

## Message from the CEO



Image: At the launch of the Ian Potter Centre for Genomics and Personalised Medicine. Left to right: Prof. Doug Hilton, (Walter and Eliza Hall Institute), Prof. Graeme Ryan AC, Mrs Janet Hirst, Prof. Andrew Sinclair (Murdoch Childrens Research Institute), and Dr Thomas Hurley AO.

Last week we joined with Murdoch Childrens Research Institute and the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research to officially announce the launch of Australia's first research centre devoted to matching disease treatments to a person's genetic makeup. The Foundation's Board of Governors granted \$3 million to a collaboration between these two leading institutes to create the **Ian Potter Centre for Genomics and Personalised Medicine**. The new methods are expected to have a profound impact on the pace of research into cancer and other major health conditions and deliver significant improvements for patient outcomes. The centre will focus particularly on immune disorders and cancer, specifically juvenile arthritis, leukaemia, neural tumours and colon cancer. I invite you to learn more about this ground-breaking project in [this article](#), from The Age last week.

Later this year **Mr Frank Nelson** will retire from the Board of Governors of The Ian Potter Foundation, The Ian Potter Cultural Trust and The George Alexander Foundation. Mr Nelson joined the Board in 1979 and has been very generous with his time and advice over the years. Mr Nelson has supported us with advice on legal issues including legislation, grants to government bodies, eligibility under the deed of the Foundation and the taxation laws, and the new guidelines relating to public ancillary funds.

He was a member of the Foundation's History Committee, which met frequently when Dr Peter Yule was writing the biography of Sir Ian Potter, and he has spent many hours writing submissions to government on behalf of the Foundation. I know everyone in the IPF office joins with me in thanking Mr Nelson for his many contributions to the Foundation and in wishing him a wonderful retirement with his wife Wilma.



Janet Hirst

### Round Up

Highlights from the recent funding round. [Read more](#)

### Feature Stories

[Growing Wild at Melbourne Zoo](#)

### News and Events

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### Feedback

We hope you have enjoyed this issue of *the seahorse*. We welcome your comments and suggestions, please send them to the Editor at [seahorse@ianpotter.org.au](mailto:seahorse@ianpotter.org.au).

If there is someone else in your organisation this newsletter should go to, please [forward to a friend](#). If you do not wish to receive it in future, simply [unsubscribe](#) (but we hope you don't!).

## Round up

### Focus on Education

Education was high on the agenda at the Foundation's recent Board Meeting with five new education projects awarded grants amounting to \$1,550,000, from a total of \$4.36 million in new approved grants.

One of the largest of these was a grant of \$600,000 (over three years) to the **Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal** (FRRR) to support their **REAP Rewards Rural Education Program**. The project will establish a revised regional education grants program that will provide a funds 'bank' for schools, pre-schools and community organisations that support children and young people in their regional and rural communities. The funding will be directed towards three consolidated projects: The Back To School program; the Rural Early Childhood Education program and the Rural Education Program, which provides practical support for families such as back to school vouchers to assist families at the beginning of the school year.

A grant of \$600,000 to be paid over three years, was also made to **Hands-On Learning** (HOL). The grant will help to expand the HOL program (*pictured*) into nine new Victorian partner secondary schools in priority geographical areas. By 2015 this funding is expected to have assisted more than 200 disadvantaged young people to stay at school and realise their potential using this proven preventative approach. The HOL method works by recruiting students who are deemed at risk of disengaging, to take part in a regular hands-on practical learning program at their school. The students spend a full day learning trade-based skills and working on projects ranging from building pizza ovens to creating vegetable gardens or building seats. The program has recorded very positive results including increased student retention rates, attendance rates, behavioural improvements and a significant reduction in vandalism. The method has a proven record of engagement with HOL graduates recording an unemployment rate of 2.2 per cent in sharp contrast to the national unemployment rate for Australian youth of 10.8 per cent.

Continuing the Education theme, the **Pigeons Project** received a grant of \$135,000 through the Alec Prentice Sewell Gift. Pigeons assists children to improve their literacy skills and develop a passion for reading and writing. Pigeon's approach is to support teachers and cultivate creative partnerships between local public schools, authors and artists. This grant will help establish a centre for young writers in Melbourne's inner-west. To be known as **The 100 Story Building**, the centre will be a space where school-aged children from disadvantaged backgrounds will be given opportunities to foster their creative voice, to have their ideas shared and respected, and where they can work alongside creative members of the community in collaborative projects to develop their literacy skills, confidence and sense of belonging. It is hoped that the Centre will reach over 1,000 disadvantaged children and young people in its first year of operating, growing to reach more than 3,000 by its fifth year of operation.

## Music Matters

Fifteen organisations received grants totalling \$648,000 through our Arts program in this funding round, with the lion's share of this going to six of Australia's leading orchestras. This underscores the importance placed on supporting the growth and development of orchestras and their educational programs.

Notably, the Foundation's Board decided to commit multi-year funding to four excellent chamber music orchestras to help increase public awareness and understanding of chamber music and to promote the orchestral experience for more Australians to enjoy. The Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, The Australian Chamber Orchestra (*pictured*), Australian String Quartet and Brandenburg Ensemble each received grants to be paid over three years.

*Photo credit: Paul Henderson-Kelly*

## Meanwhile, in other programs...

In the Science program area, five grants were approved totalling \$139,000; while in Travel there were 23 new grants and 10 in Conference, with a combined total value of \$132,000.

A particularly promising project to come to the Board was **Berry Street's Stand By Me** program which received \$300,000 (over three years), through the Community Wellbeing program area. Berry Street is the largest foster care provider in Victoria and an active partner with government, other community service organisations and academics on a range of initiatives linked to young people at risk of homelessness. The **Stand By Me** project is an innovative approach to homelessness prevention focusing on young people who are leaving state out-of-home care and who are at risk of becoming homeless. Based on a proven model from the UK, it will provide young individuals with continuity of support through a key contact person, in addition to a range of services from mediation, mentoring, to assistance with accommodation. This project originates from a research report funded by the Foundation in



2010 into the needs of young individuals leaving out-of-home care. Following the publication of the report findings we hosted a forum with Berry Street and other philanthropic organisations to assess implementation options. This led to this recent grant, as well as a grant of \$300,000 from the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, with further funding in the pipeline.

There were a further nine grants awarded in Community Wellbeing totalling \$531,000.

Please visit our website for the [complete list of recent grants](#).

*Photo: Berry Street*

## The Cultural Trust

### Highlights of the round

The calibre of our Cultural Trust grantees never ceases to amaze and delight us. In the latest funding round 47 talented young artists received a share of \$290,000 in grants to help them pursue excellence in their artistic endeavours. See the [full list](#) of Cultural Trust grantees.

Daniel Kowalik, Thomas Chawner, Karol Kowalik and David Dalseno form the Orava string quartet (*pictured*) and have been offered the rare opportunity of undertaking a professional certificate in String Quartet at the University of Boulder, Colorado, USA. This graduate program for pre-professional quartets, is offered biennially to groups that 'exhibit the potential for a national and/or international performing career'. According to our reviewer, "They play so very well as a group and in a style that is far more mature and assured than one might expect." Stay tuned!

Filmmaker Marianna Shek received a grant to produce a short documentary for her honours research project at Griffith Film School. A former pharmacist, Marianna is currently a student at Griffith University's film school, majoring in scriptwriting. The grant will help her to create a ten-minute live action-animation hybrid documentary, on the subject of mail order brides, titled *Love and Other Commodities*. One of Australia's leading animation film-makers Dennis Tupicoff is assisting as her mentor. Marianna plans to promote the film at the Australian International Documentary Conference (AIDC) in 2013.

We wish all our CT grantees the very best with their projects - remember to send us a 'postcard' via our [Facebook](#) page!

*Photo credit: Allan Chawner*



### Spotlight on Coranderk

The largest remaining part of intact Yarra Valley floor forest, known as the Coranderk, is in urgent need of restoration. The area is home to around 10 per cent of Victoria's plant species and 264 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, frogs and fish. Coranderk has a rich indigenous history and features many sites of cultural heritage significance, including scar trees. The 2009 Victorian bushfires devastated much of the Yarra Valley and surrounding regions further elevating the significance of the area.

Zoos Victoria is the custodian of the 142 hectares of Coranderk land adjacent to Healesville Sanctuary and this restoration has become a priority project for the organisation. One of the first and most fundamental activities has been the erection of a feral animal-proof fence to prevent foxes, cats, rabbits and deer entering the reserve. Once these invasive species have been removed, the area will be secure for the reintroduction of a variety of native medium sized mammals and will allow the zoo's endangered species conservation program to use of the area as a 'soft-release' site.

In early September, Zoos Victoria invited supporters, including The Ian Potter Foundation, to attend a special event to celebrate the project's progress, including near-completion of the fence (which was funded by the Foundation) and the successful recruitment and training of two young interns from the indigenous community as part of the project team. This was also a chance to introduce potential new supporters to the Coranderk project and discuss the next steps in its delivery. In a speech at the event, Governor of The Ian Potter Foundation, Professor Tom Healy said, "In time it will be a place where our children and children's children can experience not only the indigenous flora and fauna, but also the place of Coranderk in our Aboriginal history."

We look forward to watching the gradual restoration of this unique landscape over the coming years. Best of luck to project manager, Mark Cairns and his team.



## In Other News

### Growing Wild at Melbourne Zoo

Back in town, the **Zoos Victoria** team at Melbourne Zoo are getting ready to unveil a new educational precinct which aims to foster early connections between children and wild places. Known as Growing Wild, the precinct is devoted to nurturing a love of nature in children aged 3 to 8 and their families. Growing Wild will provide a space for children to come face-to-face with animals in three zones – Ground, Trees and Water, to be built in three phases. The Ian Potter Foundation grant of \$450,000, made via the Alec Prentice Sewell Gift, helped build the Discovery Centre in Ground Zone. The precinct is a wonderful space designed to allow children direct contact with ground-dwelling animals, and a chance to explore their habitats.



Following an official launch on Thursday 20 September, Growing Wild will open to the public this weekend. Take advantage of free entry for kids these school holidays to get up close and personal in this very special hands-on educational experience.

*Photo credit: John Tsiavis*

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