

7.2.1 2023/24 MONASH QUICK RESPONSE GRANTS PROGRAM RECIPIENTS - APRIL

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 1 February to 2 April 2024 to a total of \$3,500.

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 proved 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.

Two grants have been awarded for the period of 1 February to 2 April 2024.

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 **\$3,500** 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
Australian New Goldberg Orchestra	Let the East to meet the West – Enchanting Night of Music	\$2,000.00
Cantonese Art Association	Dragon-Boat Cultural Festival	\$1,500.00
TOTAL		\$3,500.00

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

Australian New Goldberg Orchestra (2324QRG089) - \$2,000.00

Australian New Goldberg Orchestra is planning to have 10 rehearsals at Huntingtower School Orchestra Room from April to June to prepare for our concert. This concert will showcase orchestra music by composers from both West and East, to bring not only music enjoyment to Monash residents but also cultural awareness and to promote cultural understanding plus celebrating multiculturalism in the city of Monash. Through the rehearsals and concert, our players get the chance to be exposed to music from East and West, to play with professional musicians, to be socially connected with others and gain friendship apart from improvement of their instrumental skills.

Cantonese Art Association (2324QRG095) – \$1,500.00

We seek a Quick Response Grants to support our project Dragon-Boat Cultural Festival event to be performed in June 2024. This event is aimed at promoting cultural exchange and understanding in our community and celebrating the traditions and heritage of the festival. The beneficiaries of this event are mainly residents from the Monash area who are interested in learning about and experiencing Chinese popular music, dance and particularly through Chinese Cultural Arts.

The event will include traditional music performances by local musicians, the Chinese Tea Arts cultural show and traditional Cantonese Opera. These activities are designed to provide attendees with an immersive cultural experience that highlights the significance of the festival and its place in Chinese culture.

This event will serve as a platform for cultural exchange and understanding between different communities in Melbourne and increased awareness and appreciation of Chinese art and culture and enhanced social cohesion and within the community by bringing people from different cultural backgrounds together in a shared celebration event.

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 \$3,500 has been allocated in this period with a remaining budget for the program of \$41,836.96.

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 1 February to 2 April 2024 are presented to Council within the available budget.



ATTACHMENT LIST

Nil