



Application Guidelines

In recognition that projects supporting mental health vary in size and nature, there are three grant types available – funds, cultural grant and advertising space.

Funds Grant

In the funds grant type, there are three categories available to apply for:

- \$5,000
- \$10,000
- \$20,000

The total pool within the funds grant type is \$100,000 (in aggregate, including grants from all three categories).

Cultural Grant

In the First Nations cultural grant type, there is one category available to apply for:

- \$5,000

The total pool within the cultural grant type is \$10,000

Advertising Grant

In the advertising grant type, organisations can apply for on-train advertising, valued at \$100,000. The advertising will appear quarterly from 1st July 2026 to 30th June 2027. With approximately 535,000 passenger journeys taken each day, that can be great exposure for any organisation. Further information on advertising grants is available at Appendix A.

Organisations may submit a maximum of one application per organisation per grant type. In the interests of supporting as many projects as possible, organisations can only be awarded a maximum of one grant per round.

Focus areas

Mental health is a complex challenge and can be approached in many ways. Metro Trains are supporting mental health programs in the following areas, and grant applications must be aligned to at least one area:

- Wellness – preventative care to reduce the risk of poor mental health.
- Education – activities that inform and promote awareness of good mental health.
- Support services – assistance like counselling, psychiatric support or crisis care that directly supports people experiencing mental health challenges.

Organisations should clearly demonstrate the need in the community and provide evidence that their project will have a tangible impact in responding to that need.



Projects can be new or build off existing projects/programs. However, Metro’s contribution and impact must be clearly distinguishable and applicants must clearly state how any grant funds will be used to support one of these focus areas.

Projects must have commenced by 31 October 2026 and be completed by 30 June 2027.

Eligible organisations

Applicants must be financially viable and be located in, or service, metropolitan Melbourne. For the purposes of the grant, metropolitan Melbourne is defined as a local council area containing a Metro train station. Appendix B contains a list of eligible local government areas.

Applicants may be one of the following organisations.

- Deductible gift recipient (DGR) status organisations.
- Not-for-profit entities including charitable organisations and incorporated associations.
- Schools or universities.

Applications must only be submitted by someone with the authority to do so. Evidence of this authority may be requested by Metro trains as a pre-requisite of funding.

National organisations or organisations based outside Melbourne may apply but must clearly demonstrate that any grant funds will be spent supporting people in or around metropolitan Melbourne. Organisations based outside of Melbourne should provide a letter of support from a local partner with their application.

Organisations that operate under an auspice arrangement that do not meet the abovementioned eligibility criteria (and have a parent organisation that do) should make the application in the name of the parent organisation and clearly state the arrangement in the application.

All applicants are required to nominate a ‘local station’ closest to the where the project will be delivered.

Organisations that received a Metro community grant in 2025 (listed at Appendix C) will not be eligible for this round of funding.

Selection criteria

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- The organisation: The applicant has a clear purpose, clearly understands who it is targeting and how it addresses the issue, and has a demonstrated ability to deliver the project as promised.
- Focus area: The project aligns with one of the focus areas (listed above) to improve the mental health of people in metropolitan Melbourne.
- Support
 - Funds grants: The proposal clearly outlines how donated funds will be used and how many people it will assist. The application should include an itemised budget.
 - Cultural grants : Th proposal clearly outlines how donated funds will be used and how many people it will assist. The application should include an itemised budget.



- Advertising grants: The proposal clearly outlines how the advertising will promote the mental health project/organisation, including any 'call to action' for passengers. The application should include a mock up example of the artwork (at least one panel).
- Measures: The applicant can demonstrate activity outcomes with evidence that are measurable, realistic and provides a clear picture of the long-term impact of funding.



Applications must be made via the online form. Attachments of no more than two A4 pages may be added to support an application.

Projects that have already secured any matched funding are welcome but it is not a prerequisite to apply.

Types of activities supported

Mental health is such a complex challenge and tackling it may come in many different forms. Some examples might include:

- Promotional campaigns to raise awareness of mental health and direct people to appropriate support services.
- Activities to encourage healthy eating and positive body image amongst teenagers.
- Support services, such as food vouchers, accommodation or education/training, for those experiencing mental health challenges.
- ‘Train the trainer’ programs to educate community leaders about dealing with mental health challenges in their communities.

A list of the projects Metro supported last year is available at Appendix C.

Types of activities not support

The Metro Community Grants program will not support:

- Activities that do not meet the selection criteria.
- General fundraising appeals (e.g. appeals from national organisations)*.
- General sponsorships (funding must be for a specific project or program)*.
- Research proposals.
- Applications from individuals.
- Applications from outside Metro Local Government Areas.
- Activities completed before the grant is awarded.
- Programs with a religious, political or sectarian purpose.
- General operational/administration functions not attached to a specific project.
- Conferences

* Project specific applications are preferred for advertising grants, however fundraising campaigns will be considered for this grant type.

How to apply

Applications open: 9am AEST, 9 March 2026

Applications close: 5pm AEST, 3 April 2026

The online application form will be available from www.metrotrains.com.au/community-grants on the open date. Applications must be made via the online form only. Late applications will not be considered.



Successful applicants can expect to be notified by June with funds to be distributed upon signing a funding agreement with Metro Trains. A commemorative event will be held in June to celebrate all grant winners. Further information will be provided to successful applicants following the assessment period.

Reporting requirements

Successful applicants will be required to provide an evaluation report within one month of project completion. Guidance on reporting requirements will be provided by Metro as part of the funding agreement. It will include having to report against impact measures detailed in the grant application. The report will require successful applicants to provide case studies as demonstration of project outcomes.

Projects of six months or more will be required to provide an interim report updating Metro Trains on progress of the project.

Successful applicants may be requested to attend promotional activities as part of the grant program.

Further information

Further information is available in the Terms and Conditions. If you have outstanding questions after reading that document, please contact Metro Trains at community@metrotrains.com.au.



Appendix A

Advertising grants

Organisations can apply for on-train for advertising, valued at \$100,000, The advertising will appear quarterly from 1st July 2025 to 30th June 2027. (see example below).

Advertising specifications

FILE SETUP

Format: MPEG-4. Supplied as a .MP4 file.

Length: 7secs

Dimensions: 1080px(w) x 1920px(h)

Max File Size: 30mb

Encoding: H264

Frame Rate: 25fps

Data Rate: 8mbits/sec or less

Audio: N/A

STATIC CONTENT

Format: JPEG

Dimensions: 1080px(w) x 1920px(h)

Max File Size: 30mb

Colour Model: RGB

FILE NAMING CONVENTIONS

Files are to be named in the following format: CLIENTNAME_FILE#OF#_PIXELRATIO.EXT





Content Guidance

Any advertising collateral:

- must comply with all applicable Law;
- must comply with voluntary codes of conduct established by the relevant advertising industry;
- must not:
 - depict any subject matter that is offensive;
 - condone or provoke anti-social behaviour;
 - promote or relate to alcohol or gambling;
 - use sexualised images or gender objectification;
 - portray images or events that may cause distress to children;
 - be used to promote a political party, parties or a political cause;
 - use offensive language;
 - demean any person or group on the basis of ethnicity, nationality, race, gender, age, sexual preference, religion or mental or physical disability; or
 - disparage or diminish the reputation of public transport or the public transport system in Victoria or be otherwise inconsistent with the marketing component of the Network Services Coordination Plan; and
 - must not resemble, be capable of confusion with, or obstruct directional or informational signs or otherwise compromise wayfinding in any way.

All advertising collateral is subject to approval by Metro Trains (in its absolute discretion).



Appendix B

Eligible Council Areas

1. Banyule City Council
2. Bayside City Council
3. Boroondara City Council
4. Brimbank City Council
5. Cardinia Shire Council
6. Casey City Council
7. Darebin City Council
8. Frankston City Council
9. Glen Eira City Council
10. Greater Dandenong City Council
11. Hobsons Bay City Council
12. Hume City Council
13. Kingston City Council
14. Knox City Council
15. Maribyrnong City Council
16. Maroondah City Council
17. Melbourne City Council
18. Melton City Council
19. Merri-bek City Council
20. Monash City Council
21. Moonee Valley City Council
22. Mornington Peninsula Shire
23. Nillumbik Shire Council
24. Port Phillip City Council
25. Stonnington City Council
26. Whitehorse City Council
27. Whittlesea City Council
28. Wyndham City
29. Yarra City
30. Yarra Ranges Shire



Appendix C

2025 Community Grant Recipients

Organisation & Grant Amount	Project Name	Project Description
FOOTSCRAY COMMUNITY ARTS CENTRE LIMITED \$20,000	Tarnuk-ut Baany: Wellbeing for First Nations Cultural Practitioners	Tarnuk-ut Baany is a First Nations-led cultural development program that supports the next generation of Indigenous leaders through mentorship, skills development, and cultural strengthening. With Metro Trains' support, we will integrate a new wellbeing stream into the program that embeds mental health support and culturally safe practices to strengthen resilience and reduce the risk of mental health barriers. This includes dedicated wellbeing workshops, trauma-informed upskilling for facilitating and support staff, and access to Elders and wellbeing practitioners to support emotional, cultural and social wellbeing—providing preventative care that addresses the unique mental health risks faced by young Aboriginal people in the arts. Support from Metro Trains will enable FCA to integrate wellbeing support across two iterations of our Tarnuk-ut Baany program in late 2025 and early 2026.
OUTSIDE THE LOCKER ROOM CHARITY LTD \$20,000	Changing The Game For Mental Health	Over 12 months, this project aims to enhance mental health awareness and support across diverse communities. Through 15 OTLR proactive prevention education sessions, we will engage youth sporting teams, coaches, parents and volunteers, reaching beyond 2,250 participants. We will offer an array of resources, including podcasts, posters, flyers, and educational videos, all accessible via the OTLR website, streaming services and sporting clubs. Furthermore, we will encourage the entire community, including non-participating members, to download and benefit from the OTLR welfare app. Our commitment to locally based lived experience facilitator and welfare professional training will include safe storytelling practices, emotional wellbeing skills, and mental health first aid instruction, ensuring lasting change in every community. We anticipate a significant improvement in normalisation of mental health through this community led approach.
BODY SAFETY AUSTRALIA \$20,000	Listening Looks Different: Visual Mental Health Tools for Inclusive Classrooms	Neurodivergent children are up to seven times more likely to become school refusers and experience significantly higher rates of anxiety, depression, and emotional distress often triggered by classroom environments that don't support their regulation needs. In response, we co-designed a set of five Active Listening posters with a young person living with multiple neurotypes. These visuals depict diverse, valid ways children engage in learning like fidgeting, movement, or using earplugs challenging narrow behavioural expectations. The posters promote positive mental health in neurodivergent students by validating how they listen, learn, and regulate. This is a trauma-informed intervention because it removes shame, reduces sensory



		<p>pressure, and helps prevent shutdowns and internalised stigma. With support from Metro Trains, we will print and distribute these resources to 15 Melbourne schools and evaluate their impact on inclusion, wellbeing, and student confidence.</p>
<p>Camp Quality Limited \$10,000</p>	<p>Cancer Education for Early Learning Centres</p>	<p>Children impacted by cancer face both short and long term physical and mental health challenges, as well as bullying and exclusion. The transition back to school or kindergarten for a child impacted by cancer after extensive stays in hospital and invasive treatment is an overwhelming time. Unfortunately, bullying and exclusion is very common during this time as many children believe that they can catch cancer, and don't understand why their peer has no hair.</p> <p>Camp Quality's Cancer Education Program is a puppet show that travels to schools and Early Learning Centres (ELC's) busts the myths about cancer, teaching kids that cancer is not contagious, and how to be a good friend. The program shines light on the physical and mental health impact of the cancer journey, and the whole school becomes better equipped to deal with cancer in their families and community.</p>
<p>THE ROYAL WOMENS HOSPITAL \$10,000</p>	<p>Sunflower program Safe and inclusive support for public hospital patients with a hidden mental health disability</p>	<p>This project seeks to improve the hospital experience for all individuals with hidden disabilities, which includes those facing mental health challenges.</p> <p>Hospitals can be anxiety-inducing environments, and for individuals with hidden disabilities such as mental health conditions, the added stress of navigating healthcare can exacerbate their symptoms and discourage them from attending. This program provides a simple, voluntary visual cue—a sunflower pin—signalling to trained staff the need for tailored support, extra time, and empathetic communication.</p> <p>The project addresses the unique needs of patients, ensures a more inclusive, supportive, and psychologically safe environment. Benefits include creating safe spaces, reducing barriers during healthcare visits, increasing hospital attendance for vital medical care, and reducing the risk of further impacts on a patient's mental health.</p>
<p>TANDEM \$10,000</p>	<p>Tandem training: 'Empowering family, carers, and supporters'</p>	<p>The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System recognised that family, carers, and supporters often bridge gaps in mental health care, and highlighted the social, spiritual, economic, and health impacts they face (Vol 3 p70, 2021). In response, Tandem developed the 'Empowering family, carers, and supporters' module, designed and delivered by individuals with lived experience of supporting someone with mental health challenges. This module aims to equip families, carers, and supporters with essential knowledge of the mental health system, provide a safe space for sharing stories and connecting with peers, and promote overall wellbeing. Additionally, our 'train-the-trainer' model will upskill family carer lived experience workers, enabling them to deliver training within their services and ensuring the program's scalability.</p>



<p>SOLVE-TAD LIMITED</p> <p>\$5,000</p>	<p>Joy of Cycling in Coburg North for People with Disabilities</p>	<p>This project introduces people with disabilities to the wellness benefits of cycling, reducing risks of poor mental health. At our Coburg North facility, our therapy team will support 14 people to try a custom-built bike which can help even those who can't walk unaided to ride. Our team observes which frames and fittings (such as pelvic belts and footcups) suit each person's physical and cognitive needs. They then 'prescribe' a custom-bike co-designed with the individual, their family and therapists to ensure their goals are met. On average, 80% of trial recipients are children. Their movement, sensory and communication/social challenges prevent them riding regular bikes so they require a custom-bike. Participants will also be supported to access NDIS or other funds to purchase a bike of their own, regardless of financial circumstances. Cycling with friends and family is fun 'exercise therapy'. It improves confidence, happiness, social skills and mobility for greater independence.</p>
<p>SERBIAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA</p> <p>\$5,000</p>	<p>Fostering Mental Health Awareness Among Serbian Women</p>	<p>The project aims to promote mental health awareness and understanding through regular social activities tailored to the Serbian community.</p> <p>Through our work, we have engaged with many individuals who arrived as refugees following the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. SCAA has observed that many in this group are older women struggling with undiagnosed post-traumatic stress disorder and related challenges. Due to stigma, language barriers, and a lack of culturally appropriate support, many remain isolated and unable to seek help.</p> <p>To address this, we will deliver a range of supportive and inclusive activities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational Workshops and Seminars on mental health and trauma. Physical Activity Programs to support overall well-being. Mindfulness and Relaxation Sessions for stress relief. Educational Resources and Information Dissemination in Serbian and English. <p>These initiatives will encourage social connection, reduce stigma, and empower individuals to access support.</p>
<p>ADVERTISING SPACE</p>		
<p>Amaze</p>	<p>Improving Support for Autistic Victorians</p>	<p>Autistic people experience significantly poorer mental health outcomes than neurotypical people. Many report issues knowing how they can access safe and relevant support, which can lead to crises and suicide. Amaze delivers a free phone advice and support service called "Autism Connect", which is designed to support Autistic people with information and advice about their neurotype, and importantly,</p>



		<p>about dedicated support services including those related to mental health.</p> <p>40% of Autistic children and 60% of Autistic adults experience clinical anxiety, and 26% of Autistic children and 40% of Autistic adults experience lifetime depression.</p> <p>Autistic adults have a threefold to fivefold increased risk of death by suicide, compared to the general population.</p> <p>Our project aims to highlight these risks and connect our community to targeted support services, in alignment with Amaze's strategic priorities and commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of our community.</p>
Safe Steps	Safe Steps services station advertising campaign	<p>Family violence negatively and cumulatively impacts children and young people's mental health via neurological/emotional development and cognitive/behavioural functioning. There is also strong evidence linking adult mental illness with family violence, for example a person with a mental illness can be more at risk of family violence due to higher levels of vulnerability and dependency on their partners, which can often make it difficult for them to leave a violent partner. Family violence also contributes to trauma and can trigger mental illness or severely impact the capacity of people to recover from one, for example living in an ongoing state of danger can wear down a person's self-worth and agency. It impacts the way people process information, communicate and make decisions. By providing awareness of Safe Steps services this project promotes help-seeking behaviour and access to services which support victim-survivors with a safer, healthier future.</p>
Griefline	Overwhelmed by grief? You're not alone	<p>Left unsupported, grief can increase mental health challenges, impair a person's ability to function and cause significant distress for months after the loss.</p> <p>In station advertising of Griefline's free grief and loss support will help to raise awareness that grief can create feelings of overwhelm, and that free support is available to reduce distress.</p>
Youth Projects Ltd	Youth Projects Advertising at Train Stations in Melbourne's west	<p>Youth Projects provides free, confidential mental health, outreach and employment support to young people across West and North-West Melbourne. Our campaign aims to raise awareness of these services and guide young people to connect with support early.</p> <p>The project aligns with the Wellness, Education, and Support Services focus areas by promoting access to services that build mental wellbeing, reduce isolation, and provide protective factors like routine, purpose and social connection.</p> <p>Through targeted outreach and tailored one-on-one support, we help young people facing complex challenges including anxiety, depression, homelessness and unemployment. The campaign features youth-informed messaging and a strong call to action, encouraging help-seeking and connection.</p>



		<p>With many young people travelling on the Metro network daily, this is a unique opportunity to engage those most in need and reduce barriers to support.</p>
--	--	--