

September 3rd 2018

## Announcement: for immediate release

Creativity Australia and the *With One Voice* program

Round 8 of the *With One Voice* Community Choir Social Franchise Start-up fund is NOW open until November 16<sup>th</sup> 2018. Our target of 40 choirs by 2020 is in reach. We're on the look-out for more people who are:

- Movers and shakers in their communities,
- Passionate about community wellbeing and the power of the arts – especially singing
- Aspiring to produce meaningful change and create a more fair and caring society.

**If this is you - Creativity Australia have further grants of up to \$10,000 available now!**

**Local community groups, social businesses and not-for-profits wanting to promote social inclusion and tackle loneliness, isolation, depression and disadvantage in their community are invited to apply. Additionally, each successful application joins a 12-month intensive mentoring program.**

All successful Start-up Grant organisations are located in areas that are culturally and economically diverse and seek to redress balance between those that have and have-not. They provide crucial interventions for all participants and support those directly and indirectly affected by many of life's challenges.

Most importantly, these organisations recognise how singing in a group can improve wellbeing, inspire personal growth and transform communities. Each successful applicant must present a strong social franchise offer that we believe will be successful and sustainable. The choirs will create new social connections and extend opportunities for residents in these multi-cultural communities to participate, celebrate diversity and develop social cohesion.

One of our last round winners from Chatswood NSW says; "The *With One Voice* program was the answer we were looking for to bring all areas of our community together. The information we receive during our mentoring sessions is invaluable and provides us the tools we need to sustain our group for years to come. We feel supported and nurtured at every step of the process. We are already seeing great results in not just our singing but in our relationships within the choir and of course, in the wider community." [View member stories.](#)

For more information and to apply for a place in the *With One Voice* Start Up project, and receive up to \$10,000 in seed funding please visit [www.creativityaustralia.org.au/start](http://www.creativityaustralia.org.au/start)



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## About us

Creativity Australia ([www.creativityaustralia.org.au](http://www.creativityaustralia.org.au)) is building a happier, healthier, more inclusive nation. We bridge the gap between people experiencing disadvantage and those more fortunate through the neuro-scientific benefits of community singing. We build supportive networks that help people connect to brighter futures and alleviate increasing loneliness, social isolation and depression in our communities. Together, we can change the world... one voice at a time. Creativity Australia is a charity founded by award-winning social entrepreneur and soprano Tania de Jong AM.

## Why we sing

Neuroscience proves singing makes people happier, healthier, smarter and more creative. Through uniting more and more communities in song, Creativity Australia aims to create positive outcomes for people experiencing mental illness, disability, disadvantage, unemployment or homelessness. Please be inspired by [Creativity Australia's Founder Tania de Jong's TEDTalk](#) on 'how singing together changes the brain'.

## The impact of loneliness and depression on our health

Research has found that lacking social connections is as damaging to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day and people experiencing social isolation have an average of 29% increased mortality (Holt-Lunstad, 2010 & 2015). Furthermore, 8 in 10 Australians think our society is becoming lonelier, while 6 in 10 say they often feel lonely (Lifeline 2016).

## Our impact

Swinburne University evaluation showed 98% of *With One Voice* choir participants experienced less stress, 91% improved social bonds, 66% felt less depressed, 70% gained new skills for work life and 70% gained increased understanding & appreciation of diversity.

Creativity Australia received the 2016 Melbourne Award for our Contribution to the Community. The program has also been named in Anthill's SMART 100 innovations for the past 5 years.

## Our target

**Creativity Australia aims to have 40 *With One Voice* choirs nationwide by 2020. Please help us make that happen by sharing our story with your networks so we can change the world, one voice at a time.**

## For further information, contact:

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