

THE SEAHORSE



The newsletter of The Ian Potter Foundation and The Ian Potter Cultural Trust.

CEO'S UPDATE



At the fundraising dinner for The Ian Potter Children's Wild Play Garden in Centennial Park, Sydney. Left to right: landscape architect Sacha Coles, Janet Hirst and project ambassador, Costa Georgiadis.

Last Wednesday, I was at Parliament House in Canberra for Philanthropy Australia's inaugural *Philanthropy Meets Parliament Summit*, which brought together the philanthropic sector, political leaders and policy makers. There were several key note addresses, including the opening address by the Minister for Social Services, the Hon Scott Morrison MP. The Minister spoke about the work of the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership, and the Giving Australia 2015 research project, which will establish good baseline data to measure progress on philanthropic giving, and according to the Minister, a solid basis for policy decisions to encourage charitable giving in Australia.

The day included several keynote addresses and interactive panel discussions, with topics including *Philanthropy – An Agent for Systems Change* and *Parliamentary Perspectives on Philanthropy*. I moderated the first session of the day, on a topic I am passionate about – *Delivering Change through Effective Collaboration with Government*. The panel discussed specific case studies; how to ensure effective programs can be maintained through the political cycles; the essential ingredients for a successful philanthropy, business and government collaboration, and the benefits of successful collaborations.

I think it is fair to say that delegates came away from a very successful day feeling challenged and inspired, and appreciative of the opportunity to meet with policy makers, politicians and funders.

On September 10th, I joined several of our Governors, the Hon. Martin Foley MP, Minister for Creative Industries, and John Wylie, President of the Library Board of Victoria, at the *State Library of Victoria* for the announcement of the Foundation's \$10m grant to help restore and renovate the architecturally beautiful and significant Queen's Hall, which is to be known as The Ian Potter Queen's Hall. This is the Foundation's third largest grant in its 50 year history, and the largest in the area of Education.

The Hall has been closed to the public for ten years, and we are very excited that when the renovation is completed it will be open for everyone in the community and the reading room will be restored to its original splendour. The project aligns closely with the principles which have guided our funding for so many years – a commitment to excellence, partnerships and long-term thinking, considering the impact of the grant well beyond the period of our support. Social media was very busy after the announcement, and there was a sense of excitement and pride about the restoration of



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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

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!).

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the magnificent space. [Channel 7 news](#) covered the story, as did [The Age](#).

As you can see in the photo above, I recently attended a fundraising dinner at Centennial Park in Sydney for [The Ian Potter Children's Wild Play Garden](#). As part of our 50th Anniversary Commemorative Grants Program, the Foundation gave a grant of \$1.5 million to Centennial Parklands Foundation to establish the garden, which will offer a wide range of nature-based learning opportunities for children and their families, and will build the capacity of the Parklands' existing education programs. Together with the landscape architect and designer for the project, Sacha Coles, I was on stage answering probing questions posed by the Ambassador for the Garden, Costa Georgiadis. It was a successful night with a further \$50,000 being raised for the project.



Janet Hirst.

ROUND UP

113 NEW GRANTS, TOTALLING \$3.7 MILLION



Our most recent funding round saw 113 grants approved totalling \$3.7 million (seven are subject to some conditions). Forty-five of these were Travel grants of \$2,000 - \$3,000 to assist early-career academics and researchers to present their work at international conferences. In Community Wellbeing, 10 grants were approved, the largest being \$150,000 to [Rural Alive and Well](#) (RAW) to engage a specialist Community Resilience Facilitator who will extend Rural Alive and Well's existing suicide prevention outreach program through the implementation of local strategies designed to boost community partnerships, enlist stronger community participation in well-being initiatives, to significantly increase suicide prevention capacity building in order to boost community resilience and address the social isolation that leads to suicide in rural Tasmania.

The largest grants this round were made in our Environment & Conservation program area. [The Nature Conservancy](#) was awarded \$347,000 over three years to develop a framework for valuing the ecosystem services such as fish production, water filtration and riparian habitats, provided by South Eastern Australia's bays and estuaries. The project will develop whole-of-estuary mapping tools to support the planning and management of restoration activities for key habitats, such as mangroves, saltmarshes and shellfish reefs, in the Richmond River in Northern NSW and in Port Philip Bay in Victoria. [Bush Heritage Australia](#) received \$400,000 over three years for a multi-faceted program to reintroduce burrowing bettongs to Bon Bon Reserve in South Australia, which will contribute to development of a blueprint for future reintroductions of native species.

In the Arts, nine grants totalling \$539,000 were made, among them \$30,000 over two years to the [West Australian Youth Jazz Orchestra Association](#) to support their Young Women in Jazz Workshops, which aim to inspire women to play, study and pursue a professional career in jazz.

Through the Alec Prentice Sewell Gift we awarded a grant of \$240,000 over 3 years to [Kids Own Publishing](#). The grant will enable them to establish a social enterprise pop-up model at the Abbotsford Convent in Collingwood. The demountable space will be called the Grand Imaginarium (GI) and will provide creative storytelling workshops and programs for children and families during and around the school holidays. The project meets strongly with the goals of the Alec Prentice Sewell Gift, providing opportunities for disadvantaged children and young people to improve their literacy skills. The enterprise will engage over 8,000 children and young people in Victoria over the period of the grant.

In Science we awarded nine grants totalling \$620,000 in this round: two large grants were awarded and seven smaller grants (under \$50,000). One of the larger grants was to [Museum Victoria](#) to offer a third Ian Potter Fellowship for Biodiversity Research at the Museum for an early career researcher from 2016-2018. The Foundation has supported two previous fellowships at the Museum.

A full list of recent grants is available [on our website](#).

Image: Community outreach activities run by Rural Alive and Well include fishing trips (photo courtesy RAW)

ROUND UP

\$290K IN GRANTS TO 43 TALENTED ARTISTS



Forty-three new grantees joined the Cultural Trust family in our most recent funding round, sharing in grants totalling \$290,000. Among them is Tim Cole, a music producer who, for the past 10 years, has been involved in Indigenous arts projects holding key creative roles with music (producing & engineering) on films (sound design & soundtracks) and on the stage (concerts & theatre). He is now seeking to establish himself as a documentary filmmaker and has been awarded a grant of \$7,000.

Tim is interested in the cultures of the Austronesian Diaspora, a vast language group embracing nations and Indigenous cultures from Madagascar on the coast of Africa to Easter Island in the far eastern reaches of the Pacific Ocean. Through films, he plans to explore the musical heritage shared beyond the barriers of language, borders and cultural prejudices, paying particular attention to portraying the heritage of indigenous culture with the language of contemporary cultural expression.

Tim's project is in two parts: a residency at the Puranti Centre for the Arts in Ubud, Bali, and an intensive three-week mentorship with award winning Indonesian documentary filmmaker Ernest Hariyanto, learning about the practice of filming, directing, developing narrative structure and producing film content with and about Indigenous cultures on location. Afterwards he will travel to Rabaul, Papua New Guinea, to shoot the first segment of his film *Small Island, Big Song*.

Sharon Wong has been granted \$6,000 to undertake a postgraduate internship at the National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan, December 2015 - January 2016. She is currently completing her final year of postgraduate studies in the Master of Cultural Materials Conservation at the University of Melbourne, and this will be a fantastic opportunity for her to learn restoration techniques applied to Chinese furnishings and develop practical skills and knowledge in the conservation of Chinese art.

Sharon's passion is in the conservation of objects from Asian cultural and decorative art. Her dedication towards her goals has seen her achieve fluency in the Japanese language (along with her native Mandarin and English); undertake a number of relevant volunteer and student work projects for professional bodies and at her university, and spend a year in Japan on a scholarship.

Congratulations to each and every one of our Cultural Trust grantees ([see our website for the full list](#)) - we wish you safe travels and wonderful experiences and look forward to hearing your stories.

Image: Artist at work. Applying a 5% Paraloid B72 in acetone isolation layer onto the surface of the material used to infill the hole in the handle of a modern reproduction Peranakan porcelain spoon. Sharon Wong, July 2015.

FEATURE STORIES

VALE JOHN GOUGH AO, OBE (1928 - 2015)

The Governors and staff of the Foundation were deeply saddened by the recent passing of Mr John Gough. John was a Governor of the Foundation from 1994 until 2011. He brought great distinction to his Governorship and served on a number of committees over his years on the Board. Remembered as a man of integrity and vision, John played a pivotal role in bringing a number of the Foundation's most significant grants to the Board, including large grants to the National Gallery of Victoria, National Portrait Gallery, The Treasures Gallery at the National

Library of Australia, The Sydney Institute of Marine Science (SIMS), and Lizard Island Reef Research Foundation.

We remember Mr Gough's considered and thoughtful advice, his kindness and his good humour. He was a true gentleman who will be missed by many.

All of us at the Foundation express our sincere condolences to his wife Rosemary, his three children and his grandchildren.



FEATURE STORIES

PROF BRIAN SCHMIDT AC JOINS BOARD

Renowned astrophysicist, Nobel Laureate Professor Brian Schmidt AC has joined the Foundation's Board of Governors. Professor Schmidt is the 25th Governor to be appointed to the Board in the Foundation's 50 year history.

"We are delighted that Brian has accepted our invitation to join the Board of Governors," said chairman, Mr Charles Goode. "His extraordinary knowledge and achievements in science and education will be of great benefit to our consideration of grants in several areas. It's important that our Board has representation from a wide range of fields, reflecting the Foundation's broad interests in the community, from the arts to medical research, through to science and the environment." Professor Schmidt will also serve as a Trustee of The Ian Potter Cultural Trust and a Governor of The George Alexander Foundation.

Commenting on his new role, Professor Schmidt said, "The Ian Potter Foundation is the premier philanthropic foundation in a number of areas dear to my heart, including education, the environment, science and the arts. I understand how valuable well-directed philanthropic funds can be. It is an honour to have the opportunity to give back in this way, to a country that has given me so much."

Image: Prof Brian Schmidt at ANU, photo by Stuart Hay



NEWS AND EVENTS

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

SURVEY OF CULTURAL TRUST GRANTEES

Having supported more than 1300 individual artists with grants totalling over \$6 million since 1993, our Trustees were keen to know how many of these grantees had continued to work in the Arts and to what extent their overseas experience - supported by the Trust - had influenced their career path.

In July we conducted a survey of past grantees to investigate these questions and were delighted to receive a strong response of over 300 replies. The responses showed that 96 per cent are still working in the arts sector - 64 per cent full time and 32 percent part time.

The survey also asked the grantees how the experience assisted in the development of their careers. Overall the respondents rated the importance of the grant to their career as 4.6 out of 5. There was some variation between arts practices with Media and Film artists expressing the highest rating (4.87) and Literature grantees the least, still rating the significance of the grant on their career at 4.1 out of 5.



Asked to nominate the most valuable outcome of their grant, the respondents identified knowledge/learning about their artistic practice as the most valuable; networking and connections second, and third listing the award on their CV.

Importantly, 40 per cent of respondents had shared their learning via formal workshops or mentoring and a further 55 per cent had done so informally. Respondents consistently acknowledged their Cultural Trust grant for allowing the completion of study, which then led to employment, often in a specialised field.

When asked to describe their accomplishments to date, the responses were impressive, particularly in the music and multimedia areas. The achievements also illustrate that while some of our early grantees are clearly top of their field, the amount of time that has lapsed since the grant does not necessarily correspond to the strength of the achievements.

There was great appreciation of travel to an enormous range of destinations including Russia, India and Beijing, and a vast array of opportunities. Responses followed a common theme of pursuing or establishing careers overseas before returning to Australia for the benefit of our vibrant art scene.

Our thanks to all the respondents for taking the time to complete the survey, and in many cases taking the opportunity to tell us stories of your career and experiences since your grant. The responses make it clear that the Cultural Trust grants are making a genuine contribution to the careers of our country's talented artists and to the wider Arts sector as well.