Monash community, a gender impact assessment (GIA) was undertaken in September 2023. This was included in the MCGP Service Improvement Report, which was tabled at the October 2023 Council meeting.

As per the previous GIA we are continuing to collect data on how projects address gender inequality, how inclusive/accessible they are and the anticipated reach of the projects by gender.

CONCLUSION

The Quick Response Grants successful recipients from February to March 2025 are presented to Council within the available budget.

ATTACHMENT LIST

Nil