



2023 Pathways to Employment Announcement - IntoWork Australia, Inner North Community Foundation & Funded Community Organisations



Pathways to Employment Fund

2023/2024 grants report



The Inner North Community Foundation works on the land of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation and recognises elders past and present and as traditional custodians of the land.

Proudly supported by





*Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre (CNLC)
Maria and King & Godfree in Carlton*

THIS REPORT



This report outlines achievements in the 2023 Pathways to Employment Grants Program, with acquittals received in late 2024 from groups funded between August 2023 and August 2024. During this period, the Foundation allocated \$200,000 to ten local community organisations to drive projects that empower local individuals to overcome employment barriers due to systemic disadvantage.

The Pathways to Employment Fund stands as the inaugural flagship funding initiative of the Inner North Community Foundation. It aims to facilitate the development of work and life skills for local communities and assist them towards meaningful and sustainable employment. This approach is custom-tailored to address the specific challenges faced by each marginalised group.

Launched by IntoWork Australia in 2007, the annual grants program has provided support for eligible organisations operating within the Cities of Yarra, Darebin and Merri-bek.

Thanks to the longstanding partnership from IntoWork Australia and our local councils, the Inner North Community Foundation continues to distribute funds and resources that bring people and organisations together and invest in the vision of a thriving local community.



OUR PARTNERSHIP

Supporting pathways for job seekers in the inner north



Since 2007, IntoWork Australia has supported the *Pathways to Employment Fund*. In 2021, a new 30-year commitment was made by IntoWork Australia to provide an annual donation of \$223,333 to the Fund, as well as additional contributions towards core operational costs of the Foundation itself.

At 30 June 2024, this partnership between IntoWork Australia, the Foundation, and the Cities of Darebin, Merri-bek and Yarra has built the Pathways to Employment Fund to \$5,814,202. It is an enduring community asset and tremendous example of local collaboration, with the granting approach strength-based, nuanced and adaptive to cultural context, supporting tailored solutions for marginalised groups led by local community organisations.

What's next?

The 2024 *Pathways to Employment* grants program is underway, supporting community members with grants awarded in September 2024. The 2025 *Pathways to Employment* grants program will launch in early 2025.

The Foundation will continue to engage local community members through our Community Advisory Panels that centre community voice in grant-making processes.

2023/2024 Pathways to Employment - \$20,000 per project



ORGANISATION	LGA	PROJECT TITLE
Breakaway Youth	Darebin	Focus For Life
Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre	Yarra	Make it Work
For Change Co	Merri-bek	Pathways to Change
Free to Feed**	Darebin	Commercial cooking, training and employment
Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network*	Merri-bek	Vocational Mentoring Exchange
Outer Urban Projects*	Merri-bek	Live and Digital Training and Employment Pathways
The Boite Inc	Yarra	Portfolio 3
The Social Studio**	Yarra	Work2Learn
Sustain: The Australian Food Network	Darebin	Urban Farm, Food Justice and Training Network
Youthworx	Merri-bek	Youthworx Pathways

*Multi-year grants \$20,000 FY22, FY23, FY24

**Multi year grants \$20,000 F23, F24, F25



PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT- OUTPUTS 2023/2024



566

PARTICIPANTS
ACROSS THE
REGION

291

PEOPLE SECURED
WORK

\$1.22M

IN GENERATED
COMMUNITY
VALUE

The Foundation bases its Pathways to Employment acquittal on Social Ventures Australia's research into effective employment project indicators. Data captured also includes:

- ***343*** people gained work experience
- ***177*** volunteers were involved in supporting the projects
- ***274*** people received a qualification

Funded Projects



BREAKAWAY YOUTH

Focus For life



Breakaway Youth delivered a program for 21 at-risk young people aged from 10 – 16 who had been referred by local schools and the Department of Health and Human Services.

Participants take part in a one-year program of weekend camps and an overall six-year mentorship which helps them develop interpersonal and life skills, healthy self-worth, and confidence to move through school to employment.

Organisers reported that all of the 10 female and 11 male participants improved their employability skills.

"As our program follows these young people for a large part of their teen years, beginning a new group and watching the dynamics of that group form is a healthy reminder that there is no set formula for a successful intervention."

"It's hard to find words for the lifelong impact that this funding has on the lives of youth. Three participants who graduated from the program last year have returned as volunteers to champion the next group of campers. They gain employment skills by contributing to their community as they begin adulthood, and we can nurture leadership potential."

*Setting Up Camp: (c) Breakaway Youth
A camper learns the ropes in setting up her tent - Success!*

Funded Projects



CARLTON NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING CENTRE

Make it Work (MiW)



Connecting 53 people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to vocational training, work experience and employment opportunities during 2023/4, this program contributed to participants having greater capacity and confidence to engage economically and socially with their local community and society.

Independently evaluated in 2023, participants rated their level of satisfaction with the program as very happy or happy. And 96% of respondents said they would recommend the program to a relative or friend.

"The quantitative and qualitative data indicate that MiW is making some meaningful progress towards outcomes for economic participation, social participation, and organisation capacity."

"The benefit of MiW to some participants is that they are able to repeatedly use its services and access sustained personal support."

Marian Hussein, school crossing job

Funded Projects



Pathways for Change Program
Brunswick Cafe

FOR CHANGE CO. Pathways for Change



For Change Co supported 13 young people through the Brunswick stream of its Pathways for Change employment and training program, with additional wraparound support provided by specialist housing partners, including Launch Housing, Melbourne City Mission, Salvation Army and Berry St.

- 92% of graduates successfully transitioned to further employment and education
- 64% increase in confidence, wellbeing and work readiness of the graduates.

Two trainee takeover days at For Change's Brunswick venue allowed the trainee participants to showcase their skills to community members and partners.

"To be valued and cared about is so important. The friendships I made have been great, there was a big turn around there. The trainers really make the program what it is" (2023 Trainee)

"It was a really good team, i really enjoyed it... I've definitely gotten stronger and more confident with customer service and more confident with the coffee machine. I felt comfortable with the team, the customers and the space." (2024 Trainee)

Funded Projects



*MM Coburg T2
Industry Excursion
Onset Arts*

INNER NORTHERN LOCAL LEARNING EMPLOYMENT NETWORK

Vocational Mentoring Exchange (VME)



Completing its second year of funding, the Vocational Mentoring Exchange continues to demonstrate the benefits of experienced volunteer mentors working with secondary students as they prepare to transition to their lives beyond school.

The INLLEN's Vocational Mentoring Exchange project recruits and trains vocational mentors who can draw on their varied life and working histories to assist students as they move towards further education, training or employment.

During 2023/2024, more than 110 mentors (included 20 new recruits) worked individually with 198 students to develop career action plans and visit local business and industry to develop links and gain a better understanding of local employment opportunities.

Working with local secondary schools, community agencies and employers, the program was run in partnership with 12 schools and community organisations.

Funded Projects



OUTER URBAN PROJECTS

Associate Artists - Live and Digital Training



During its second year of funding, the Associate Artists program brought 12 emerging artist and arts workers together with established artist, arts worker and producer mentors.

During 2023-2024, many of these relationships led to mentees expanding their skill base into new areas. Such as exceptional gospel, Pasifika vocalists, Fijian sisters Ruci and Jo Kaisila, who extended their work into jazz recording and as storytellers and filmmakers. Outer Urban Projects aims to continue this work into the future.

“It testifies that it takes a village to raise an artist from the margins. To empower and advocate the aspirations and creative potential of ghettoised and marginalised culturally diverse young artists who will attract audiences who want to hear about and from.”

“In 2016, the path ahead of me seemed shrouded in uncertainty. A mere glimmer of hope flickered. By your, Irine's and Outer Urban Project's unwavering trust you all guided me to trust myself over time. I got accepted at VCA. I am sincerely thankful for your ongoing support.” (Former participant)

The Audition Dress Rehearsal - Sahra Davoudi - (c) Outer Urban Projects

Funded Projects



*Zulya Kamalova, singer
and Director of The Boîte*

THE BOÏTE Portfolio 3.0



Since its introduction, the Boîte's Portfolio mentoring program has worked with 80 musicians from backgrounds such as Iranian, Burmese Chin, Zimbabwean and Macedonian.

The Boîte's Portfolio 3.0 is providing 36 new participants with professional development and mentoring to enable them to take part in activities such as showcase events and radio appearances.

The program works with industry partners such as Music Victoria, Melbourne Polytechnic, Multicultural Arts Victoria and PBS Radio.

It is with sadness and honour we pay tribute to Zulya Kamalova, Director of the Boite, who passed away in September 2024. The Foundation extends its sympathies to Zulya Kamalova's family and community.

"We will feel Zulya's impact in everything we do at The Boîte for years to come as we continue on the course she has set for us, nurturing communities, elevating the marginal, and challenging the boundaries of genre, culture and tradition. She was an incandescent and magnificent force who engaged and inspired everyone in her orbit, and we were privileged to work alongside her."
Staff and Committee of The Boîte

Funded Projects



The Social Studio graduates and staff

THE SOCIAL STUDIO

Work2Learn



During the first of its three years of funding, the Social Studio in Collingwood was able to provide a group of refugees with their first Australian work experience and paid employment. Several participants have now moved onto ongoing employment as a result.

Over 12 weeks, trainees worked two days per week with the studio's production team, following real-world, assemble-to-order plans and learning how to work and communicate within a busy team.

The program upskills people with refugee backgrounds to meet the needs of prospective employers in the textile industry. The program provides a bridge from study into work, with trainees receiving career advice, connections with prospective employers and information on Australian systems.

After more than a decade of training refugees, The Social Studio is grappling with decreasing opportunities for work in the textile industry, which will hit refugees particularly hard.

Funded Projects

SUSTAIN: THE AUSTRALIAN FOOD NETWORK

Urban Farm, Food Justice and Training Network

Sustain's Urban Farm Team is working to create sustainable community farm models that can be adopted by communities in partnership with local First Nations, LGBTQIA+, CALD, Disability and Youth organisations.

18 internships, with six for First Nations people, built skills, confidence and experience to support interns to continue to further education and/or employment.

- 100% reported they had gained skills, knowledge and/or connections that had made them more employable
- 100% reported that the experience had inspired them to do or think more about food growing, sharing and learning
- Three participants gained employment, one has gone on to further training and one is curating the Ganbu Gulin Festival through FUSE Darebin.

"It made me feel really purposeful. I was having a bit of a hard time when I signed up as I was lacking a lot of community and internal direction. The internship didn't magically fix these things, but it helped me realise my own capacity to contribute and work with others. It really helped me out" (2023 Participant)



January 2024 True Leaf Urban Farm in Alphington, harvest, (c) Sustain

Funded Projects



YOUTHWORX

Youthworx Pathways



Unfortunately, one funded organisation ceased operations in the last 12 months.

The Youthworx Pathways program harnessed the vibrancy of the screen and creative industries to engage with and facilitate employment pathways for young people with additional engagement barriers.

Working with people aged 15 to 25, the program supported people in out-of-home care, the juvenile justice system, or those experiencing housing instability. Over 16 years, Youthworx achieved exceptional engagement and employment rates in the screen and creative industries.

Youthworx became insolvent in March 2024, ceasing operations and the entity has been wound-up.

Historically, the Foundation has had a long term positive relationship, with many local young people benefiting from their engagement. This is the first organisation funded by the Foundation unable to acquit a project due to liquidation.

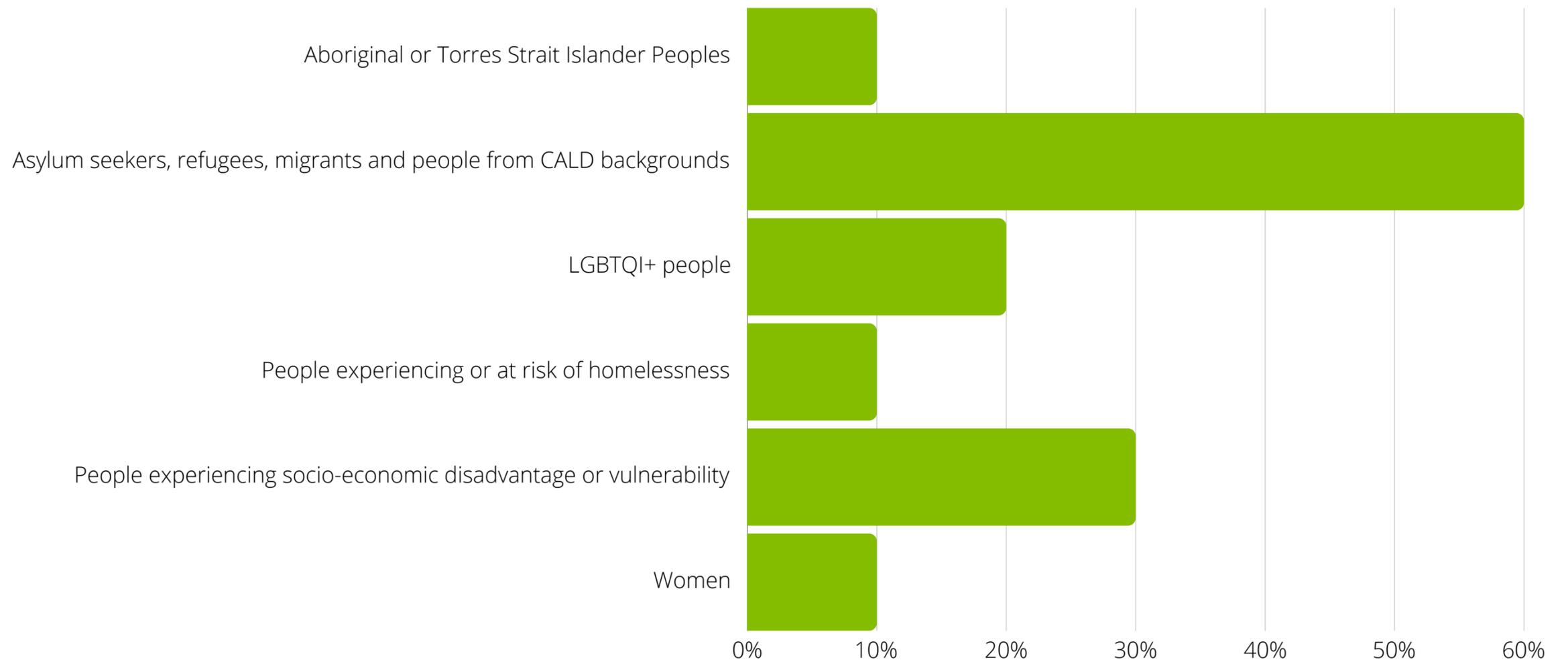
Students of Youthworx training program shooting student stories of graduation



Market garden planning and design
True Leaf Urban Farm, Alphinton
(c) Sustain

MARGINALISED GROUPS SUPPORTED

The Pathways to Employment Grants Program funded programs supporting local community members, targeting marginalised groups with vulnerabilities in their journey to work. We note that while the grantees organisations in FY24 did not solely focus on people with a disabilities or people exiting the justice system, these groups have been represented and supported.





2023/24 FOUNDATION HIGHLIGHTS



\$447k+

GRANTED ACROSS
THE REGION IN F23

48

GRANTS MADE
ACROSS ALL
GRANTS PROGRAMS

\$370k+

RECEIVED FROM 58
LOCAL DONORS

\$69k

IN FUNDING TO
ABORIGINAL LED
ORGANISATIONS

21

LOCAL VOLUNTEERS
ASSESSING GRANTS

\$12.1m

FUNDS UNDER
MANAGEMENT

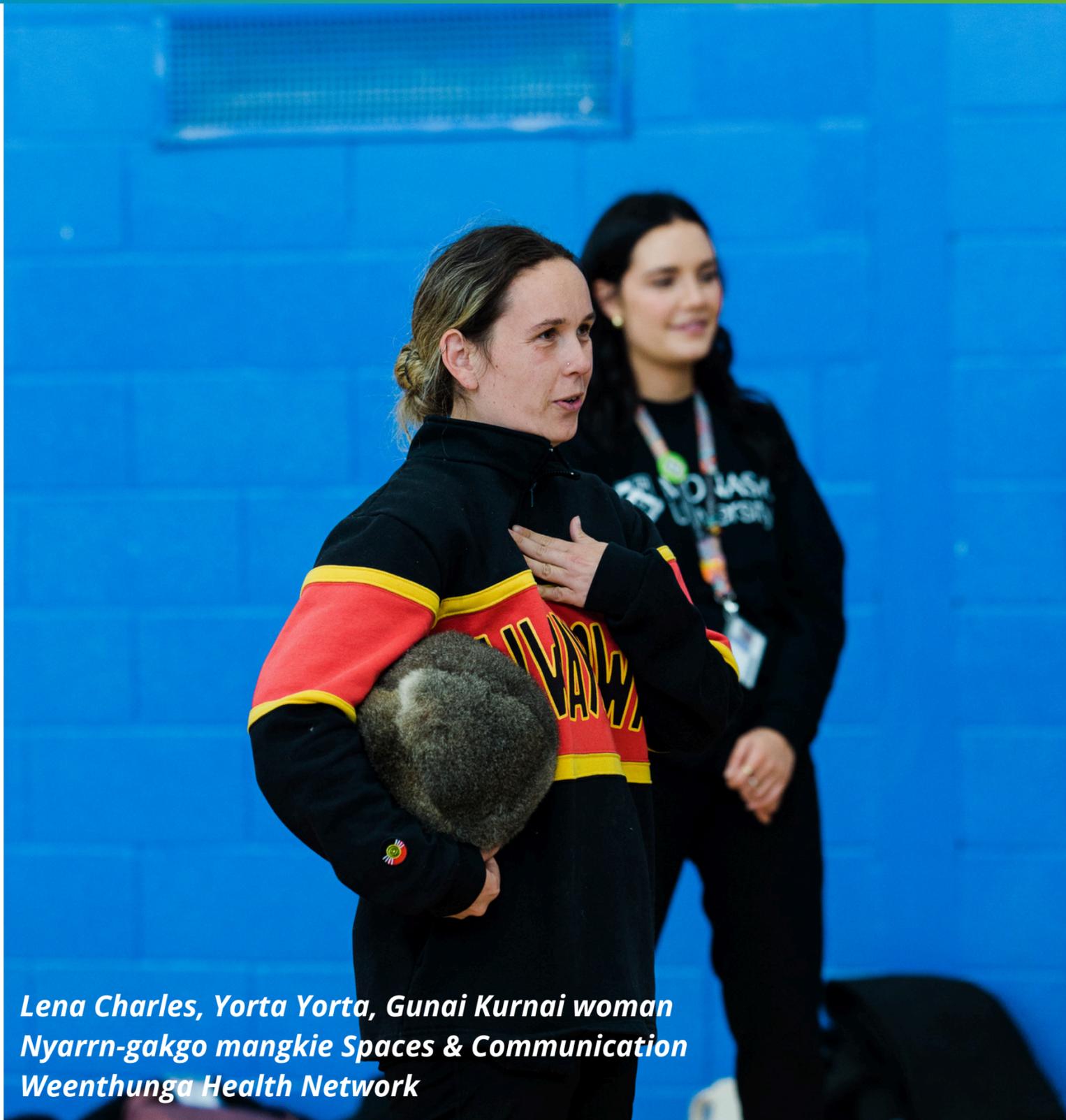
ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

2023/2024



Community Foundation highlights include:

- Led by community advice, supported Aboriginal-led organisations with 6 programs responding to the impacts of the 2023 national referendum.
- Facilitated the independent community advisory panel assessment of Merri-bek City Council's Community Grants program. Containing three streams, local people recommended Merri-bek Council provide \$511,212 to community organisations.
- Involved local community members in round table discussions that include advice on the strategic development of the Foundation approach to stewardship of community relationships and funds.
- Supported 17 local emergency and material aid organisations with partnership funding from the Magistrates' Court of Victoria Court Fund.
- Continued our partnership with the Vocational Mentoring Exchange (VME), supporting the career transition journey of socially/economically disadvantaged/marginalised young people from across the inner north.



*Lena Charles, Yorta Yorta, Gunai Kurnai woman
Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Spaces & Communication
Weenthunga Health Network*



Harding St Bridge, Coburg/Preston

OUR JOURNEY

Co-creating a better future



We believe the best way to co-create a better community is through partnership and dialogue. That's why we see our primary role as connecting those who want to contribute with those who can make change happen.

Since 2007, the Foundation has given \$6,100,00 to more than 293 charities across the cities of Darebin, Merri-bek and Yarra. Our first grant round for Pathways to Employment in 2007 distributed \$21,300. The Pathways to Employment fund supports 10 programs each year. Annually, \$200,000 is given across the region to remove the barriers people face on their journey to work.

The Foundation continues its role as a safe pair of hands for community money, and a broker of knowledge and relationships. We work with donors who are passionate about giving where they live, and investing in systemic change that aids marginalised groups into equitable opportunities.

We steward, in perpetuity, a community resource. With \$12,100,000 in funds under management, the foresight of our founder and key supporter, IntoWork Australia, has been complemented by other local donors. In addition to the Pathways to Employment Grants Program, Intowork Australia has supported the Foundation with \$2,261,669 in operational support since 2007.



Total investment in Darebin, Merri-bek and Yarra since 2007



\$2.2M

OPERATIONAL
SPONSORSHIP FROM
INTOWORK

\$4.9M

DONATIONS TO THE
PATHWAYS TO
EMPLOYMENT FUND

\$11.5M

TOTAL DONATIONS
TO THE
FOUNDATION

\$6.2M

TOTAL
REINVESTED IN
GRANTS

\$12.1M

TOTAL FUNDS
UNDER
MANAGEMENT

701

TOTAL NUMBER OF
GRANTS MADE

Fitzroy street scene

Thank you!



*2024 Pathways to Employment Celebration at CERES,
In this photo: IntoWork Australia, Grant Recipients, Councillors and supporters of the Foundation*



2023/2024 Pathways to Employment Grants Program

Proudly supported by

