

## 2.2 2020/21 MONASH QUICK RESPONSE GRANTS PROGRAM RECIPIENTS

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### ***PURPOSE***

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

#### ***KEY CONSIDERATIONS/ISSUES***

Monash Council is committed to supporting the community to adapt positively to the challenges of COVID-19. The Quick Response Grants were designed to support the adaptation and continuation of local community groups and individual creative efforts to help build community resilience, cohesion and connectedness during and after the pandemic.

Five applications were assessed between the period of 10 September – 7 October 2020 and funding of \$10,812 has been awarded to three successful applications.

#### ***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

The Quick Response Grants program is funded from the existing 2020/21 Monash Community Grants Program budget. The Quick Response Grant program has an allocation of \$135,000, of which \$10,812 has been allocated in this period. Including these decisions the total allocations made to date are \$47,062, with a remaining budget for the program of \$87,938.

#### ***CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION***

The Quick Response Grants successful recipients for the period 10 September – 7 October 2020 are presented to Council within the available budget, recognising the implications on future Council budgets given the impact of COVID-19 and the social distancing measures currently in place.

These projects have demonstrated how resilient, adaptive and caring the Monash community is during this challenging time.

**2020/21 MONASH QUICK RESPONSE GRANTS PROGRAM RECIPIENTS**

Responsible Director: Russell Hopkins

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council notes the successful applications that have been funded through the Quick Response Grant program during the period 10 September – 7 October 2020 to a total of \$10,812.*

**INTRODUCTION**

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

**BACKGROUND**

Monash Council is committed to supporting the community to adapt positively to the challenges of COVID-19. The Quick Response Grants were designed to support the adaptation and continuation of local community groups and individual creative efforts to help build community resilience, cohesion and connectedness during and after the pandemic.

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. The establishment of a Quick Response Grant Program has enabled Council to continue to support the local community groups and artists to remain agile and innovative as they respond to the impacts of COVID-19.

As per the Guidelines that were endorsed at Council on 9 June 2020 the process is as follows:

- Applications will be submitted via SmartyGrants from 1 July 2020 until the allocation has been exhausted
- Applications will be assessed by an internal Council Officer Panel
- Applicants will receive a response from Council within four weeks of the application being received
- Once receiving notification of a successful application, applicants must commence the project within four weeks and complete by 30 June 2021
- All successful applications will be formally acknowledged at the next applicable Council meeting

**DISCUSSION**

The current COVID-19 pandemic has posed many challenges for Council and community alike, both from an operational and economic perspective. Council is acutely aware of the importance of many of our community groups and the role that they play in combating social isolation and loneliness amongst our community members.

The establishment of a Quick Response Grant Program (QRG) has enabled our community to apply for a once-off grant of up to \$5,000 for a project that demonstrates innovation in response to the impact of COVID-19 on their group and our local community.

It is important to note that Quick Response Grants were developed for the community to provide innovative ways to respond to the issues that have arisen as a result of COVID-19 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:

- July Bulletin
- Monash social media – Facebook, Instagram and twitter
- As part of a mail out to current grant recipients
- Art & About e-newsletter
- Sustainability e-newsletter

The grants opened on 1 July 2020 and will remain open until the allocation of \$135,000 is exhausted.

Five applications were received via the SmartyGrants portal for the period 10 September – 7 October. Applications were assessed by an internal officer assessment panel.

The assessment criteria consisted of the following:

1. Addresses an evidence-based community need or opportunity
2. Demonstrated response to the impacts of COVID-19 on an organisation/community
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, ensuring the applications were considered and assessed in an equitable and transparent way. This provided the assessment process with rigour and consistency.

A total of **\$10,812** has been awarded to three successful applications, outlined in the table below. These amounts were determined by the project, amount and specific items requested in the application budget.

Recipient	Project Name	Amount Awarded
Mary Walker	Children's Mental Health Online Drama Workshops	\$2,112.00
Rashmi Gore	Artistic Murals to Promote Diversity of Cultural Expression	\$4,700.00
Actomania	Act & Connect to Keep Us Together	\$4,000.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,812.00</b>

Details of these projects are as follows:

*Mary Walker (2021QRG0064) – \$2,112.00*

Mary is a performing arts practitioner with 20+ years of drama experience, a Bachelor of Arts and a Masters in Education. She tutors in drama and creates drama workshops. For this project she will bring the concepts from mental health research into drama activities and games for children online via Zoom. These workshops will be provided on a Saturday morning for children to join and enjoy the drama activities that are underpinned by an evidence-base in mental health research. It will get the children up and moving, laughing and having fun while teaching important mindfulness and resilience techniques. It will focus on the three main areas; recognising and managing emotions, looking after worry and anxiety and focusing on the positive. These will be offered as three separate aged workshops based on age: 5-7, 8-10 and 11-12.

*Rashmi Gore (2021QRG0068) – \$4,700.00*

Rashmi is an accomplished artist who will paint Art Murals on 2 wooden electric poles or equivalent wall space, as suggested by the Council. These will be 5-6 feet high murals with the top not exceeding 7 feet from the ground. These murals could depict the rich cultures, social issues or any other relevant aspects. The exact concepts will be finalised considering the 'creative place-making principles' in consultation with the Monash Arts & Cultural Development team. With the support of Council's team three locations have been short-listed to undertake the proposed project, but the exact locations are yet to be finalised.

*Actomania (2021QRG0069) – \$4,000.00*

Actomania will develop short video plays to highlight the effects of COVID 19 and why compliance with health and hygiene advices are imperative. The plays will also portray how to remain engaged during isolation and thus overcome mental health issue. The objective will be to generate positivity, hope and resilience to cope with the crisis.

The end product (in a form of short film) will be circulated to migrants and the broader community to generate awareness and encourage all to do the right thing. This will help team building and encourage community to acquire new artistic skills, for make-up/costume/choreography etc.

A project of this nature will spread the key messages in a simple yet attractive manner leading to better awareness of health and wellbeing, importance of complying with Government and Council's advice, improve mental health and generate capacity to cope with the crisis.

### **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 A Healthy & Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan and other relevant strategic documents.

The Program encourages community connectivity and participation, as well as focusing Council's support on the groups most in need. The MCGP Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it meets the changing needs of both Council and the community.

***SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

The Monash community sector has a rich history of innovation and promoting community participation. The establishment of a Quick Response Grant will enable many community groups to respond effectively and innovatively to the impact that COVID-19 has had on their members and local community.

***HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS***

The 2020/21 Monash Quick Response Grants Program addresses the four key themes: freedom, respect, equality and dignity of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

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***CONCLUSION***

The Quick Response Grants successful recipients for the period 10 September – 7 October 2020 are presented to Council within the available budget, recognising the implications on future Council budgets given the impact of COVID-19 and the social distancing measures currently in place.

These projects have demonstrated how resilient, adaptive and caring the Monash community is during this challenging time.