

7.2.2 2023/24 MONASH QUICK RESPONSE GRANTS PROGRAM RECIPIENTS - NOVEMBER

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 15 September to 25 October 2023 to a total of \$11,493.18.

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.

Three grants have been awarded for the period of 15 September to 25 October 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 **\$11,493.18** 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
Kathryn Watt	Queen Bee	\$5,000.00
Women's Health East	Shine 2024	\$4,750.18
Rose Society of Victoria	Spring Rose Show	\$1,743.00
TOTAL		\$11,493.18

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

Kathryn Watt (2324QRG008) - \$5,000.00

The project is to install a street mural at 45 Chester Street, Oakleigh (Corner Hanover Street) on the side of the building (Oakleigh Fish & Chippery) in Oakleigh Shopping precinct. It is an arts & environmental project that will have an interactive online component with links & live time viewing of a real beehive. Project "Queen Bee" will brighten the walls in Chester Road Shopping Area.

"Queen Bee" will create artwork that highlights creativity and benefits mental health & wellbeing. It will bring members of the community together to enjoy the artwork. Community connectedness through clicking QR code or link to website to see bees in action in a live hive & ability to interact with the wall art project by uploading their own insect images to website thus opening discussion on bees, nature, pollination & the environment.

This project will provide interesting & engaging walls in Oakleigh Shopping Centre Precinct. Many walls without artwork or signage have graffiti and tagging on them so this project can help prevent this.

Women's Health East (2324QRG050) – \$4,750.18

As the continuation of the successful SHINE 2023 program run by City of Monash in 2023, SHINE 2024 will utilise a similar format as a multi-week in-language health program aimed to support the health and wellbeing of Mandarin-speaking women living, studying, working or socializing in the City of Monash.

Running across six sessions, the program will include one hour of health information on various topics, and one hour of physical activities. The topics and activities are based upon women's preferences identified through a pre-program community consultation survey conducted in September 2023.

The popular health topics to be considered for SHINE 2024 are listed below (but not limited to):

- Dementia and maintaining good brain health
- Menopause
- Healthy relationships
- Mental health and social connections
- Australian culture and traditions
- Navigating Centrelink and My Aged Care service.

The popular physical activities to be considered for SHINE 2024 are listed below (but not limited to):

- Tai Chi
- Yoga
- Dance

The aim of SHINE 2024 is not only to bring more health knowledge and information to the participants and keep them active through physical activities, but most importantly create more opportunities to connect and socialize with each other. And this will help reduce loneliness and improve participants' mental health, which is in alignment with Council's Loneliness Frameworks.

Rose Society of Victoria (2324QRG055) – \$1,743.00

The Annual Spring Rose Show exhibits the best blooms grown by our members. It is a competition with numerous categories which give anyone from novice to expert an opportunity to enter and to win a certificate. It gives people who are not members a chance to look at the roses, admire the roses and decide which roses they would prefer in their own gardens. There are members of the Society present to answer questions and give advice and there are education sessions which anyone is able to attend. Everyone is welcome to look and smell the roses, to enjoy a cup of tea or lunch and to buy roses from the vendors as well as other items of interest. This year's Show includes a photography competition, if you can't grow beautiful roses perhaps you could photo some. It is not limited to locals, but it attracts visitors from the Victorian country areas and interstate.

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 \$11,493.18 has been allocated in this period with a remaining budget for the program of \$66,141.45.

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 focused 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 15 September to 25 October 2023 are presented to Council within the available budget.

ATTACHMENT LIST

Nil