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Media Release

Canberra Foundations Collaborative opens grant round with \$1 million for local community organisations

The Canberra Foundations Collaborative, a partnership between Snow Foundation, Hands Across Canberra and the John James Foundation, has opened its fifth joint grant round, with **\$1 million available** to support community organisations working to improve outcomes for people across the ACT region.

Expressions of Interest are open now and close 27 February 2026.

Most grants range from \$5,000 to \$50,000, with larger or multi-year grants considered for significant initiatives. Grant sizes vary depending on the nature and scale of the project, and each foundation's giving approach.

Since launching in 2021, the Collaborative has provided more than \$6.8 million to more than 310 community projects, supporting local organisations working in areas such as mental health, disability, housing, family violence, healthcare and community connection

This fifth round continues the Collaborative's commitment to streamlined, accessible philanthropy, with a two-stage application process designed to save applicants time while supporting strong, impact-driven projects.

Evolving our Grant Making

In 2026, the Collaborative is building on a grant awarded in 2025 that helped establish the first **ACT Youth Parliament**, supporting 25 young people aged 16–25 to draft, debate and present policy ideas in the ACT Legislative Assembly, and to build leadership, confidence and civic participation.

As one example of how the Collaborative continues to evolve its grant making approach, members of Youth Parliament's newly formed committee will review this year's Expressions of Interest for projects that directly affect young people. Their feedback will help inform shortlisting and funding decisions for youth-focused initiatives.

"Youth Parliament was created to give young people a genuine voice in decisions that affect their lives and their communities," Kobi Stray, Youth Coordinator, ACT Youth Parliament (YMCA Canberra)

said. “Being involved in reviewing projects that impact young Canberrans is a meaningful opportunity to contribute our perspectives.”

This is the first time the Collaborative has formally involved a structured community group in reviewing Expressions of Interest, strengthening how community perspectives are considered early in the funding process.

“Bringing our voices into this process will strengthen the quality of decisions being made and help ensure funded projects are grounded in real community need,” Kirsty Dixon, CEO of YMCA said.

Two online information sessions will be held for interested organisations on 11 and 17 February; these sessions will cover eligibility, assessment criteria, and tips for submitting a strong Expression of Interest.

New Collaborative website

The Canberra Foundations Collaborative has launched a new website at www.canberrafoundations.org the site will provide up-to-date information on funding guidelines, past grant recipients, events and resources for community organisations.

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About the Canberra Foundations Collaborative

Hands Across Canberra

Canberra’s community foundation, working with over 350 local organisations to grow giving and ensure support reaches those who need it most. Hands Across Canberra supports a broad range of local charities and community organisations addressing disadvantage across the ACT. Its focus is on connection, inclusion and strengthening the community sector through grants, capacity-building programs and partnerships.

*The **Snow Foundation** is a family philanthropic foundation committed to place, country and community. Their purpose is to create lasting social change by building strong communities and forging fair systems. The Foundation’s focus spans five interconnected themes — Gender, First Nations, Youth, LGBTQ+, Community, underpinned by Ecosystem — investing in and working alongside initiatives and leaders that advance equity and strong leadership across Australia.*

*The **John James Foundation** is Canberra’s largest medical philanthropic charity, with a mission to strengthen health outcomes and support the local community. It supports healthcare access, medical services, and community programs that strengthen wellbeing and contribute to the broader community good.*

Media contacts:

The CEOs of Hands Across Canberra, the Snow Foundation and the John James Foundation are available for interview on request.

Genevieve Jacobs – Hands Across Canberra – 0428 432 621

Chris Wagner, Media - Snow Foundation - 0434 378 939

Nathalie Maconachie - John James Foundation – 0412 341 117