

Project UHF radios for first aid volunteer vehicles in regional and rural Victoria	Amount \$19,026	www stjohnvic.com.au	Program Rural and Regional Victoria <small>Under our new grants structure, Rural and Regional Victoria is now Regional Resilience.</small>
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TRUST OBJECTIVES	PROJECT OBJECTIVES
Rural and regional Victoria	Provide first aid emergency services to communities across rural and regional Victoria.
Building capacity	UHF radios enable essential communication for rapid response to natural disasters and at community events.
Extending opportunity	Protect the rights of remote communities to quality first aid services.



St John volunteers come in loud and clear on new UHF radios

The St John Ambulance has been a vital feature of the Victorian landscape for more than 125 years. Victoria's leading first aid training organisation, it has a large force of qualified and trained volunteers providing first aid and support to communities across the state. St John had its own emergency in January 2013, when a change in government channel allocations meant existing UHF radios in volunteers' vehicles could not access the new channels.



IMAGE A new lifeline for volunteers.

St John Ambulance volunteers play a vital role in emergencies throughout the state, providing a rapid response to local communities when natural disasters strike. About 30 of its 70 divisions are now located in regional and rural Victoria, where they're also a familiar sight at thousands of community events each year. Radio communications are key both to the safety of volunteers and to the contact between St John Ambulance units and other emergency services. New equipment is particularly important to volunteers in the country, as communication outages are common when natural disasters strike. But when changes were announced to government channel allocations from January 2013, the ambulance service faced a bill of more than \$73,000 to update radios which could no longer access the new channels.

PROJECT AIMS

Purchase UHF radios for first aid vehicles operating in regional Victoria to:

- > Allow access to the new communication channels
- > Overcome communication outages
- > Facilitate contact between units and other emergency services
- > Ensure smooth coordination of services at community events.

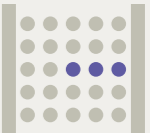
Marketing, Communications and Development Manager, Martin Wells, says St John Ambulance faced a "show stopper" over the radios ceasing to work. "The Trust provided funding which saved the day," he says.

The radios, which are now installed and working smoothly, also provide a lifeline to St John's command and control structure.

The communications re-equipment has been completed with the rolling out of new mobile first aid posts, which include hand-held devices for volunteers working at a distance from their post.

Project Helping Hoops Inc	Amount \$8,500	www helpinghoops.com.au	Program Education and Vocational Training <small>Under our new grants structure, Education and Vocational Training is now Education and Vocational Pathways.</small>
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TRUST OBJECTIVES	PROJECT OBJECTIVES
Building capacity	Engage and retain migrant and refugee children and youth in education. Connect their families to welfare and community programs and develop social networks.
Extending opportunity	Provide free access to a structured social and support network for disadvantaged youth and their families.
Collaboration and partnership	Establish partnerships with local government, police and other organisations.



Vulnerable kids get right on the ball with Helping Hoops

Operating with a tiny budget, a large amount of goodwill and very effective partnerships, the independent Melbourne charity Helping Hoops operates a free weekly basketball program for refugee children at the Atherton Gardens public housing estate in Fitzroy. Basketball skills are taught in a fun atmosphere, and the program helps develop a range of life skills and connections for vulnerable children and their families.



IMAGE Helping Hoops in action at the Atherton Gardens public housing estate.

While Helping Hoops Inc has been running free weekly indoor basketball programs for disadvantaged children since 2010, the Helping Hoops Fitzroy project was the first to be established outdoors on a public housing estate. "We were invited to launch the program by the Fitzroy Police Youth Resource Officers," says Helping Hoops Executive Director Adam McKay. "The challenges of this open housing estate were big, but the potential was also incredibly exciting." A former professional basketball player and fully accredited coach was appointed to run two one-hour sessions each week, assisted by up to four Fitzroy police and elders of the African-Australian community.

PROJECT AIMS

In addition to developing basketball skills in children aged eight to 15, aims were to:

- > Build self-esteem
- > Develop leadership, discipline and teamwork skills
- > Teach respect of self, team mates and officials
- > Build trust
- > Promote social inclusion
- > Provide exercise and promote an active lifestyle.

Regular contact with the core group of around 20 children means Helping Hoops has become a positive influence on and off the basketball court, and ensures children's and families' needs are being met in welfare, social services and education.

Other key outcomes include staging a Helping Hoops Fitzroy Tournament, attendance at Melbourne Tigers basketball games, reducing cultural resistance to girls' participation in sports and a new collaboration with an arts program so children can create personal artworks on their basketball court.

Helping Hoops Fitzroy has provided a template for expansion into other public housing estates, with Richmond already established and programs planned for Collingwood and Flemington.

Park Lane Nursery

Project Shadehouse renewal project	Amount \$24,590	www parklanenursery.com.au	Program Rural and Regional Victoria <small>Under our new grants structure, Rural and Regional Victoria is now Regional Resilience.</small>
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TRUST OBJECTIVES	PROJECT OBJECTIVES
Rural and regional Victoria	Australian Disability Enterprise based in Wangaratta.
Building capacity	Build the capacity of the nursery to increase its current annual production of 300,000 native tubestock.
Extending opportunity	Expand shadehouse project to increase training and employment opportunities for people with a disability.
Collaboration and partnership	Partnerships developed with local organisations including the Community Work Crew from the Beechworth Community Facility and local building suppliers.



Reconstruction of shadehouse the highest priority of infrastructure requirements

Park Lane Nursery is a highly successful social enterprise of North East Training and Employment Inc (NETE), a not-for-profit disability enterprise which provides employment, training and social inclusion opportunities for people with disabilities.



IMAGE Room to grow in the new shadehouse.

Since its establishment 21 years ago, the nursery has trained and employed about 70 people. It also has lifestyle programs, including customer contact in the retail nursery, for those with higher needs. Operating from leased premises on a 3ha site in Wangaratta, Park Lane Nursery has long-established clients in the commercial revegetation markets, with many large forward contracts in place. The retail nursery also caters for smaller individuals and organisations.

A 2012 strategic plan identified infrastructure upgrades and investment as essential to the nursery's continuing success. Reconstruction and relocation of a large 18-year-old shadehouse would also provide space for retail expansion, another initiative identified in the plan.

"The nursery has grown in fits and starts," says Park Lane Nursery CEO, Scott Grant. "One of the issues identified was the need for workflow management. By relocating and rebuilding the shadehouse we have achieved a really cohesive flow between our operations shed, the poly houses and the shadehouses right next door."

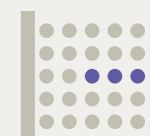
PROJECT AIMS

- > Salvage much of the steel and relocate 40m
- > Attract generous discounts from local suppliers for new materials
- > Arrange volunteers to undertake appropriate work
- > Include new concrete paths, multi-function benches and a new irrigation system
- > Involve other community groups, such as the community work crew from the Beechworth Correctional Facility.

Victoria University

Project Harvester Technical College and disadvantaged students	Amount \$100,000	www vu.edu.au	Program Education and Vocational Training <small>Under our new grants structure, Education and Vocational Training is now Education and Vocational Pathways.</small>
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TRUST OBJECTIVES	PROJECT OBJECTIVES
Building capacity	Support upwards of 200 Year 10 and 11 disadvantaged Harvester Technical College students to stay engaged and complete their course.
Extending opportunity	VU students support younger, disadvantaged Harvester students. Regular breakfasts, mentorship, employment advice and social contact.
Collaboration and partnership	Partnerships developed with Visy Cares Hub, Kellogg's Vic Relief, Second Bite and Brimbank Local Learning and Employment Network.



New Youth Work Centre improves education and employment outcomes for disadvantaged youth

Harvester Technical College delivers VCAL (Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning) and VET (Vocational Education and Training) programs to many disadvantaged western suburbs students who are at risk of failing to complete their basic education. Established by the western region's Victoria University (VU) and supported by university student mentors, the new Harvester Youth Work Centre encourages students to improve their education outcomes, community connections and employment opportunities.



IMAGE Role models and mentoring are key to the project.

Completion of basic education is essential if disadvantaged young students are to achieve further education success, improve their community connections, develop personal skills and ultimately find employment.

Believed to be the first model of its kind, the Harvester Youth Work Centre brings together a range of competing needs in a win-win situation, according to Victoria University (VU) Associate Professor Robyn Broadbent, who coordinates VU degrees in youth work and youth service management.

"We have western suburbs young people moving through their university degrees who need experience and practical work, while Harvester College has a diversity of young people who can really benefit in education from role models, mentors and extra programs," she says.

The project includes development of a student representative council, a student action team to coordinate programs including a breakfast club, weekly lunch day, cooking, health and nutrition programs for all year 10 and 11 students plus weekly employment assistance. Students participate in leadership programs, health and wellbeing workshops, a community project pilot and outdoor activities.

PROJECT AIMS

- > 70% student participation in 2013
- > 80% of Harvester students connected with a VU student
- > A Youth Work kit to enable development of a sustainable, replicable project
- > Connect the college to other education resources and community services
- > Equip students to cope with a range of educational barriers
- > Ensure all students start the day with breakfast (20% currently don't).

The project may well have a wider impact, with a national alternative education program already interested in developing a similar model with VU.

Project New Aboriginal Filmmaker Training Production Initiative 2013	Amount \$25,000	www openchannel.org.au	Program Education and Vocational Training <small>Under our new grants structure, Education and Vocational Training is now Education and Vocational Pathways.</small>
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TRUST OBJECTIVES	PROJECT OBJECTIVES
Rural and regional Victoria	Train Aboriginal filmmakers from regional Victoria.
Indigenous Victoria	Experienced professional Indigenous filmmakers work with new Indigenous filmmakers resulting in the production of six 15-minute films around cultural themes.
Building capacity	4-month course leads to Certificate III in Media qualification.
Extending opportunity	Deliver an otherwise unattainable opportunity for screening on national SBS NITV and at the St Kilda Film Festival.
Collaboration and partnership	Partners include Koorie Heritage Trust, SBS TV and Victorian Government's Higher Education and Skills Group.



New Aboriginal filmmakers trained for production of short films for SBS NITV

A new core of Indigenous filmmakers is being built in Victoria through the 2013 relaunch of the New Aboriginal Filmmaker Training Production program. It is an initiative of Open Channel, a not-for-profit film and television organisation which supports emerging filmmakers. First piloted in 2009, the program is being conducted by established Aboriginal filmmakers. Around a dozen new students in Victorian regional areas are being trained in a range of production skills as they create six 15-minute films for national broadcast on SBS NITV in 2014.



IMAGE
Students in the Indigenous filmmaking course.

The program will bring to life a diversity of stories, including the Aboriginal Advancement League, reconnecting with storylines and language revival (there are between 20 and 30 language groups in Victoria).

A core group of six students is being trained, but around a dozen participants are learning a range of production skills. The program includes weekend workshops, regional and online training delivery and production support, with cultural support for story development provided by the Koorie Heritage Trust.

PROJECT AIMS

- > Facilitate broad cultural understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people
- > Provide an important cultural voice to Victorian Aboriginal communities
- > Develop a new core of Aboriginal filmmakers
- > Produce six films for SBS/NITV
- > Engage learners and embed complex screen production skills
- > Offer a nationally-recognised Certificate III in Media qualification.

The Trust funding, together with a new mobile training unit, have been critical in facilitating filming in regional communities, says Open Channel's Training Manager, Daniel Schultheis.

"This is really very significant. Many Aboriginal stories we see in Australia have come from other states such as the Northern Territory and Queensland, where there is a bigger pool of filmmakers. A lot of Victorian stories have not been told yet," Mr Schultheis says.

While the shortage of appropriate Aboriginal trainers in Victoria has required experienced Indigenous filmmakers to be flown in from interstate, a long-term goal of the project is to develop local practitioners who can also become trainers.

Project ANAM Health and Wellbeing Project	Amount \$94,500 over three years	www anam.com.au	Program Arts and Culture <small>Under our new grants structure, Arts and Culture is now Culture and Heritage</small>
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TRUST OBJECTIVES	PROJECT OBJECTIVES
Building capacity	Introduce an innovative new Health and Wellbeing Program for elite music students focusing on the prevention and management of work-related stress, anxiety and injuries.
Extending opportunity	Protect the rights of musicians to an injury-free career.
Collaboration and partnership	Partnership and collaboration with the Australian Ballet School, Australian Institute of Sport, National Tennis Academy and University of Melbourne.



An Australian first in music education aims to transform music practice in orchestras

Musicians' mental and physical health has been largely ignored in training and professional performance music sectors, where a culture of silence and 'turning a blind eye' to injury and mental health issues has prevailed. The Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM), Australia's national centre for the development of exceptional young musicians, has launched an innovative Health and Wellbeing Program designed to change the culture of the music sector. ANAM is the only institute of its kind in Australia, and one of few in the world.



IMAGE
Alexander Technique practitioner Penny McDonald working with ANAM cellist Jack Bailey. Photograph: Pia Johnson

There is an acute need for attention to the physical and mental wellbeing of musicians across the world, and ANAM's investment in this area is an international 'game changer', says ANAM's Artistic Director, Paul Dean.

"We're extremely proud to be partnering with the Trust to develop and deliver Australia's first Health and Wellbeing Program for musicians. It has already brought about positive change in its launch year," Mr Dean says.

Following intensive sessions with a range of highly-regarded professional practitioners, the Academy's 68 students have gained a greater understanding of the physical and emotional demands of their craft, how to produce sound at their top potential while lessening injuries, and how to better manage their health and performance anxiety.

Formal feedback has ranged from *"this has changed the way I play my instrument"* to *"you can't learn this anywhere else"*, according to ANAM's Business Manager, Charlotte Cassidy.

PROJECT AIMS

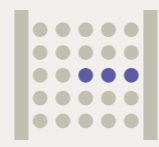
- The program:
- > Is instrument-specific for each student
 - > Deals with the preparation and ongoing care of the musician's mind and body
 - > Educates students about injury prevention
 - > Advises on various tools to deal with pain, injury and performance anxiety (to date most commonly managed by drugs).

Content includes practices such as Pilates, yoga, meditation, Feldenkrais and the Alexander Technique. Other sessions involve a specialist classical music physiotherapist, discussion around the issues of beta-blockers and performance anxiety, and two psychologists on maximising performance potential and managing anxiety.

ANAM plans to share its program with other institutions and the professional performance sector, and may generate revenue through the sale of IP and delivery mechanisms.

Project Navigating a New Path	Amount \$151,292 over two years	www stkildagatehouse.org.au	Program Education and Vocational Training <small>Under our new grants structure, Education and Vocational Training is now Education and Vocational Pathways.</small>
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TRUST OBJECTIVES	PROJECT OBJECTIVES
Building capacity	Assist young women aged 13 to 24 years transition out of street sex work through an intensive outreach and mentoring program.
Extending opportunity	Offers a pathway to a safe and stable life through the coordination of health services, accommodation, education and ultimately employment.
Collaboration and partnership	Partnership established with Whitelion, and collaboration with organisations including Open Family Australia, Victoria Police, St Kilda Youth Services and DHS Youth Services.



Helping young women break away from street sex work, drug addiction and homelessness

St Kilda Gatehouse is a safe haven that offers street sex workers services including emergency aid, advocacy, counselling and transitional care. Navigating a New Path (NANP) uses intensive case management to assist young women aged 13 to 24 break out of the traps caused by trauma, homelessness and drug addiction that can lead to street sex work. Many have experienced statutory care, and enter street sex work as a way of meeting their basic survival needs as they transition to independence.



IMAGE
Intensive mentoring providing an effective approach.

Launched in April 2012 as a partnership between St Kilda Gatehouse and Whitelion, NANP uses intensive outreach work and mentor support to engage with vulnerable young women and connect them with social services and their local community.

While the project originally focused on the St Kilda area, further research revealed greater needs around Fitzroy public housing, Dandenong and Footscray. It also became clear that at-risk teenagers as young as 13 should be targeted.

PROJECT AIMS

- > Reducing young women’s involvement in street sex work
- > Highlighting education/training and/or employment opportunities to those at risk of ongoing involvement in street sex work

- > Reducing substance dependence and supporting the development of protective factors such as stable housing and education/training opportunities
 - > Developing positive relationships, confidence and self-esteem.
- To date, 11 volunteer mentors have been fully trained, 15 at-risk young women are receiving intensive one-on-one support and 30 are engaged through assertive outreach.

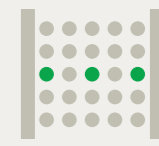
All numbers will increase as the project expands. Much valuable information about needs and service delivery is being uncovered and shared with partners and stakeholders.

“The grant from Helen Macpherson Smith Trust has allowed us to step into this space and help where no one has gone before,” says St Kilda Gatehouse CEO Sally Tonkin. *“It has opened up a huge need.”*

“We are working where women’s lives are in crisis, where it is so difficult to get out of addiction and sex work. We are also helping to divert young women away from the lives these older women have experienced.”

Project Growing the Central Victorian Biolinks	Amount \$80,000 over two years	www wilderness.org.au	Program Land Stewardship <small>Under our new grants structure, Land Stewardship is now Land and Environmental Stewardship.</small>
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TRUST OBJECTIVES	PROJECT OBJECTIVES
Rural and regional Victoria	Build a network of landcare and conservation groups across Central Victoria from the Grampians to the Alps.
Building capacity	Coordinate and service more than 100 independent environmental groups to facilitate large-scale environmental projects.
Collaboration and partnership	Partnerships include the Wilderness Society, Victorian National Parks Association, Trust for Nature, Bendigo and District Environmental Council, Bush Heritage Australia, BirdLife Australia and CSIRO.



The power of numbers leads to a whole-of-landscape approach

‘Growing the Central Victorian Biolinks’ is an initiative based on broad sector collaboration and aimed at restoring biodiversity and ecological health of Victorian landscapes. The Wilderness Society, a community-based organisation whose focus includes landscape scale projects in Victoria, has partnered with the Victorian National Parks Association and Trust for Nature (as the Victoria Naturally Alliance) to develop and manage projects which no single non-government organisation could achieve on its own. At the local level, 10 networks covering 75 landcare groups are working to restore the environment while sharing information and learning.



IMAGE
Goldfields cluster meeting, Bendigo 2013.

A loss of biodiversity and ecosystem health prompted the creation of the Central Victorian Biolinks project, a long-term initiative that brings together and supports many landcare and conservation management networks stretching from the Grampians to the Alps.

Central Victoria is a high-priority landscape but, when the region was not granted Commonwealth Biolinks funding, the Trust was approached to extend its June 2012 pilot grant so the project’s momentum could be maintained.

The project supports people and networks to collaborate through vision, goal building, science and planning, along with the development of an information and support hub to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and implementation on the ground.

A whole-of-landscape approach is needed to rebuild well-connected and functioning landscapes, including linking protected areas with areas of remnant habitat.

PROJECT AIMS

These included:

- > Continue development with Melbourne Ark member networks, a biolink project from Moorabool to the Strathbogies
- > Continue building the Victoria Naturally Alliance and partnerships
- > Develop the knowledge base and deliver priority activities
- > Further develop and implement the communications and fundraising plan.

“The Trust’s funding has enabled us to survive and we’re underway in three regional landscape projects,” says Victorian National Parks Association’s Team Leader, Karen Alexander.

Melbourne Ark’s six landcare and conservation management networks are mapping biolinks, while the Goldfields are connecting current projects and expanding resources. Project Platypus and partners are working from the Grampians to the Pyrenees on a pilot climate change planning process.

A major up-scaling of effort is being planned with project partners.