



Rural mental health initiatives given a funding boost

\$200,000 available to fund community-led mental health projects

26 April 2022: Remote, rural and regional communities across Australia can apply now for grants through FRRR's [In a Good Place \(IAGP\) program](#) to support community-driven activities focused on mental health and wellbeing. Offered in partnership with CCI giving, there is \$200,000 available through grants of up to \$20,000 for projects that support vulnerable community members at risk of, or experiencing, mental health issues.

The program supports a range of approaches that are preventative or responsive in nature, and clearly and directly focus on strengthening mental health and wellbeing. These include initiatives that increase social participation and connections with the community, and reduce stigma surrounding mental health by encouraging open discussion and supporting self-help-seeking.

Jeremy Yipp, CCI, Chief Risk Officer and Chair of CCI Giving, said that greater access to mental health services and support is vital to those living in rural communities, particularly following times of crisis.

“Rural and remote communities continue to be affected by events such as fires and flooding, and in recent years the pandemic. It’s more important than ever to encourage people to stay connected and seek support, especially for those living in places with limited access to mental health services.

“Our partnership with FRRR helps CCI Giving reach remote, rural and regional communities, to build and nurture social connections and community participation, and provide access to mental health training and education,” said Mr Yipp.

Jill Karena, FRRR’s People Programs Portfolio Lead, said that the events of the past few years have highlighted the need for rural Australia to have equitable access to mental health services and support.

“The impact of the pandemic, and the subsequent isolation, is still being felt and understood. But clearly, access to mental health tools, services and support that are driven by community need, are critical to improving and strengthening the mental health of remote, rural and regional Australians, particularly younger members of the community.

“As an example, through the IAGP program, the Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic) in Swan Hill received funding of \$13,480 to deliver a culturally specific Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training program and establish a local support network – Deadly Yarning & Learning, targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

“Although initially intended to be delivered face-to-face, the COVID pandemic and lockdowns caused serious disruptions to the project. Instead, most training took place online. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people gained vital skills in MHFA, connected with each other, relevant workers and service providers, and increased their confidence and leadership skills while helping to shape local, culturally safe responses to mental health.



Media release Grants available to support rural mental health

“Our partnership with CCI Giving means we can support these kinds of community-led approaches to mental health services that respond to community need and are accessible for people in rural areas who may otherwise have difficulty accessing services,” Ms Karena said.

Applications open on 20 April 2022. As in previous years, FRRR expects this will be a highly competitive program and so there is a two-stage application process. A brief Expression of Interest must be submitted no later than 5pm AEST, Wednesday 25 May 2022. The Expression of Interest form and more information is available on FRRR's website - <https://frrr.org.au/funding/place/in-a-good-place/>. Applicants can also call 1800 170 020.

The IAGP program is the centrepiece of a partnership between FRRR and CCI Giving which has just been extended for a further five years, to run until 2027. Since the partnership began in 2018, IAGP has awarded \$800,000 in grants to 53 community-led initiatives that promote good mental health and wellbeing in remote, rural and regional communities.

ENDS

Attached image

Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic) in Swan Hill delivering training online - culturally specific Mental Health First Aid training program, Deadly Yarning & Learning, targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

[\[https://www.dropbox.com/s/u4tdgxy8ufruiOf/Aboriginal%20Youth%20Mental%20Health%20First%20Aid%20Training.jpg?dl=0\]](https://www.dropbox.com/s/u4tdgxy8ufruiOf/Aboriginal%20Youth%20Mental%20Health%20First%20Aid%20Training.jpg?dl=0)

For media enquiries

Julie Weldon – 0423 110 802 or news@frrr.org.au

CCI Giving – Lauren Clair +613 9934 3197 or ccigiving@ccinsurance.org.au

About FRRR

The Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal-FRRR- (phonetically: F-triple-R)- is the only national foundation specifically focused on ensuring the social and economic strength of remote, rural and regional communities. FRRR's unique model connects common purposes and investment with locally prioritised needs, to create communities that are vital and resilient. Since FRRR's start in 2000, it has delivered nearly \$135 million to more than 12,000 projects.

About CCI Giving

CCI Giving is a foundation for the Australian Catholic community from Catholic Church Insurance Limited (CCI). Set up with a \$10 million contribution from CCI in 2017, CCI Giving is a perpetual charitable foundation that is not reliant on public funding. CCI Giving builds on a longstanding history of ‘giving back’ to the community, and is inspired by the centuries-old Catholic tradition of compassion in action to support the most marginalised and under-served in our community.