

1 February 2021 – Media Alert for immediate release

Creativity Australia and the *With One Voice* choir program

Singing the blues away – Singing in the national *With One Voice* choir program alleviates depression, loneliness and social isolation...



“Using singing as the vehicle for **community inclusion** is the centerpiece of why our program works. **Singing together is a powerful social magnet** and acts as a super “social glue” that **binds people together**. The more we use singing and music to bring us together less loneliness, social isolation and depression in our community and the more potential for increased empathy, social connection and cooperation.”

– **Tania de Jong AM, Founder of Creativity Australia**

Creativity Australia’s *With One Voice* movement recently celebrated their impressive 12th Anniversary. Their network of community choirs brings together people from all faiths, cultures, ages, abilities, backgrounds and socio-economic situations. They currently have 26 choirs located across the nation and are planning to announce a further 10 by June 2021. Currently grants of up to \$10,000 are available to community groups around the nation wishing to set up a *With One Voice* program. With over 1000 choir members ranging in age from nine to 90 years old, they are growing monthly!

Loneliness, and the depression which accompanies it, is the global epidemic of our era. Statistics show that 2 in 5 people feel socially isolated and unheard. This isolation leads to serious mental and physical health issues and great economic disadvantage. Following the year that was 2020 and the Covid pandemic we witnessed many of our community isolated and alone. It is more important than ever to concentrate on programs like *With One Voice* which bring together diverse voices from all corners of the community. Together they can sing, smile, connect and heal.

Through the innovative [Wish List](#) program, participants can grant one another wishes big and small: such as free music lessons, language and computer tuition, assistance with resumes, mentors and finding jobs. The choirs help people connect to whatever they need in life: friends, mentors, wellbeing, self-esteem, networks, skills and employment. Over 4100 wishes have been granted so far!

Feedback from a recent member survey saw current participants claiming “*If it wasn’t for the choir, I wouldn’t be alive today*”. They also explain that joining the choir has made them feel “*empowered, happy and alive and part of something that matters.*” [View our inspiring member stories.](#)

Patrons:

Lady Marigold Southey
AC
Professor Allan Fels AO
Hugh Morgan AC
Rosie Lew

Founding Patron:

The Late DEM Elisabeth
Murdoch AC DBE

Founder

Tania de Jong AM

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Choir programs are running in [Adelaide CBD](#), [Altona Meadows \(VIC\)](#), [Ashburton \(VIC\)](#), [Ballarat \(VIC\)](#), [Bayswater \(VIC\)](#), [Break'O'Day \(TAS\)](#), [Brisbane CBD \(QLD\)](#), [Central Victoria \(VIC\)](#), [Chatswood \(NSW\)](#), [Geelong \(VIC\)](#), [Ginninderry, Canberra \(ACT\)](#), [Greater Dandenong \(VIC\)](#), [Gungahlin Canberra \(ACT\)](#), [Kingston Park \(SA\)](#), [Melbourne CBD \(VIC\)](#), [Mackay \(QLD\)](#), [Mildura \(VIC\)](#), [Mt Druitt \(NSW\)](#), [Mirrabooka \(WA\)](#), [Parramatta \(NSW\)](#) [Perth \(WA\)](#), [Redfern \(NSW\)](#), [Shepparton \(VIC\)](#), [St Kilda \(VIC\)](#), [Sydney CBD \(NSW\)](#), [Windale \(NSW\)](#).

Everyone is welcome and no singing experience is necessary. You don't have to read music or have ever been part of a choir before. *With One Voice* choirs are led by professional conductors and the session is followed by supper and The Wish List where choristers gather and share their hopes and dreams. All are welcome. Just come along and experience the joy! You will feel the amazing endorphins and increased neuroplasticity that are unleashed through the incredible neuroscientific benefits of group singing.

Creativity Australia is a registered charity. Any support you can offer us and your assistance to spread the word of our life-changing, inclusive choir programs would be greatly appreciated. Much gratitude :)

Ends.

About Creativity Australia

Loneliness, and the depression which accompanies it, is the global epidemic of our era. Statistics show that 2 in 5 people feel socially isolated and unheard. This isolation leads to serious mental and physical health issues and great economic disadvantage.

Creativity Australia (www.creativityaustralia.org.au) is building a happier, healthier, more inclusive nation through the life-changing *With One Voice* program. 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. Together, we can change the world... one voice at a time.

Creativity Australia is a charity founded in 2008 by award-winning social entrepreneur and soprano Tania de Jong AM. Tania de Jong's TED talk '[How Singing Together Changes The Brain](#)', has been viewed over 110,000 times. *With One Voice* programs are now being replicated around Australia and the world through our unique social franchise model.

With One Voice

Creativity Australia's *With One Voice* program operates in Victoria, New South Wales, ACT, SA, WA, Tasmania and Queensland. The inclusive community choirs unite hundreds of people aged 9 to 90, from all faiths and all walks of life: migrants, people with disabilities, job seekers, executives, seniors, students, refugees, asylum seekers and more. [View member stories.](#)

Why we sing

With One Voice choirs are led by professional conductors and meet weekly, followed by supper. [View choir locations.](#) Through the [Wish List](#), participants grant one another wishes big and small: such as free music lessons, language and computer tuition, assistance with resumes, mentors and finding jobs. The choirs help people connect to whatever they need in life: friends, mentors, wellbeing, self-esteem, networks, skills and employment. Over 3000 wishes have been granted so far! Please be inspired by a [short 3-minute video.](#)



Neuroscience proves singing makes people happier, healthier, smarter and more creative and increases neuroplasticity. Music and singing have no barriers of language, background or politics. Unlike sport, music is non-competitive – the participants are working together to create something greater than themselves as individuals – and the results are transformative. The choirs transcend borders every week, and in public through regular performances.

When we come together to create harmony, participants feel they are together, not different. There is no more us and them, only us. Through uniting more and more communities in song nationwide, Creativity Australia aims to create positive outcomes for people experiencing mental illness, loneliness, social isolation, disability, disadvantage, unemployment and homelessness.

Our impact

[Swinburne University research](#) showed 98% of *With One Voice* choir participants experienced less stress, 91% improved social bonds and 66% feel less depressed. [View research](#). Creativity Australia won the 2016 Melbourne Award for Contribution to Community by a Community Organisation and been named in the Anthill Smart 100 Innovations for the past 5 years.

Donations and Partnerships

It costs just \$10 a week, or \$500 a year, to support a person in need to attend a *With One Voice* choir. We would love to partner with you to increase diverse participation in this transformational work. Our work is all about community wellbeing, alleviating disadvantage and inclusiveness. With enough support we can continue to create transformational outcomes for disadvantaged participants and develop our strategy to reach more people and communities in need throughout Australia.

With One Voice Social Franchise

Creativity Australia is passionate about nurturing communities across Australia and beyond to sing together in the spirit of joy, wellbeing and inspiration. We are therefore delighted to offer a suite of *With One Voice* “how to” guide videos, resources and mentoring for individuals, groups and communities looking to start new, inclusive *With One Voice* choirs using our innovative social franchise model. Our goal is to have 40 programs operating nationwide by 2022.

We have also commenced a Conductor Development Program and have developed a *With One Voice* Start-up Fund to provide small grants to enable community leaders from around Australia to commence programs and replicate our model.

Our social impact goal

Creativity Australia’s social impact goal is to help break down the traditional silos of the social welfare sector, building cohesive communities that include and support one another, rather than relying on ‘top-down’ services. Thus, we mobilise and multiply community change-makers far beyond the capacity of our organisation: diverse people who will pay it forward and help address the deep issues that impact our society. Your support is critical to the future of the *With One Voice* program. Together, we can change the world... one voice at a time.

Here are some of the [testimonials from our participants](#) to illustrate the impact of these life-changing programs.

Please connect with us at www.creativityaustralia.org.au

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