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Media Release

Chief Minister's Charitable Fund, the Snow Foundation, John James Foundation

Canberra foundations unite against Covid-19 - \$500k in grants for local charities

The Covid-19 Rapid Response Grant Round was opened on Friday by Canberra community foundations: the Chief Minister's Charitable Fund (administered by Hands Across Canberra), The Snow Foundation, and the John James Foundation.

The foundations have joined forces to deliver a collaborative community response and distribute an initial \$500,000 to local non-profit organisations affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Diane Kargas Bray AM, Chair of Hands Across Canberra and the Chief Minister's Charitable Fund ACT charities, said the foundations are encouraging local charities to apply for small grants from \$1-15,000 and medium grants up to \$25 000.

"Today we open the Covid-19 Rapid Response Grant Round which will inject funds into the community sector to support and enable the wonderful work they do during this uncertain time," Diane Kargas Bray AM said.

"We listened to our community sector and heard that everyone is facing challenges due to COVID-19. In the past two weeks, local community organisations have grappled with simultaneously adjusting their work environments for the safety of staff and volunteers—and dealing with a surge in demand for their services."

Georgina Byron, CEO of The Snow Foundation (a family foundation that focuses on supporting the Canberra community, the surrounding region and beyond) said that this is how we work, by teaming with others to get the best collective response, and in this case to help those impacted by COVID-19.

"By injecting half a million dollars into local community charities, we are providing support to the Canberra community in the quickest and most effective way we can," Georgina Byron said.

"Collaboration is needed now more than ever to strengthen community organisations and charities to be able to continue to operate and help those in need, especially where demand has increased significantly."

Steve Coster, Uniting Care Kippax, was tasked with taking the lead on the community sector response to the COVID-19 crisis.

"It is paramount that we keep the services running as much as possible. There is already increased demand for food and essentials in our Emergency Food and Material Aid program due to the scarcity and increased cost of products with the current coronavirus panic shopping," Steve Coster said.

Joe Roff, the John James Foundation (an independent broad-based healthcare charity providing a range of programs and assistance to the people of Canberra and beyond), said that they were committed to provide flexible resources to organisations in Canberra and the nearby region.



“We are working with communities who are disproportionately impacted by the consequences of the pandemic. This cooperative response is the exact role that community foundations should play in serving our region,” Mr Roff said.

Hands Across Canberra is an independent philanthropic community foundation, working with more than 250 local community organisations. Funds for this grant round are being provided by the Chief Minister’s Charitable Fund which is delivered in partnership with Hands Across Canberra.

“We don’t know how long disruption will continue, but we know that vulnerable people in our community will be impacted more than others. We stand with local organisations that serve our most vulnerable citizens—and we will keep supporting you through this time of crisis,” Diane Kargas Bray AM said.

Grant applications, criteria and guidelines can be found at

<https://www.handsacrosscanberra.org.au/>

Applications are open now and close midnight 10 April 2020.

Media contacts:

Peter Gordon, CEO HAC – 0417064767

Tim Dawson, The Snow Foundation (CAG) – 0455227711

Joe Roff CEO John James Foundation – 0488389462