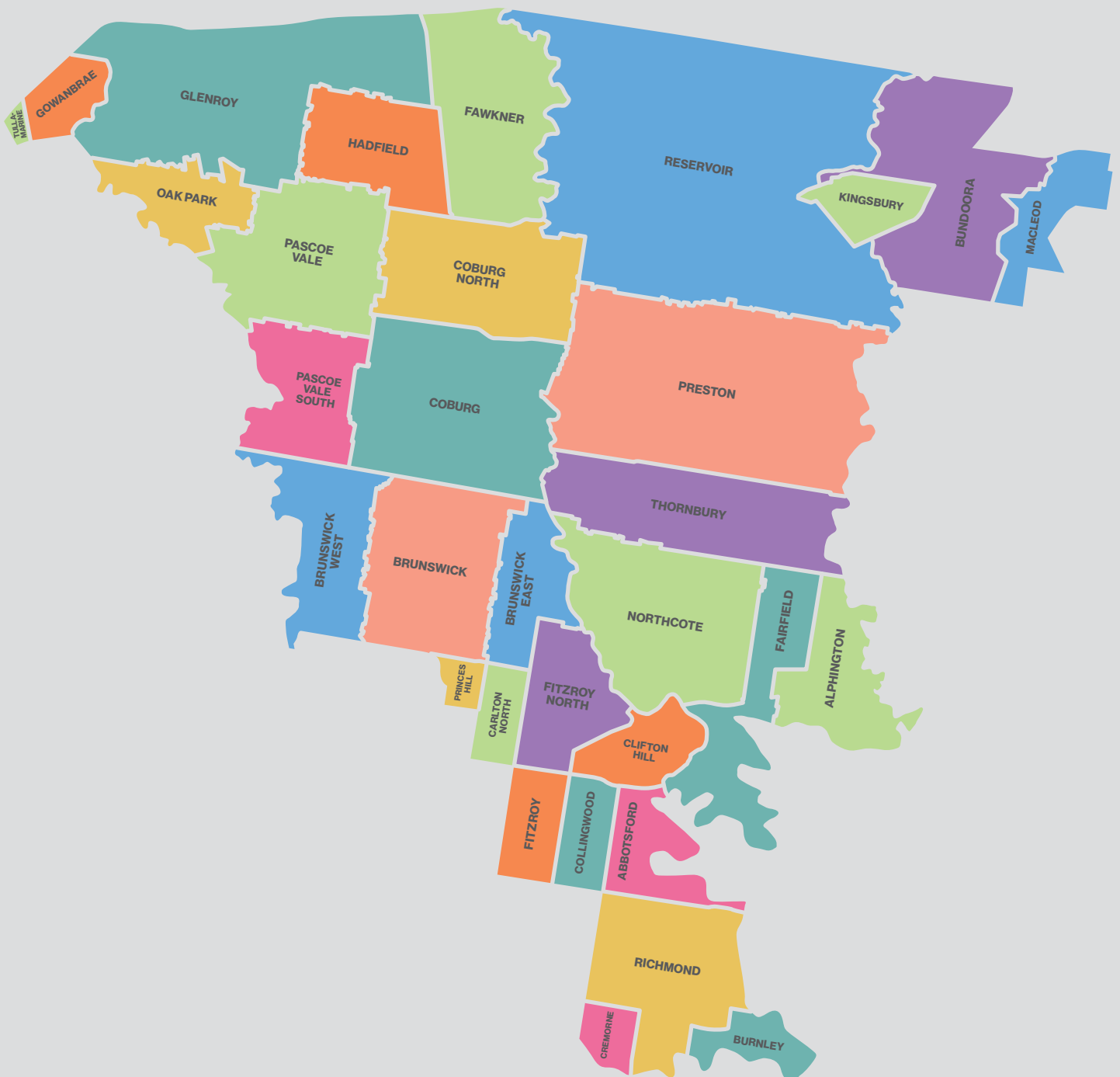


Inner North Report 2024

What We Did

A Community of Action



Introduction

This report completes a 3-part process titled **The Inner North Report**, designed to make improvements in the inner north which are **community guided**, **community assessed** and **community funded**.

Part 1 of the process described the inner north (*Who We Are*), Part 2 (*Who We Want to Be*) identified the priorities for action and this report, Part 3 (*Community Action*) describes what was done. All parts of the Inner North Report are available on the Foundation's website [HERE](#).

The Inner North Report was reviewed by The Social Equity Institute, Melbourne University, and our summary of their findings is included below.

We sincerely thank the thousands of community members, the Northern Funders Network, the NFP organisations and the many community groups who contributed to this process and demonstrated that a united community can drive change in the direction needed.

The report will be updated in 2025 and we look forward to sharing the update with you.

Melbourne University – Social Equity Institute Report

The following is our summary of the key findings of The University of Melbourne, Social Equity Institute report titled “A Place-based Community Indicators Framework for the Inner North Community Foundation”, June 2024.

Stakeholders interviewed as part of this study acknowledged the **great value** and **significance** of the initiation and production of the Inner North Report to the Inner North Melbourne community. The approach has shown the following **key strengths** and benefits:

The production of the Inner North Report has offered a **communication channel** to **inform the community** of what is going on in Inner North Melbourne.



It contributes to creating a **shared understanding of goals** for the whole community.



The Inner North Report has provided **comprehensive data** with credible information sources in **digestible and usable** format.



The production of the Inner North Report has engaged with a greater **diversity of voices** to define 'who we are'.



The **community engagement process** has offered an effective approach to gather community feedback.



The Inner North Report has **strengthened donors' confidence** in the work of the Foundation.



“By leading the production and use of the Inner North Report, the Foundation has played a needed role in engaging, collaborating and partnering with community members, organisations, donors, practitioners, and policymakers around questions and actions for wellbeing in Melbourne’s inner north communities.”

Acknowledgement of Country

The producers of this report acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land. We recognise their continuing connection to Land, Water and Culture. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.





Support for homeless children

MERRI OUTREACH SUPPORT SERVICES LIMITED, NORTHCOTE, BRIGHT FUTURES

The Bright Futures – Homeless Children’s Specialist Support Service was the project funded by the Inner North Action Fund grants round 2023. This grant trialled a specially developed participatory grant making approach.

Unlike other support services targeted at families or parents, the *Bright Futures* program presents a child-focused early-intervention outreach approach. It provides bespoke health, social, psychological and educational support to children and young people experiencing homelessness and family violence.

Following the grant design to foster collaboration and harness community contributions, the Foundation convened a community participatory grant making workshop. The workshop presented the *Bright Futures* programs and invited local community members to reflect on the program presentation, brainstorm ideas and share their knowledge and understanding of local community needs. As an extension of the participatory grant making process, the workshop helped build connections and draw insights from the community to contribute to the *Bright Futures* program.

Participatory grants process

The grant round focused on addressing homelessness challenges and involved a participatory grants process, developed by the Inner North Community Foundation and trialled in 2023. It is based on direct consultation between the community, support providers and other community organisations. Seven projects were submitted for a single grant of \$50,000 and evaluated following a two-stage blind assessment process, which involved core members of the Northern Funders Network shortlisting top three applications with the final selection based on community voting by a pool of over 2,000 community stakeholders. As the highest-ranked project, the *Bright Futures* program received the grant to support the expansion of its pilot.



Helping kids participate

NORTH CARLTON RAILWAY NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE, CARLTON NORTH, THE PASSION PROJECT

The Passion Project was designed to address inequality and poverty at a local level by supporting disadvantaged young people living at the Princes Hill Public Housing Estate to participate in after school recreational activities. *The Passion Project* received funding from the Inner North Action Grants Program 2022 and responded to the priority area identified in The Inner North Report: Support for those facing poverty.

With the financial resources provided, the project was able to grow from its initial small pilot in the beginning of 2022. The program supports young people experiencing disadvantage with resources to access after school activities. Working with volunteers as mentors to support the children, it develops opportunities for community members and businesses to take part in the project. The pilot phase saw disadvantaged children being able to follow their interests through a range of activities, the project also built connections in the community among parents, families, schools, volunteers, local businesses (running after school activities) and other local resources (donations, volunteers and time, and information) – all of which contributed to stronger social cohesion.

Built upon the experience and success of the pilot phase, the project has secured funding from other funders including VicHealth to operate throughout 2024 and 2025. According to Alison Beck, Manager of North Carlton Railway Neighbourhood House, *The Passion Project* has “evolved and continued to grow even stronger”.



Supporting homeless women

JUNO INC., PRESTON, RAPID RESPONSE CLINIC

Juno's Rapid Response Clinic (RRC) is an early intervention initiative amongst women and gender diverse people in the inner north. Through coaching, resources and support it aims to prevent homelessness amongst those experiencing housing stress and family violence.

Born in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, funding from the Inner North Action Grants Program 2022 was used to ensure the continuation of RRC at a critical time when demand for the clinic doubled, at a time when Victoria lifted pandemic restrictions and welfare payments returned to base levels.

RRC responded to four priority areas identified in the Inner North Report: Homelessness and access to housing, support for those facing poverty, cost of housing ownership and rental, and violence against women.

The Inner North Report 2021 identified 39% of households in the Inner North were renting and one in three renters were a lone person or single parent households. While the rate of homelessness in the Inner North dropped 12% in five years, only 22% of people experiencing homelessness were in supported accommodation. The community conversations undertaken as part of the process to produce the Inner North Report 2022 raised 'Homelessness and access to housing' and 'Cost of housing ownership and rental' as major topics of concern and were voted by the community amongst the top five highest priorities.

A local response to prevent homelessness, the clinic continues its operation and services to this date. Focused on private rental for the clinic, Juno also explores alternative ownership options and other market mechanisms. The Inner North Report estimated that as 2,581 people were experiencing homelessness in the Inner North, at the same time 9,985 homes in the area were vacant, suggesting needs and prospects for more creative solutions to mobilise local resources through collective efforts to address homelessness issues.

What's next ...

The Inner North Report is a community action program designed to drive change and make the Inner North a better place for all, but starting with those who do not get their fair share now.

It is community guided, community assessed and community funded and if you share this vision and would like to be a part of part of it, we would welcome your involvement.

There are many ways you can get involved.

And don't forget, the 2025 report will be available soon.



If you want to **talk** about it with your family and friends, you can get all 3 reports [HERE](#).



If you have **ideas** or **time to volunteer**, contact [Ben Rodgers](#).



If you want to **donate** to the effort, you can do so [HERE](#).



If you want to be part of our **community granting** process, contact [Bianca Maciel Pizzorno](#).



If you want to **keep up to date** leave your details [HERE](#).

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