



## Summary

### P500 Shortlisted Grant Applications for 2021

The applications for the following three shortlisted grant applicants are summarised on the pages below:

- 1. Common Ground Project**  
Staying Grounded
- 2. Geelong Mums**  
Stronger Communities, Safer Families
- 3. Geelong Youth Engagement**  
GYE Program Initiative to Support More Youth of Geelong



## COMMON GROUND PROJECT (AUSPICED BY DIVERSITAT)

### “STAYING GROUNDED”

#### ORGANISATION OVERVIEW:

Common Ground Project (CGP) is a community farm that promotes food security by creating fair access to locally grown, healthy food. "Staying Grounded" is an onsite food-security program for some of the most vulnerable people in the region. Participants develop skills in the hospitality and agricultural sectors, while supplying emergency food relief to those in need, helping build strong, resilient, healthy communities. "Staying Grounded" also offers training and assistance in food production to members of the Diversitat community. This initiative enables direct access to nutrient rich food, pathways to further training and potential employment opportunities and greater social connection within the community and improved mental health.

The SEIFA Index of Disadvantage found that communities in the G21 region are among Victoria's most disadvantaged, including a higher than average unemployment rate compared with other Victorians (<http://www.g21.com.au/addressing-disadvantage>). This data was captured prior to the event of COVID-19, which suggests these figures have increased, along with subsequent effects on individual mental health, impacting the relative level of social and economic wellbeing of the region. "Staying Grounded" has been developed in response to this reality - with a view to address the specific and ongoing need for training and employment opportunities for asylum seekers who are most vulnerable within the region. This approach is motivated by significant evidence; the best way to reduce persistent disadvantage in a community is to reduce unemployment rates in those areas.

#### HOW THE GRANT FUNDS WILL BE USED:

##### **Salaries – 50% of the salary for their Farm Manager and Community Events Manager**

Staying Grounded is a food-security program for some of the most vulnerable people in the region. Participants develop skills in the hospitality and agricultural sectors, while supplying emergency food relief to those in need, with the aim to help build strong, healthy, resilient communities. Over the past 18 months through our Staying Grounded program, CGP has provided: 12 women from asylum seeker background 1,700 hours of paid work preparing meals and growing produce; helping to prepare over 7,000 food relief meals; grow and distribute 1,200 kilos of fresh vegetables grown onsite for people facing disadvantage. We have also recently done an "Afghan Feast", selling 60 meals to supporters in the community for \$75 per meal, paying the women to prepare the meals and helping to raise awareness and funds for these women and their families. Increased awareness of the program has also resulted in the participants catering for private events. Funding for the wages of Greta and Ivan will allow us to increase the number of meals prepared as well as provide catering and onsite events where the women will be paid to prepare food.

**Note: This application is being auspiced by Diversitat as Common Ground does not have deductible gift recipient tax status.**



## GEELONG MUMS

**“Stronger Communities, Safer Families”**

### **ORGANISATION OVERVIEW:**

Established in 2013 by volunteers, Geelong Mums exists to provide babies and children experiencing disadvantage with the essential nursery equipment and clothing they need for a safe start in life. We collect and safety-check nursery equipment including cots, prams, and car seats, clothing, books and toys from the community.

We receive requests from Maternal & Child Health Nurses and social workers on behalf of families. We then meet or exceed each request with quality donations. The families we help are experiencing a multitude of disadvantages including family violence, homelessness, unemployment, illness and disability, and refugee, migrant and indigenous families. Our material aid not only keeps the children in those families safe, but also provides parents and caregivers with dignity, choice and the means to connect with support services and their community.

### **HOW THE GRANT FUNDS WILL BE USED:**

**Salaries – volunteer co-ordinator and capital items – equipment for volunteers to repair items**

As a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, Geelong Mums has seen its volunteer pool diminish. As with most charities around the nation, restrictions, lockdowns, health concerns and safety fears have all resulted in fewer volunteers returning to support the important work we do. This in turn has had an impact on the volume of material goods we can process in any given day, risking the wellbeing of more than 6,000 babies and children each year. As a volunteer-led charity, without the support of the community, we simply cannot do what we do without people power.

Traditionally, word of mouth has always been the primary way we have engaged with new volunteers, but now we need to try new ways to engage the community. The Stronger Communities, Safer Families project will aim to recharge and reinvigorate our volunteer program, welcoming existing volunteers back to the warehouse and attracting new volunteers to our mission. Through investing in volunteering, we can build stronger communities and ensure community wellbeing by providing a safe start in life for more vulnerable babies and children.

**Note: Geelong Mums is a recipient of a Geelong Community Foundation grant for 2021/22.**



## GEELONG YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

### “GYE Program Initiative to Support More Youth of Geelong”

#### ORGANISATION OVERVIEW:

Geelong Youth Engagement (GYE) facilitate mentoring based programs that target vulnerable young people from our community with the focus on - encouraging engagement with education, employment, family and to Increase Youth Confidence, Building Resilience, Create Engagement, and Increase Self-Belief.

Currently GYE facilitates two successful youth programs. Our flagship program is the Geelong Kokoda Youth Program (GKYP) and the Road Safety Program – ‘You Just Never Know’. The young people selected to undertake the GKYP, an intensive year long program, are mentored in personal development, fitness, health, diet, and most important role modelling with stable and genuine support.

GYE program’s help young people work through the challenges they are facing in their lives; the reason for their disconnection can be for a number of reasons that may include truancy, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, suicidal tendencies, self-harming, anti-social behaviour, family violence, mental health amongst others. As an organisation, we work closely with the Government secondary schools in the Geelong region supporting young people from ages 15-18 that the school identify could benefit from our programs.

GKYP has been running since 2013, previously facilitated by Victoria Police who still have a strong affiliation with GYE. Due to timeframes and funding, GYE is limited to how many young people can participate in GKYP each year and have developed two new programs to begin in 2022 to support more young people from our region.

#### HOW THE GRANT FUNDS WILL BE USED:

**External trainers, first aid training, events, capital items & small amount of operational expenses – grant spread over two years**

GYE plan to begin a new youth program 2022 based on the same values of GKYP but on a smaller scale and will be focused on building self-confidence, community awareness and support the young people in need to work through their challenges. The program is planned to run two afternoons per week. The sessions will be 1 ½ hours long with 45 minutes involving physical activity and the second half will be focused on goals, also hearing from professionals or guests who can support their current challenges and advise positive guidance into the future i.e. dietitians, youth workers, psychologists, Victoria Police members, sports people, everyday people who have worked through challenges in their lives.

Goal setting and commitment to these goals is a large component of the program. The 3 focus areas for the young people will be: 1) Physical Challenge; 2) Community Service; 3) Fundraising. Although the program will only be one and a half hours a week of contact as a group the goals the young people set will require commitment of their own time and help them focus on something positive.

**Note: GYE is a recipient of a Geelong Community Foundation grant for 2021/22 and the Adroit Capital grant for 2021/22.**