

7.2.3 2023/24 MONASH QUICK RESPONSE GRANTS PROGRAM RECIPIENTS - SEPTEMBER

Responsible Manager:	Kerryn Jansons, Manager Community Strengthening
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RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the successful applications that have been funded through the Quick Response Grant program during the period 13 July to 23 August 2023 to a total of \$16,017.46.

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.

As per the Guidelines that were endorsed at Council on 30 May 2023 the process is as follows:

- Applications will be submitted via SmartyGrants from 1 June 2023 until 10 May 2024, 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 2024.
- 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 \$115,042.

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

The grants opened on 1 June 2023 and will remain open until 10 May 2024 or until the allocations are exhausted.

Seven grants have been awarded for the period of 13 July to 23 August 2023.

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 **\$16,017.46** has been awarded to seven 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
Monash Youth Market (Auspice Notting Hill NH)	Monash Youth Market	\$1,500.00
Rajasthani Kutumb of Victoria	Teej 2023	\$1,500.00
Alcoholics Anonymous	Alcoholics Anonymous Meetings (Oakleigh AA)	\$2,533.09
Combined Probus Club of Monash	Venue Hire	\$618.55
Friendship Australian Egyptian Association	Monash Positive Active Senior Program (Stay Positive)	\$4,036.00
Afghan Islamic Centre and Omar Farooq Mosque	Staying on top of your health and keeping fit	\$4,329.82
Monash Senior Chinese Volunteer Service Centre	Celebrating Chinese Moon Cake Festival and Chinese National Day 2023	\$1,500.00
TOTAL		\$16,017.46

Six of the applications that have been funded in this period (all except the Monash Youth Market) could have applied for multi-year funding through the Community Grants Program, however did not submit an application for the 2023/24 funding year. Four of these are previous recipients of Hall Only funding for their regular meetings – Alcoholics Anonymous, Combined Probus Club of Monash, Friendship Australian Egyptian Association and Afghan Islamic Centre and Omar Farooq Mosque. All recipients have been recommended to apply for the 2024/25 MCGP to support their activities in the future, and advised funding through the QRG for their programs is limited to one year only.

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

Monash Youth Market (2324QRG013) - \$1,500.00

The Monash Youth Market is a community connection project in partnership with the Notting Hill Neighbourhood House. After the success of two youth markets held in 2022, we hope to add value to this project with 6-weeks of workshops leading up to the market which will this year be held at the beginning of spring at the end of Term 3.

This project has the aim of addressing the health and well-being of young people, and in particular, those who identify as female or non-binary. We will teach entrepreneurial skills, in supportive, weekly workshop sessions that include both business strategy as well as the opportunity to practically work on a business idea.

During this time, they will also share a simple, healthy meal (soup) and connect as a community, building friendships. These paid workshops will provide the revenue to offer scholarship places for those families on lower income.

In these workshops, the young people will develop emotional and social, as well as life skills together, which will assist them with leadership, networking, and employability opportunities in the future.

Rajasthani Kutumb of Victoria (2324QRG017) – \$1,500.00

Teej is the name for a Hindu festival that is celebrated by women and girls. Haryali Teej and Hartalika Teej welcome the monsoon season and are celebrated primarily by girls and women,

with singing, dancing and prayer rituals. This year, our theme is to promote DIVERSITY and INCLUSION by celebrating the important contributions women bring to the society.

Swings, Heena, traditional songs and dancing are the unique features of Teej celebrations in Rajasthan. The event will have performances showcasing Rajasthani culture. There will be various workshops and stalls on traditional arts and crafts. Indian food will be catered from local restaurants. RAJKOV have been celebrating Teej for years to promote diversity, multiculturalism and share our culture while upholding rights and responsibilities of being Victorian.

Alcoholics Anonymous (2324QRG025) – \$2,533.09

AA assists members of the community in staying sober so they can change their lives. The real-world impact of alcohol abuse reaches far beyond the financial costs. When a loved one has a problem with alcohol, it can affect their marriage and their extended family. There's also a larger impact on the community, schools, the workplace, the healthcare system, and on society as a whole. We help to provide some kind of help to those who seek it.

Oakleigh AA has been open for over 60 years and has helped many people get sober and stay sober. That is the primary focus of our meetings. Oakleigh AA has changed the fortunes of lives for many generations.

Combined Probus Club of Monash (2324QRG027) – \$618.55

Venue Hire for Mount Waverley Youth Centre for monthly meetings of the Combined Probus Club of Monash.

This provides social activities and support for senior citizens of the area, with interesting speakers on current topics and appropriate activities will be part of the meeting and morning tea provided.

Friendship Australian Egyptian Association (2324QRG029) – \$4,036.00

The project is a social and active support program for Monash families from an Arabic background, particularly members above 50 who are socially inactive after the Covid 19 isolation period. It is for those who are seeking social connection and have limited financial resources.

The program offers a regular variety of activities and sessions which help senior women to maintain their personal independence and stay informed. The program includes positive mental health sessions that address senior abuse, domestic violence and gender equality. We also will undertake a variety of social activities ranging from going on outings, having guest speakers, undertaking exercise classes, and celebrating and sharing each other culture events.

Afghan Islamic Centre & Omar Farooq Mosque (2324QRG040) - \$4,329.82

Our organisation provides mainly Afghan members and anyone else from the City of Monash to take part in volleyball sessions. These are 3 days a week and we initially started Wednesday nights from 8pm to 10:30pm. Because of the huge success we now offer Thursday nights from 6pm to 8pm and Sunday nights from 5:30pm to 8pm. We provide volleyball games and other forms of activities such as different stretching, maintaining weight loss and promoting healthy living. Our main focus is for those aged 18 to 70 years old, however we can provide for those 70+ as well if interested.

We encourage members to give up addictions that they have had for a long time, and we encourage them to live a balanced and healthy lifestyle. We provide counselling to members in need, as we have professional volunteers who are able to provide assistance in their field. We are

always looking for ways to improve our services and be up with the times. Currently we are and will be in the future working on encouraging more females to take part and we have and are working towards attracting more transgender individuals to take part in our activities.

Monash Senior Chinese Volunteer Service Centre (2324QRG043) – \$1,500.00

On 22 September, we will organise an event to celebrate Chinese Moon Cake Festival and Chinese National Day. We will invite all of our members and some special guests, such as two MPs and councillors from City of Monash. We will prepare lunch, make moon cakes with two different flavours, dumplings and some delicious dishes and we will organise performances.

The purpose of the event is to let the seniors and other guests enjoy the food, music and share the wonderful time.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Quick Response Grants program is funded from the existing 2023/24 Monash Community Grants Program budget.

The Quick Response Grant program has an allocation of \$115,042, of which \$16,017.46 has been allocated in this period with a remaining budget for the program of \$81,428.54.

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 2023/24 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 focussed on having a direct and significant impact on the Monash community, a gender impact assessment (GIA) was undertaken in April 2023. This was included in the MCGP Allocations Report that was tabled at the May 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 for the period 13 July to 23 August 2023 are presented to Council within the available budget.

ATTACHMENT LIST

Nil