



# Bank of Melbourne Foundation 2021

Helping to create a brighter  
future for Victorians in need.





## A message from the Chair

2021 has been another extremely challenging year, with unprecedented periods of lockdowns, and social and economic uncertainty continuing to impact communities around Australia. In Victoria, people have undoubtedly suffered more than most, enduring almost nine months of restrictions during six separate lockdowns since March 2020 – earning Melbourne the unenviable title of the world’s most locked-down city along the way.

And while restrictions have been necessary to manage the ongoing health risks from COVID-19, the closure of critical mechanisms for referrals to support services, such as workplaces, schools, and other community organisations, has reduced access for those Victorians most in need.

Of particular concern has been evidence of rising mental health challenges, family financial stress, domestic violence, increased drug and alcohol abuse and students from disadvantaged backgrounds falling significantly behind during prolonged periods of home-schooling, putting them at increased risk of disconnecting from their education.

This year, Bank of Melbourne Foundation has awarded more than \$630,000 in Community Grants to help our small charity partners support Victorian children and communities experiencing disadvantage, while also transitioning to new ways of working - helping them to expand or adapt to meet growing demand.

We continue to be inspired by their hard work, unrelenting optimism and extraordinary outcomes, and we’ve been impressed by the speed at which some organisations have been able to implement digital platforms and remote service delivery. This has built organisational capacity and resilience that will endure long into the future.

We were also proud to award our first ever Multi-Year Grant to Skyline Education Foundation, empowering students from disadvantaged backgrounds to thrive through the power of education. Over three years, this funding of \$500,000 will support academically talented students to become resilient leaders in the face of social and economic adversity.

These past two years really have been extraordinary, and I’m so proud to reflect on the increased support we’ve provided to Victorian communities during the very toughest of times. On behalf of everyone at Bank of Melbourne Foundation, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for your ongoing support and generosity. We look forward to 2022, knowing that our combined efforts have the ability to make a positive impact on the lives of Victorians in need.

**Christine Parker**  
**Chair, Bank of Melbourne Foundation**



## A message from the Foundation

When we began this year, we could never have imagined that it would once again be such a challenging time for so many. As in 2020, those challenges have been magnified for the most vulnerable members of our communities.

COVID-19 continues to transform how we all live and work, and Victorians in particular have suffered its brutal effects more than most amid 2021's seemingly endless lockdowns. For many of our charity partners it has been their most difficult year yet, marked by a further increase in need for their vital support services, unmatched by an increase in funding and resources.

It's during times like these, that the contribution Bank of Melbourne Foundation makes has even more urgency and importance – to enable our partners to deliver their critical programs to help people in our communities who are experiencing disadvantage. For their sake, it's imperative that we keep working together to create greater opportunities to help improve the lives of Victorians in need.

Over the past year, Bank of Melbourne Foundation has granted \$1 million to charities in Victoria to support programs helping to transform lives for the better. As always, I've continued to be inspired by their hard work and resilience, and I'm enormously proud of the positive impact our combined efforts have had on the communities we've supported during the last 12 months and beyond.

Finally, everything we do is made possible through the support of Bank of Melbourne Foundation's many donors, including our bank customers and employees, and strengthened through deep engagement with our community of stakeholders. We can't thank you enough for your contribution. We couldn't do it without you!

**Georgia Stryker**  
**Head of Bank of Melbourne Foundation**



# About Bank of Melbourne Foundation

Bank of Melbourne Foundation supports local charities and programs that deliver sustainable benefits to Victorians who are experiencing disadvantage.

With the help of our generous supporters, the Foundation has granted more than \$4.6million to over 160 Victorian charities since our inception in 2013.

Every single dollar we receive goes straight to these charities to help them create a brighter future for Victorian people, families, and communities.

Bank of Melbourne Foundation acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging.

## Multi-Year Grant

Bank of Melbourne Foundation's Multi-Year Grant was created to improve the lives of children experiencing disadvantage across Victoria.

This grant awards one Victorian charity up to \$500,000 over three years, with the aim to support direct interventions for children who are in need, through programs that would otherwise not be possible without ongoing funding support.

The inaugural recipient of the Multi-Year Grant Skyline Education Foundation. Over the next three years the grant will help them generate long-term social impact by empowering students who have high-ability and are academically talented to become resilient leaders in the face of social and economic adversity.

# Skyline Education Foundation

## Giving promising students their best shot at success.

With the right support, gifted and high-ability students can achieve extraordinary things. But up to 40% of them leave school before finishing Year 12. Some drop out due to geographic isolation. For others, it's because of family breakdown, mental health issues or financial hardship.

The COVID-19 crisis has made things even more challenging for these students. Many of these students don't have access to quality remote learning, and more families are stressed and struggling than ever before.

**For 15 years, Skyline has supported Victoria's most talented young people, so they can complete high school and go on to realise their dreams. No matter their circumstances.**

This year, Skyline scaled up to reach more schools and students – especially those in rural, regional, and remote areas.

With the support of Bank of Melbourne Foundation's multi-year grant, 134 promising young people from 25 schools were given intensive help with their education, including costs, so they could stay in school. The students also received emotional support to build their self-confidence. And they were given extra tuition in person and online to grow their gifts and help them reach their full potential.

Together, we're giving Victoria's brightest students the best chance to thrive so that they can become the innovators and leaders of the future.



Image credit: Mel Hobbs



**“Through Skyline, I realised what the world has to offer me and what I have to offer it.”**

– 2020 student

## Most Skyline graduates go on to further study or into career pathways.

Many would not have completed high school without Skyline’s intensive, wraparound support.

### Skyline graduates say they:

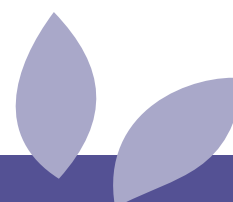
- see themselves as a person of value and worth
- have confidence in their academic ability
- are better able to pursue the career they want
- have stronger personal, organisational, and work-readiness skills
- wish to give back to their community through leadership and volunteer work



Image credit: The Age



Image credit: Mel Hobbs



**“Skyline relieved the financial burden on my family and provided me with a support network and friendships that have been more than valuable over the periods of isolation this year.”**

–2020 student

# Community Grants

Local community organisations are often too small to generate significant funding on their own and attract little assistance from the government. Yet, they are usually the closest and most essential to the children, families, and communities they help.

This is why Bank of Melbourne Foundation's Community Grants are so vitally important.

In 2021, more than \$630,000 was awarded in Community Grants to help grassroots organisations create a brighter future for Victorians in need.



# 100 Story Building

## Breaking down the barriers to creative learning.

Arts education helps children and young people build their literacy, critical thinking, empathy, and resilience. These benefits flow beyond students to teachers, schools, and the wider community.

**Yet, students in areas experiencing disadvantage often don't have the same access to an arts education as their peers – and this is reflected in poorer academic performance. Moreover, two years of lockdowns and pandemic hardships have widened the inequity.**

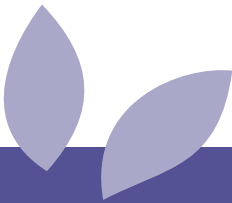
With a Community Grant from Bank of Melbourne Foundation, the social enterprise 100 Story Building, is tackling this problem.

The grant helped them pilot a new online creative learning portal to deliver on demand creative learning and live online workshops for 2,500 students and 80 teachers in areas of need across Victoria. The portal provides guided activities and videos for students, along with resources to help teachers develop students' creative thinking, self-confidence, and connection with others.

100 Story Building now hopes to expand the portal to reach up to 8,000 students across the state. With the help of our generous community, they're making sure distance and disadvantage don't stop children from expanding their horizons.



Image credit: Brendan Ternus



**The grant helped them pilot a new online creative learning portal for 2,500 students in areas of need across Victoria.**



# Big Group Hug


## Delivering clothing and care to teenagers in need.

COVID-19 has left many more teenagers across Melbourne in desperate circumstances. Their parents may be struggling just to buy groceries. Or they may be sleeping on friends' couches, with only a backpack to their name.

Big Group Hug is a volunteer-run service that delivers donated essentials to vulnerable children and families. But for too long, they've had to turn away families who need items for their teens.

This year, with the help of a Bank of Melbourne Foundation Community Grant, Big Group Hug launched one of Victoria's first mobile clothing services for teenagers experiencing disadvantage. Now young people can get the clothes and toiletries they need to go to a job interview, meet prospective flatmates, or feel more hopeful about life.

Support from Bank of Melbourne Foundation hasn't just brought new clothes to young people who are struggling. It's brought them greater confidence and wellbeing and is helping them look forward to a brighter future.



**This year, with the help of a Bank of Melbourne Foundation Community Grant, Big Group Hug launched one of Victoria's first mobile clothing services for teenagers experiencing disadvantage.**

# Eat Up Australia

## Filling children’s stomachs to change their futures.

Every day, around 1 in 8 children in Australia go hungry at school because their families can’t afford to give them lunch.

These children naturally struggle to concentrate or learn. As a result, they’re more likely to get sick, be absent from school and fall behind academically. In missing meals, they miss out on the chance that school offers to build better futures for themselves.

**With the help of Bank of Melbourne Foundation, Eat Up Australia delivered more than 160,000 free lunches to vulnerable primary and secondary students across Victoria in 2021.**

In a year when the pandemic has created more hardship and hunger across our community, the grant for Eat Up Australia has made a big difference. It’s helped them deliver not just school lunches but the fuel that every child needs to learn and realise their potential in life.



“Children who benefit from Eat Up Australia’s amazing work no longer have to think of a new excuse for why they don’t have a lunch. Their day is as ordinary and as special a day as the next kid, and that’s such a fantastic place to start for children of disadvantage.”

– Principal

# Fitted for Work

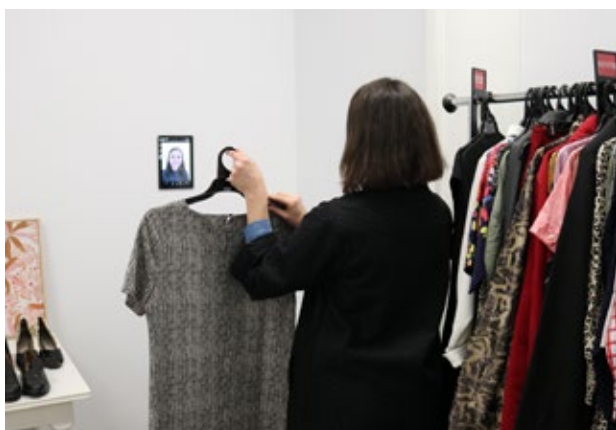
## Helping women back into work after COVID-19.

The pandemic has hit women’s incomes and job security hard, and women experiencing disadvantage are now far more likely to be without work or underemployed.

With a Community Grant from Bank of Melbourne Foundation, Fitted for Work is helping fast track 200 women back into the workforce.

Through online courses and webinars, women receive free training on everything from CV writing to career planning, which is then followed up with check-ins on Zoom.

**That’s helping women emerge from COVID-19 stronger and means they can re-enter the job market with confidence.**



**With a Community Grant from Bank of Melbourne Foundation, Fitted for Work is helping fast track 200 women back into the workforce.**

# K.I.D.S. Foundation

## Giving children comfort and hope after a severe injury.

Brothers Fletcher and Spencer were aged just eight and five when their father deliberately started a fireball that left them with devastating burns. They spent almost half a year in hospital, enduring surgeries and skin grafts and learning to talk, walk and eat again.

K.I.D.S. Foundation helps to support children like Fletcher and Spencer as they heal from a significant injury, burns or trauma – so they can rebuild their trust, their confidence, and their lives.

A Community Grant meant K.I.D.S. Foundation could deliver 100 Hospital Packs filled with books, journals, and soft toys to lift children’s spirits. If children were staying in hospital for a while, there was a comfy set of PJs and a dressing gown in there for them too.

The grant also helped fund Recovery Camps, where children like Fletcher and Spencer can get support and have fun with other kids who understand what they’ve been through.



**“It was at our first K.I.D.S. Foundation camp that I opened up and spoke about what happened for the first time. After that, we felt at home with this amazing group of survivors and K.I.D.S. Foundation staff and volunteers. The Foundation is our second family and has helped my sons regain confidence.**

– Fletcher and Spencer’s mum

# Servants Community Housing

## From home to hive: helping people start over with urban beekeeping.

The residents of Servants Community Housing finally have a safe roof over their heads. But they need help to rebuild their lives and self-worth after years of homelessness and trauma.

**Starting over isn't easy when you've never held down a stable job, or you struggle with addiction or have mental health issues that prevent you from working regular hours.**

With a Bank of Melbourne Foundation Community Grant, Servants Community Housing has piloted an urban beekeeping program, 'Home Sweet Comb'. In a peaceful outdoor group setting, residents have learned from a professional beekeeper how to build beehives and look after bees; this will soon allow residents to collect honey for the kitchen.

They've gained joy, confidence, and shared purpose in caring for the bees and contributing to food production for their community. The grant has made life sweeter for some of Melbourne's most vulnerable residents.



**“The bees have brought more interest to the house. I feel like we’re helping others, helping the environment. I love the bees!”**

– Resident, Andrew

# St Kilda Gatehouse

## Stepping up to keep more girls and young women safe.

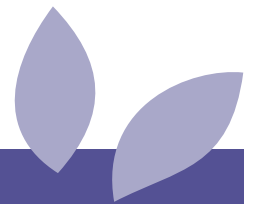
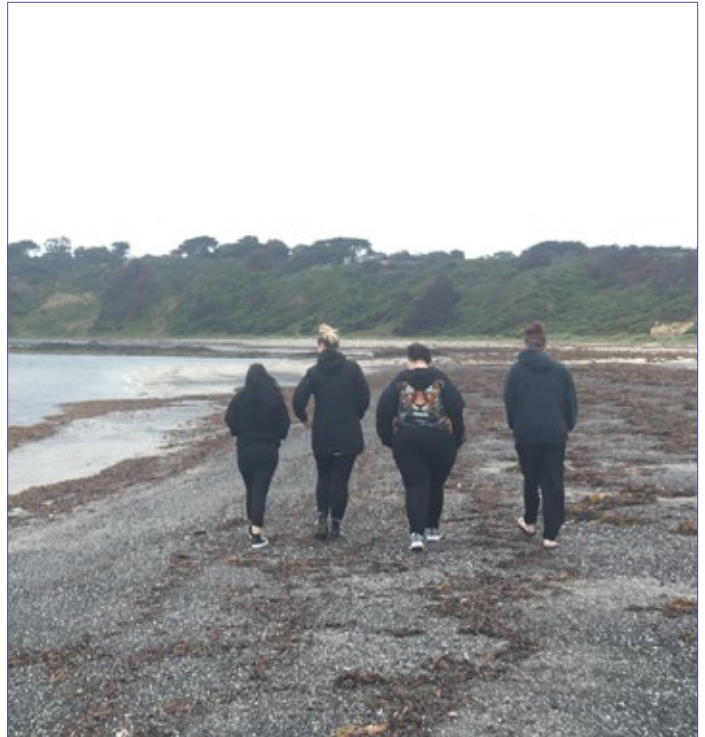
Since 2015, St Kilda Gatehouse has been working to protect girls and young women across our community from sexual exploitation.

Sadly, it's a growing problem in Greater Dandenong and surrounding areas, with high rates of early school leavers, unemployment and crime.

**Many girls and young women here have experienced trauma, violence, and family instability and are at risk of being exploited in the Dandenong street sex market.**

This year, with a Community Grant from Bank of Melbourne Foundation, St Kilda Gatehouse could expand its outreach and group support for vulnerable young women. They've intervened early and helped more girls and women escape exploitation and create safe, confident futures for themselves.

Our collective kindness has given young women back the hope that others have tried to destroy.



### How your support grew the Young Women's Project in 2021

- a Program Manager is employed two days a week
- 1:1 trauma-informed outreach support for up to 50 at-risk young women and girls
- 20-25 COVID-19 safe group sessions to enhance women's self-esteem, resilience and understanding of healthy relationships
- 1:1 sexual health education sessions

# The Venny

## Restoring joy and connection to children in lockdown.

Children who live in the North Melbourne and Flemington housing towers were experiencing disadvantage even before the COVID-19 crisis.

Then the city's extended lockdowns cut them off from school, sport, and the community.

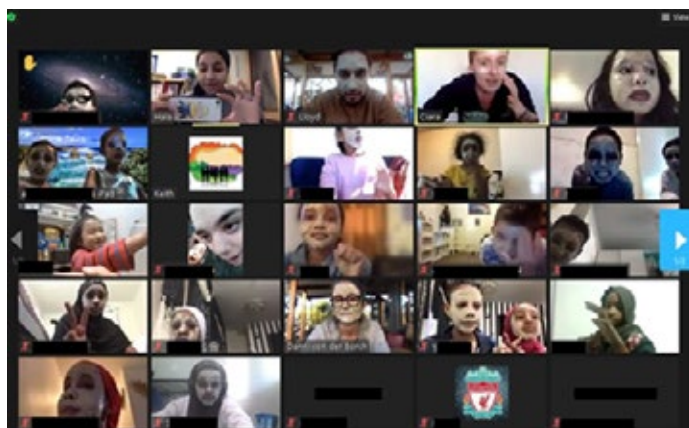
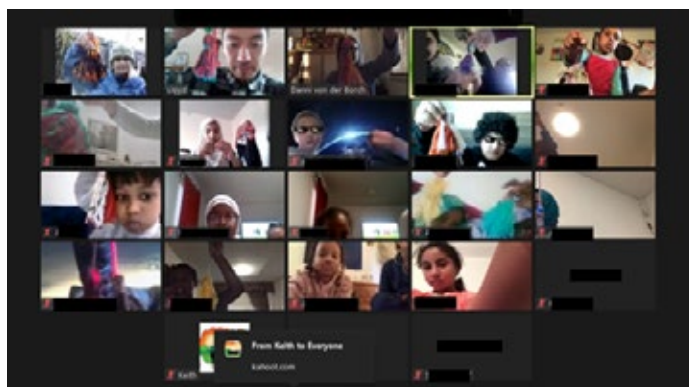
**For months, children were primarily confined in their flats with limited Wi-Fi and no room to play or run amid extended families of up to 10 people.**

Already struggling families were hit by job losses, COVID-19 outbreaks and extended lockdowns. So, it's no wonder children reported feeling lonelier, hopeless, and anxious.

The Venny is a shared backyard and adventure playground for children and teenagers in the nearby public housing towers. With the support of Bank of Melbourne Foundation, The Venny could bring vital extra support to these isolated children during the lockdowns.

More than 200 children and young people received weekly play packs and participated in creative activities such as puppet making, songwriting, storytelling, and dance. They performed over Zoom and at The Venny for their friends and family. Out of lockdown The Venny visited the North Melbourne and Flemington estates to bring play to the children.

**A grant brought the healing power of play to children who have been robbed of so much this year.**



**More than 200 children and young people received weekly play packs and participated in creative activities such as puppet making, songwriting, storytelling, and dance.**

# Ardoch

Distributed STEM (science, technology, engineering, and maths) School Readiness Packs to more than 3,000 kindergarten children across Victorian communities experiencing disadvantage.



Image credit - Haim Kadar, Magnet-Me

# The Babes Project

Equipped vulnerable women to manage life and parenting challenges through the Empowered Mamas Program.



# Lord Somers Camp and Power House

Youth leaders supporting families of children with a life-threatening illness through camp and respite programs.



# Open Table

Delivered much-needed, nutritious food relief to vulnerable residents across the north of Melbourne.



Image credit - Michelle Jarni



## Reading Out of Poverty

Brought accessible early-literacy tools to children and families facing disadvantage in Geelong.



## The Social Studio

Purchased vital new equipment so young people from refugee, asylum seeker and migrant backgrounds can continue to train in sewing and fashion.



## St Kilda Mums

Provided donated car seats, prams, and baby carriers to families experiencing severe socio-economic disadvantage.



Image credit - Britax

## Western Chances

Awarded scholarships to help 24 talented young people facing financial disadvantage so that they can complete high school, TAFE, or university.



# Thank you!

## Together we're making a difference

Bank of Melbourne Foundation would like to acknowledge every person who has helped create a brighter future for Victorians in need.

Just as we are grateful for our charity partners' extraordinary achievements every day, we are also thankful to our community and supporters. Everything we do, we do with sincere gratitude for your financial support and your friendship.

## Support us

Please help us to help our charity partners support communities across Victoria.

Every dollar you give helps people, families, and communities across Victoria to overcome hardship and build better futures.

100% of your donations go towards Bank of Melbourne Foundation's grant programs, and all donations over \$2 are tax-deductible.



Creative and print services  
proudly provided by

**ive**

## We're here if you need us

✉ [bomfoundation@bankofmelbourne.com.au](mailto:bomfoundation@bankofmelbourne.com.au)

💻 [info.bankofmelbourne.com.au/foundation](http://info.bankofmelbourne.com.au/foundation)

☎ 0459 807 112

📍 150 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

📌 Bank of Melbourne Foundation



