

7.2.2 2024/25 MONASH EMERGENCY RELIEF SUSTAINABILITY GRANT RECIPIENTS

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 Monash Emergency Relief Sustainability Grant program to a total of \$78,768.20.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of successful applications to the Monash Emergency Relief Sustainability Grant program.

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.

Organisations such as Monash Oakleigh Community Support & Information Service (MOCSIS) and Monash Waverley Community Information & Support (MWCIS) provide emergency food relief and support to the Monash community. These organisations have reported their services continue to be accessed at higher levels every year and require greater support to continue to provide this service to the community.

At its meeting on 28 May 2024, when considering the allocation of the 2024/25 Monash Community Grants Program, Council resolved in part that it:

Allocates the residual surplus to create a one-off grant program to support emergency relief organisations to undertake projects which will support their sustainability.

As per the Guidelines that were subsequently endorsed at Council on 25 June 2024 the process was as follows:

- Applications submitted via SmartyGrants from 1 July to 26 July 2024.

- Applications assessed by an internal Council Officer Panel.
- All successful applications will be formally acknowledged at the August Council meeting.

DISCUSSION

Monash Council is committed to supporting our local emergency relief organisations to provide support to members of the Monash community who find themselves needing assistance with food, material aid and financial relief.

The agencies that deliver these services are seeing a higher need across the community due to the increased cost of living, rising grocery, housing and living expenses, with those who have not previously accessed these services being impacted. These organisations are heavily reliant on a volunteer base and have highlighted to Council some of the challenges that the organisations are facing regarding their long-term viability to continue to provide the services at the current level.

The provision of the Monash Emergency Relief Sustainability Grants will enable Monash’s emergency relief agencies with the implementation of a broad project that will focus on their ongoing sustainability.

The assessment criteria consisted of the following:

1. Addresses an evidence-based need or opportunity
2. Evidence of partnerships with other organisation(s)
3. The capacity of the organisation to undertake the project
4. Budget expenditure

An evaluation matrix was developed, taking into consideration the guidelines, and ensuring that the application was considered and assessed in an equitable and transparent way.

The assessment panel was comprised of three officers from the Community Strengthening team.

The available funding pool was **\$78,768.20**.

One application, totalling the full amount of \$78,768.20, was received, with this being recommended to be fully funded.

Applicant	Project Title	Amount Awarded
Monash Waverley Community Information & Support (partnering with Monash Oakleigh Community Support & Information Service)	MWCIS & MOCSIS Sustainability Planning and Implementation	\$78,768.20
TOTAL		\$78,768.20

Details of how the funding will be used, as provided by the applicants, are as follows:

MWCIS & MOCSIS (2425ERS02) - \$78,768.20

This project will address the sustainability needs of both Monash Waverley Community Information and Support (MWCIS) and Monash Oakleigh Support and Information Service (MOCSIS) with the aim of ensuring that they are able to continue providing emergency relief for the most vulnerable members of the Monash community.

The project components will include strategic planning, operational planning and begin the task of implementing required organisational changes to improve efficiency and effectiveness of our services.

These changes are likely to be in the areas of:

- Organisational structure
- Operational policies and procedures
- Volunteer roles and task allocation
- Volunteer recruitment and development

There will be a particular emphasis upon identifying efficiencies by enhancing the partnership between MWCIS and MOCSIS. Various models for enhancing this partnership will be explored.

Given the greatly increased administrative burden on both all-volunteer agencies, the project will also have an emphasis upon identifying administrative efficiencies and options for accessing administrative resources.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Monash Emergency Relief Sustainability Grants will be funded from the existing 2024/25 Monash Community Grants Program budget. The allocated budget for this program is \$78,768.20.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Whilst this is a stand-alone grant program the Monash Emergency Relief Sustainability Grants align with the MCGP Policy that is based on Council's values and strategic objectives outlined in the Monash Council Plan 2021-25, in particular "An Inclusive Community".

Monash Council has a proud history of working in partnership with community-based organisations to meet the needs of local residents and to deliver positive community outcomes. The funded activities in this program will support key Council plans, strategies and frameworks including but not limited to:

- The Council Plan 2021-2025
- Monash Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
- Monash Loneliness Framework 2020-2025.

CONSULTATION

Community consultation was not required.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Monash community sector has a rich history of innovation in promoting community participation and civic engagement. The contribution of community organisations in providing

support and emergency relief to the Monash community is well recognised and respected by Council.

The 2024/25 Monash Emergency Relief Sustainability Grants funding facilitates these organisations operating in Monash to draw on this legacy and continue their social and community services. The social implications of the Monash Emergency Relief Sustainability Grants are significant. Grant funding will provide support for these organisations to be sustainable going forward so they can support the diverse needs of our Monash community (e.g. children and families, young people, elderly people and people with disabilities), and facilitate the accessibility of community services

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The Monash Emergency Relief Sustainability Grants are 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 Monash Emergency Relief Sustainability Grants are 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 Allocations Report that was tabled at the May 2024 Council meeting.

As per the previous GIA, data will continue to be collected on how projects address gender inequality, how inclusive/accessible they are and the anticipated reach of the projects by gender.

CONCLUSION

The Emergency Relief Sustainability Grant successful recipient for 2024/25 is presented to Council within the available budget.

ATTACHMENT LIST

Nil