



Snow Entrepreneurs  
fellowships for social change



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### The Snow Foundation Empowers Nine Visionary Social Entrepreneurs

25 October 2023: The second cohort of the *Snow Entrepreneurs – fellowships for social change* program has been announced, with nine visionary, social impact start-up leaders selected. The recipients will share in grants totalling \$1.5 million and enjoy extensive capacity-building support.

In addition to \$100-200k each in philanthropic funding, the Snow Entrepreneurs receive comprehensive wrap-around support, including a three-day leadership recharge, mentoring and tailored advisory services through Social Impact Hub, a 12-week Antler Founders program, and invaluable peer cohort engagement and connections.

“These fellowships honour our own entrepreneurial beginnings and those of our Founder, Terry Snow AM. We have a long history of supporting and maintaining long-term partnerships with passionate up-and-coming entrepreneurs who are looking to solve problems in new ways,” The Snow Foundation CEO Georgina Byron AM said.

“These remarkable leaders and changemakers are deeply committed and have a realistic potential for impact”, Ms Byron added. “Many of them are motivated by their own lived experience to develop innovative solutions that help address gaps.”

In this year’s cohort, almost all of the selected fellows bring lived experience to their initiatives, showcasing a personal connection to the issues they aim to tackle. In addition, their initiatives address a diverse range of critical issues, including disability (2), employment pathways (3), domestic violence/homelessness (2), education (2), and mental health (2).

Nicole Dyson, Founder and CEO of Future Anything and new Snow Entrepreneurs said, “being a founder sometimes feels like you’re stuck in a really bad line dance; constantly taking two steps forward, and one step back over and over again.

“Being a Snow Entrepreneur means a complete step change in my growth as a leader, and the impact of my organisation. It means being able to step back from the ‘busy’ long enough to work ‘on’ the business, rather than ‘in’ the business. And, perhaps most importantly, it is humbling recognition that the work that I am leading is important.”

#### The nine recipients:

- **RoboFit (Vigor Technologies) | Maryanne Harris – Disability; Wollongong, Sydney, Brisbane:** RoboFit helps mobility-impaired patients explore what is possible by harnessing new and emerging technologies like neuro-controlled exoskeletons. Co-founders Maryanne Harris and her husband Daniel Hillyer, who experienced paralysis due to an accident, aim to increase accessibility to this technology for those who need it.
- **SpendAble | Reece Miller – Disability / Aged Care; Melbourne / National:** SpendAble protects vulnerable people from financial abuse. Founder Reece Miller seeks to give people the opportunity to control their own money safely and independently regardless of age or disability.
- **Foremind | Joel Anderson – Mental Health; Canberra / National:** Foremind is on a mission towards zero suicide by making mental health and wellbeing support affordable for businesses of every size. Founder Joel Anderson, driven by his own experience, aims to break down barriers to mental health support.

- **Future Anything | Nicole Dyson – Education; Brisbane / National:** Future Anything is on a mission to create enterprising students, empowered educators and future-ready schools. Founder Nicole Dyson aims to engage students and prepare them for a rapidly changing world.
- **ReLove | Renuka Fernando – Domestic Violence / Homelessness; Sydney:** ReLove’s goal is to break the cycles of poverty experienced by women and children impacted by domestic violence and homelessness as they access safe housing. Co-founders Renuka Fernando and Ben Stammer and their team walk alongside families to fully furnish their homes with everything they need to restart their lives.
- **Scriibed | Melanie Greblo – Domestic Violence / Employment Pathways; Sydney / National:** Scriibed helps women rebuild their lives after abuse by training and employing them in the digital economy. Founder Melanie Greblo offers digital services to corporate and government clients, creating opportunities for women.
- **Youngster.co | Tony Rothacker – Life Skills / Employment Opportunities; NSW Central Coast / National:** Youngster.co creates job opportunities and life skills through young people teaching older adults tech skills. Co-founders Tony Rothacker and his son Finn aim to reduce loneliness and build stronger communities through intergenerational connections.
- **Deadly Runners | Georgia Weir – Health / Mental Health; NSW South Coast / National:** Deadly Runners is a grassroots running club for First Nations people, promoting physical and mental wellbeing. Founder Georgia Weir's personal journey with running and addiction fuels her mission.
- **Hold Access | Jason-Urranndulla Davis – Indigenous; Darwin / National:** Hold Access offers a digital wallet and physical card for secure identification, benefiting First Nations and others. Founder Jason Davis, with extensive experience in Indigenous policy and programs, addresses a critical issue of under-documentation which poses a barrier to employment and education.

The Snow Foundation has a long history of supporting people who have a drive to make the world a better place, through innovative social enterprises. “The Foundation, and our family, remain committed to fostering innovation and positive change in the social sector and the community in general, now and into the future,” Ms Byron concluded.

For more details, visit [www.snowfoundation.org.au](http://www.snowfoundation.org.au)

### **The Snow Foundation - 33 years of giving**

- Total giving \$78 million
- 2022/23 giving: \$9.5 million
- Current corpus size: \$150 million
- # Organisations supported: 470+
- # Individuals: 580+

**Media contact:** Chris Wagner 0434 378 939



### **From strength to strength – case studies from the 2022 Snow Entrepreneur cohort**

Success stories from last year's cohort show the importance of the Fellowship program in helping to establish social enterprises that make a real impact to disadvantaged Australians.

**Joe Kwon from Confit Pathways** has seen significant growth for his social enterprise, focussed on reducing the re-incarceration rate in Australia by helping incarcerated and formerly incarcerated young people develop a positive attitude and mindset around the value of employment and education.

To date, 535 young people have been mentored through programs in 5 Youth Justice centres across NSW, with 390 of these occurring since Joe joined the Snow Entrepreneurs program in May 2022. Joe's team of mentors has also grown from 3 to 8.

Snow Foundation support has enabled the development of a business plan, financial model and impact framework and supported improved governance and an expanded Board. This activity has been instrumental in enabling Confit Pathways to raise significant additional funding from Paul Ramsay Foundation and others over \$940,000. This additional funding will enable the opening of a social enterprise gym in Parramatta later this year.

“The Snow entrepreneur fellowship has not only provided the much-needed financial support but also the various professional support I desperately needed to grow our organisation,” Joe's Kwon said. “We now have a robust impact measurement framework, better understanding of navigating government relations and establishing a social enterprise business model allowing us to be financially self-sufficient, and not to mention all the great networks we get access to.”

**Pia Clinton-Tarestad from the Clean Slate Clinic** is another Snow Entrepreneur from last year. The organisation focusses on allowing people to detox from alcohol from home. 320 patients have been detoxed to date, 250 of these since Pia joined the program in May 2022. Of these participants, only 5% have relapsed in the three months post-detox, compared with 50% for traditional in-person detox approaches.

In addition, with the assistance of the program, Pia has established Partnerships with Indigenous health organisations, domestic violence support services and Bupa to provide pathways into detox and recovery. Participation in the Snow Entrepreneurs fellowship enabled Pia to become full-time as the CEO, grow the clinical team from 5 to 16 and back-office staff from 2 to 5.2FTE

“Quite simply Clean Slate Clinic wouldn't be here today without the support of the Snow Foundation. Looking back it was perhaps naïve of us to set up a brand-new clinical service, from scratch, with nothing other than an idea of how the model could work and an absolute passion to provide better access, to better addiction treatment,” Pia Clinton-Tarestad said.

“But the Snow Foundation believed in our mission and in us, and provided (and continues to provide) the most amazing support to help us grow and develop the service and team from an initial pilot into the scale-up phase we are now in. Anything we have needed, from funding to professional development support, to expert advice, to the community, they have provided it – often before we even realised we needed it. They are our Snow angels, and we will be forever grateful to have them in our corner.”



## 2023 Snow Entrepreneurs

### *Key highlights of the second cohort*

**Lived Experience:** Seven of the selected fellows bring either direct or indirect lived experience to their initiatives, showcasing a personal connection to the issues they aim to tackle.

**Diversity:** The cohort boasts gender balance, with five female and four male entrepreneurs. Additionally, it includes two Indigenous individuals and two from multicultural backgrounds, highlighting the program's commitment to diversity and inclusivity.

**Geographic Impact:** All initiatives have a focus on benefiting communities in the ACT and NSW, as well as other states, with many possessing the potential to scale nationally.

**Revenue Generation:** Each of the nine initiatives incorporates revenue-generating business models, emphasising sustainability and self-sufficiency.

**Regional Presence:** The organisations are located across various regions, including five in NSW, three in regional areas, and one each in Victoria, ACT, Queensland, and the Northern Territory.

**Diverse Focus Areas:** The initiatives in this year's cohort address a diverse range of critical issues, including disability (2), employment pathways (3), domestic violence/homelessness (2), education (2), and mental health (2).