Bridge Darebin

Annual Report 2021

Contents

Vision Statement 2
Our Mission 3
CEO's Message 5
Chairperson's Message 7
Supporters & Partners 8
Food Relief 10
Funding Streams 12
2021 Awards 14
Moon Rabbit Cafe 15
Adult Education & Training 17
Community Outcomes 19
Child Care 25
Venue Hire & Facilities 29
Financial Statement 31

Bridge Darebin acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which Bridge Darebin is located. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Vision Statement

Bridge Darebin

We are Bridge Darebin (Preston Neighbourhood House Inc.), an innovative, not-for-profit community organisation based in Preston and Thornbury.

Established in 1982, we're a registered charity and public benevolent institution (PBI), a certified social enterprise and a Learn Local organisation.

Our services include: adult education, child care, community programs, venue hire, Moon Rabbit café, Moon Rabbit On The Hop mobile café and Heart Of Thornbury (HOT) Makers Market & Arts Hub.

Our Mission

Community First

Authenticity

Innovation

Our Values

Equality

Positivity

Inclusion

Our purpose

The purpose of the association is to strengthen our community by providing social and educational services to empower those that need it most. The Association seeks to break the cycle of poverty, overcome disadvantage and improve the quality of life of community members.

Our mission

To provide social and educational services to empower those who need it most.

Our work

Actively addresses some key challenges in the Darebin community, including training and employment pathways, positive ageing and social inclusion.

CEO's Message

"2021, a memorable year for so many reasons."

I have a vivid recollection of the numerous times I heard these words uttered; "We've just got to make it through the week". Then next week would arrive all too quickly, bringing with it the same levels of Covid complexity, uncertainty and frustration. For 48 weeks, the Bridge Darebin team managed to 'just make it through the week', day-by-day to ensure our community knew that we had their backs.

We returned from our Christmas break in January 2021, invigorated and optimistic that the year ahead would not be a repeat of 2020. Our first day back was January 18, and it commenced with a staff training day. We were all happy to reconnect, feeling refreshed and ready for whatever 2021 had to offer.
The training day included a workshop facilitated by Aunty Joy Murphy - a Senior Wurundjeri Elder - on why it is important to Acknowledge Country across all areas of the business. Aunty Joy taught us that an Acknowledgement recognises the place of Indigenous people as the first custodians of this land, promotes awareness of the history and culture of Indigenous people and formally acknowledges Indigenous peoples' ongoing connection to the land.

This day formally kicked off the development of the Bridge Darebin Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The curiosity and enthusiasm from the team for genuine allyship continued throughout the year resulting in the submission of our draft RAP by year-end. The RAP is just one example of our many 2021 projects and events showcased through this report. That first day of our working year really set the scene for us, reminding us of our roles as ambassadors and agents for change for our community.

During a year that proved to be more difficult than the last, our strategic focus as an organisation, was to invest some of the 2020 surpluses into new program designs, updated curriculum and upgraded facilities. All actions enabling us to better meet the needs of our post-pandemic community. Evidence of a community in crisis came through in our daily work and we wanted to be ready to provide whatever support we could offer. With an additional 14 staff members funded until May through Working for Victoria, we felt prepared for what may lay ahead.

Crucial to living up to our mission of strengthening our community, the staff, volunteers and organisation needed to remain strong, resilient, and relevant, a responsibility we did not take lightly.

I want to acknowledge the work of both General Managers; Catriona and Ramona in navigating the endless health directives, communicating with our hybrid team, ensuring our onsite activities were safe and appropriate and providing reassurance to their teams at every turn.

To the rest of the management team and all staff, thank you for never giving up and for putting on your game-face every day to provide positivity for each other, even under the most difficult circumstances. Determined to remain connected, these fantastic staff continued to deliver our services, programs and events, despite 109 days of lockdowns. Café take-away services, the coffee van, food-relief, facilities, management and child care staff worked onsite daily without exception, a show of cooperation and support for each other.

The Bridge Darebin team is everything to us, the key to our success. We are proud, protective, and proactive toward our workplace culture, teams like this do not come along by chance. Which is why in 2021 we developed a new framework for supervision and regular check-ins, welcoming all feedback to create the best workplace experience we can. Shout out to Paddy McVeigh, CEO of PRACE for his time and patience upskilling the management team in this vital area.

To our volunteer Board of Management, thank you for your unwavering support, guidance and trust. Tough decisions had to be made throughout 2021 and you were always available, providing understanding and advice. Special thanks to our Chair, John Sheen, for his ever-present, calm reassurance and knowledge. Speaking of volunteers, our selfless team of volunteers stuck with us throughout, even when onsite activities were not possible. Thank you for enabling us to do what we do including the distribution of over 41, 038 FareShare meals.

It is not news to us, that the strength of people lies in being a part of a community; when left alone, humans are fragile. The pandemic has reminded us of that, reinforcing that connection to others makes us stronger. It is also true that organisations can widen their reach and create more impact when they work cooperatively for a common goal. Neighbourhood Houses are exceptionally good at pooling our resources for the greater good, and we did.

This year provided us with opportunities to partner with many other NFPs, government agencies, local council, disability and employment agencies to put mechanisms in place to holistically address service gaps. We have been proud to stand alongside these Orgs to serve and advocate for better outcomes for the most vulnerable among us.

As we learn to live with the pandemic and look forward to our 'new normal' with optimism, it is evident that reaching equality in health, economics and education will be vital to recovery. At Bridge Darebin, we remain committed to advocating for equality in support of our community. Everyone deserves to be supported by a framework that allows them to reach their full potential, without feeling undeserving or fearful. We are committed to calling out injustices, systematic failings and insisting on greater accountability from our government at all levels. We need to remove the barriers that cause the most vulnerable amongst us to feel unworthy. Bridge Darebin is proud to be a neighbourhood house, a charity, a social enterprise and a grassroots community organisation that understands our role in the Darebin landscape.

As the end of my 20th year at Bridge Darebin draws to a close, I just want to say, thanks for the privilege.

To the people of Darebin, we see you and we have your back!

- CEO, Chris Lombardo

Chairperson's Message

"Moving forward we now turn our attention to strategic planning, ensuring the direction and sustainability of the organisation over the next three years, can move us forward with confidence as we continue to support our community and look to the future for Bridge Darebin"

It is my great pleasure to table the 2021 Annual Report on behalf of Bridge Darebin.

Once again, the organisation demonstrated great resilience in the face of many challenges. It was impressive to witness both innovation and agility in service delivery across the business. The Board was honoured to support such a dedicated staff as they deftly navigated yet another unprecedented year.

Despite the complexities of 2021 there was much to celebrate. Our esteemed CEO Chris Lombardo was awarded 2020 Citizen of the Year by Darebin City Council which served as acknowledgement of the significant contribution Bridge Darebin has made, particularly our food relief efforts; work that continues even now as our community feels the dire effects of the pandemic.

Chris also reached the significant milestone of 20 years with Bridge Darebin. I would like to personally extend my thanks to Chris whose leadership and vision has seen significant organisational growth.

Her great contribution cannot be understated, especially these past two years as we navigated such a challenging time word wide.

Special thanks to the senior management team Catriona Herz (Operations, Finance and Compliance) and Ramona Barry (People, Programs & Projects) and all the staff and volunteers for their incredible dedication and hard work.

Thank you to my fellow board members, for their continued commitment to the organisation and their support of me in my role as Chairperson. This board is a formidable group of people dedicated to the future-proofing of Bridge Darebin so it can not only survive but thrive in the 'new normal'.

We welcomed three new members this year, Hiruni Peters, Catherine Andrews and Sam Pillings. I thank you for becoming part of this dedicated and dynamic group, all three were fantastic additions to the Board.

In 2021 the Board formed sub-committees to provide additional support across key areas of the organisation (finance, HR, business development, policies and risk management). This development ensures that as Bridge Darebin continues to grow, it has strong governance foundations on which to do so. The work of these sub committees has already been extensive and has enriched the Board's understanding of how they can best serve Bridge Darebin in years to come.

Moving forward we now turn our attention to strategic planning, ensuring the direction and sustainability of the organisation over the next three years, can move us forward with confidence as we continue to support our community and look to the future for Bridge Darebin.

- John Sheen

Partners

Alphington Community Centre

Campbell Page

Darebin Neighbourhood House Network

DIVRS

FareShare

Feed Appeal

Housing Choices

Jesuit Social Services

Jika Jika

Melbourne Food Hub and Sustain

Melbourne Polytechnic

Neami National

Neighbourhood Houses Victoria

North East Neighbourhood House Network

Northern Support Services

Padre

Parade College

Reservoir Neighbourhood House

Rotary Preston

The Salvation Army

Snap Printing & Design Preston

SPAN Neighbourhood House

Thornbury Church of Christ

VACSAL

VAHSA

Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)

Your Community Health

Supporters

Australian Government - National Indigenous Australians Agency & Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resource

AGS World Transport

Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association

Barr Family Foundation

Breen Family Fund

Bunnings Northland & Fairfield

City of Darebin

Foodbank

GoGet

Good Things Foundation

Inner North Community Foundation

Jemena

McGrath Northcote

Mitre 10

Northcote Bakeshop

Northway Honda

Office of Ged Kearney MP

Sage

State Trustees

Sustainability Victoria

The Funding Network

Victorian Government – Department of Education & Training , Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, & Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

Special thanks to photographer Linda Oliveri for the photography throughout this Annual Report

Food Relief

Our food relief efforts of 2021 involved a collaboration of community organisations providing direct assistance to individuals from our High Street hall in Preston. We knew that our capacity to keep up that level of commitment would prevent us from returning to our core business, we had to rethink the model to ensure we could still support our partner organisations and our community.

Our approach was to move away from direct assistance and instead focus on a wholesale distribution hub. Our partnership with FareShare enabled us to act as a weekly distribution centre for the North. Organisations provided us with their requirements every Thursday and the following Monday morning, FareShare would deliver all the meals to our Preston site.

The Bridge Darebin team, assisted by volunteers, collated the meals for each service for pick up. Using our own mini-van we delivered the orders to those services who had no capacity to collect the meals themselves.

This arrangement is a fine example of not-for-profit organisations working collaboratively, to achieve greater out comes for our community and will continue for as long as it is required.

2021 in numbers:

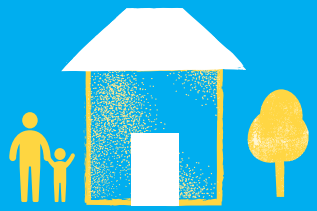
- 41,038 FareShare meals distributed
- 1,045 fresh meals prepared onsite and delivered
- Close to 200 end of year hampers distributed

Funding Streams

The overarching outcome being that we could continue to provide our most vulnerable community members with the equity, accessibility and inclusion they deserve.

When the February lockdown hit, we had to accept the harsh reality that the economic impacts of the pandemic were far from over. The revenue streams that we relied on to fund many of our community programs, Laneway Lunches and Community Development staff were the hardest hit. Moon Rabbit café income, our new enterprise Moon Rabbit On the Hop, Venue Hire, contract Child Care all felt the strain. Covid restrictions prevented all these areas of our business to operate at full capacity and some ceased completely.
With no Job Keeper to support salaries, we had to turn to grants and philanthropic support to ensure we could continue to provide our services.

We are fortunate to have an extraordinary group of capable grant writers within our team. Erin, Ramona, Mahira and Chris applied for 49 grants and were successful with 20. With additional support from the philanthropic sector, and corporate sponsorship we were able to meet our community development objectives and continue to grow even under such challenging circumstances.



Grant Name & Funder	Amount	Deliverable/Delivered
COVID-19 Disaster Fund Grant 2021 - INCF	$1,475	Sustainability Day for Child Care Families in November
2021 Emergency Relief End of Year Grants - City of Darebin	$2,500	Food Relief
Priority response to multicultural communities during COVID-19 #3 (PRMC3) - DFFH	$75,000	Food Relief
Investment Support Grant Packaging Round 2 - Sustainability Victoria	$28,200	Bridge Darebin Paper Loop (project worker and equipment)
Powering Communities Program Grants - Deparment of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources	$10,150	Solar Panel installation at Preston
Street Smart Café - Street Smart Australia	$12,200	Supporting food relief through Moon Rabbit café
Breen Family Fund - INCF	$4,755	Moon Rabbit merchandise development and display
Community Climate Change and Energy Action Program - Sustainability Victoria	N/A	Energy audit in partnership with Darebin Council being carried out in 2022
2021 Jemena Community Grant - Jemena	$10,000	Paperloop (pilot program set up)
Barr Family Foundation	$80,000	Support extension of roles: Education and Pathways Officer and Young Community Development Officer
Bakers Dozen Social Justice Fund - INCF	$5,000	Connecting through Ceramics - Allyship initiative with Gurwidj Koori Neighbourhood House
Supporting Carers Locally Grants Program - Round 1 - DFFH	$40,000	Aboriginal Grandmothers Support Group
Revitalising the LGBTIQ+ Sector Fund - DFFH	$50,000	Bridge Queer Gathering
Pathways to Employment 2021 - INCF	$15,000	TTT Pathways Course for Adults
Young Changemakers - INCF	$2,000	Laneway Lunches
Community Inclusion Grant - State Trustees	$20,000	TTT Trainer support
Stronger Communities Programme - Round 6 - Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (DISER)	$20,000	Coolroom for Moon Rabbit and Food Relief
Digital Divide	$2,000	Project delivered through EPCC supporting residents of local public housing to increase digital capacity
Digital Skills for Adults- Wyndham Community and Education Centre and ACFE	$22,000	Developing Digital Literacy resources in partnership with WCCE.
AGS World Transport	$27,000	Community Development and Training

2021 Awards:

2021 Learn Local Awards - Shortlisted - Micro Business for Makers Course

2021 Sustainable Cities Awards - Community Category - Finalist - Heart of Thornbury

2021 Sustainable Cities Awards - Waste Category - Highly Commended - Moon Rabbit café and Bulk Foods

'I wanted to thank you so much for such an interesting and informative lesson this morning.

My mind hasn't stopped with all the possibilities and it's such an amazing feeling!'

- Micro Business for Makers student

Moon Rabbit Cafe

MOON RABBIT

Lockdowns, mandatory masks, vaccination certificate checks, staff shortages and overall community Covid fatigue all proved to be challenging.

Bridge Darebin was fortunate enough to welcome new café manager Santos Kothapeta onboard and it became quickly apparent that under his leadership and guidance Moon Rabbit would continue to develop and grow despite the many obstacles the year presented.

Continued commitment to sustainability with the installation and use of our new Enrich 360 machine that allowed us to transform food waste into fertiliser. This machine was developed right here in Melbourne and was purchased with grant funds from the City of Darebin and has brought Moon Rabbit and Bridge Darebin overall one step closer to our 100% zero waste goal.

The transition from Bulk Food collective to online sales saw the launch of the Moon Rabbit Pantry. Through generous funding from the Breen family foundation, we were able to construct a stunning cabinet form CERES reclaimed timber to showcase some of the best locally sourced and produced food goods from across Victoria.

Moon Rabbit took advantage of the strong relationships with these extraordinary suppliers and developed a suite of hamper boxes in time for Christmas, proving once again that this team, when faced with challenges, create opportunity through innovation.

"Like all hospitality businesses in 2021, Moon Rabbit faced many challenges that required a great deal of resilience amongst its small team."

There was however heartbreak at having to temporarily cease running Moon Rabbit On the Hop mobile café van.
It became a year of consolidation and forward planning committing energy to developing a strong catering offering, involvement in food relief meal production and supporting, training and recruiting team members that understood the ethos of community, sustainability and education at the heart of Moon Rabbit.

2021 in numbers:

- 7,413 cups saved from landfill by using jars, borrow mugs and BYO reusable cups
- 555 kilos of food waste diverted and turn into 125kg of fertiliser via our Enrich360
- 122 Moon Rabbit Gift Boxes sold
- 53 external and 35 internal catering jobs

Adult Education and Training

"I am hoping to possibly use what I've learned and find a future career opportunity involving food or urban agriculture. The main aspect of this course that was useful to me was learning the knowledge of food and agricultural practices but also how communities can work together to achieve a beneficial outcome."

- Intro to Urban Farming for Youth student 2021

It is a testament to our hard-working community education team that despite constant stop-starts, Bridge Darebin delivered 21,584 hours of pre-accredited training to 424 students.

With 12 new pre-accredited courses launched, 26 different pre-accredited training courses and 15 community arts, health, and wellbeing programs it was a busy year for all the staff and trainers, ably led by community education manager Mahira Sobral.

The theme of the year was very much 'partnerships' as we co-designed courses for specific outcomes. These included a youth employment program with Activate Youth, digital literacy training for Our Community Health and a financial literacy program in partnership with Juno.

Working to our combined strengths of education and hospitality, we co-designed a barista course with Padre coffee, Northcote Bakeshop and other local businesses.

We successfully delivered a food systems and warehousing induction training program to 10 Working for Victoria staff at Sustain and Melbourne Food Hub and an Intro to Urban Farming for Youth with Darebin Youth Services

Partnerships in 2021:

- Hosted two partner moning teas with over 30 people in attendance each time
- Parents Next
- Job Prospects
- Max Employment
- Activate Youth
- Juno
- Judy Lazarus Transition Centre
- VACCA
- CVGT - Parents Next
- Jobs Victoria Advocates
- Local Jobs Project
- Neami National
- Preston Hub
- Melbourne Polytechnic
- Sisterworks
- Sustain
- Melbourne Food Hub
- Darebin City Council
- Preston Rotary
- DIVRS
- Northern Health
- Your Community Health
- Aboriginal Advancement League
- First peoples' health and Wellbeing
- Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network (INLLEN)

Community Outcomes - Climate Action & COVID

Our community development goals focussed on responding to the needs of our community through education, support and inclusion.

Climate Change Action

Our commitment to sustainable practices extended across the organisation as we come closer to our zero waste goals and increase our participation in new circular economies

In-house we conducted a waste audit of our organisation and provided staff training resources on waste reduction .

Our training space had a decidedly sustainability edge in 2021. Sustainability 101 to build literacy and understanding of sustainable topics and climate change, family co-learning sessions about sustainability and waste for parents and children under 5 were two such offerings.

Our Sustainability Zero Waste Market featuring the Moon Rabbit Bulk Foods and a Bridge Darebin information table engaging children in learning about the waste cycle and how long things take to break down, was a great success with more than 300 people in attendance

Bridge Darebin was proud to host a Climate Resilience workshop in collaboration with Jesuit Social Services for over 30 participants across 10 local community sector organisations and Darebin City Council. This has led to great collaboration outcomes in identifying the gaps and needs to make Darebin more resilient in the face of climate change.

Partnering with Jesuit Social Services on a project capturing Darebin residents' lived experience of climate change to inform Darebin City Council's new climate emergency plan. Over the course of 2021 we've engaged over 250 residents.

We continue this important work with the Darebin Neighbourhood House Network collaborating on developing a network Climate Change Action Plan to launch in 2022.

"Thank you so much for your support for the community during lockdown and through all the uncertainty around these stressful times.
We have all found Florencia's class so beneficial to our mental health and a way we can get moving in our homes despite restrictions.
It means that whatever our circumstances we are able to join in... It has been of so much benefit to the community already."

- Zumba student

COVID Engagement Support For Community

- Delivered an online mental health and wellbeing program to prisoners at the Judy Lazarus Transition Centre
- Offered a free Step up to Work Course as part of our Lockdown Learning ACFE campaign, that attracted 22 people
- We were able to transition some of our courses online - including Intro to Urban Farming, English classes, Computer classes and Studio Arts
- Hosted a free Women's Job Club Info Session as part of Women's Health Week
- Delivered online Zumba through 2021, which attracted between 40 – 50 people every week

Community Outcomes - RAP & Bridge Queer Gathering

Indigenous Community Events and Enagement

Bridge Darebin established a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) group to keep our organisation committed and accountable.

2021 began with an all-staff day cultural event with Aunty Joy Murphy and also cultural training with Uncle Bill Nicholson.
Staff underwent Indigenous cultural training with Kathryn Coff and Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd (VACSAL) through the Neighbourhood House Network.

Bridge Darebin hosted a Reconciliation Week panel discussion with Uncle Bill Nicholson, Sianna Catullo, Uncle Charles Pakana and Dr. Clare Land. We marked NAIDOC week with a morning tea guided by Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO, Senior Wurundjeri Elder of the Kulin Nation in addition to a sustainable craft workshop with Indigenous artist Jo Pappas.

We hosted an Indigenous World View event in partnership with NENHN and Kathryn Coff and launched 'Women's Business' Grandmother's Group led by Cecily Atkinson.

We also delivered pottery classes to Indigenous women at the Arts Hub Thornbury for the Aboriginal Advancement League and collaborated with Victorian Aboriginal Childcare Agency on a work readiness and placement program for young people.

Bridge Queer Gathering (BQG)

This now well-established long-term project grew stronger in 2021 with the engagement of youth facilitators who participated in a 12-week employment program.

Partnerships built:

- Transgender Victoria
- Rainbow Lounge (Darebin Youth Services)
- Rainbow Village (Your Community Health)
- Darebin Council's Gender Equity team
- Find the Rainbow (Banyule Council)
- Archer magazine
- Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network (INLLEN)
- Thornbury Picture House
- Melbourne Queer Film Festival
- Darebin Libraries

2021 in numbers:

- 15 events and acitivities facilitated
- Just under 200 people participated in Bridge Queer Gathering events
- Over 170 people in the Facebook group

"This opportunity has been a fantastic gateway into opening my mind and world to other lines of work that don't relate or could be combined with my qualification in environmental science. I look forward to using my new skills and confidence to seek out more fulfilling community-based roles for employment and volunteer positions."

- BQG Youth Facilitator

Community Outcomes - Working for Victoria

Bridge Darebin was lucky enough to engage 14 staff members as part of the Working for Victoria Scheme. This dedicated group delivered above and beyond in their 6-month stint with us and we thank them for their contribution the organisation.

- Nicola designed a range of new logos and templates to support Bridge Darebin's communication and marketing. New projects included: Bridge Queer Gathering and Bridge Darebin Green
- Cathie was retained as Moon Rabbit Chef
- Al stayed on as cleaner
- Carli transitioned into the Operations Coordinator role
- Kim audited all sites for waste reduction and waste management best practice and supported the training of staff on the Enrich 360
- Skyla's experience with us for six months gave her the knowledge to successfully apply for a Jobs Advocate role with Darebin Council. In that role, she supports people through the Job Club and does so onsite at Bridge Darebin weekly
- Monica managed the BD Green design and installation
- Sabine has stayed on to manage BQG and Food Relief
- Jess stayed on to get the RAP to a place where we could continue with it on our own
- John A stayed on as part of the facilities team

Child Care

Despite the ongoing complications of Covid impact, 2021 was a significant year for our thriving Thornbury based Child Care centre.

An extensive marketing campaign and mapping of the customer journey with documented scripting for talking to families, advertising boards, flyers and a promotional video attracted new families to the centre and with the engagement of our new Child Care manager Adriana Gray, we ushered in a new era for this much-loved department of Bridge Darebin.

As an essential service we stayed open to support our community, retaining seven staff who worked tirelessly throughout the year. We were able to support our families through this trying time and also provide subsidised Child Care to vulnerable community members.

We also took the opportunity to do a range of upgrades to both the physical space and to our procedures including:

- Upgrades to indoor space included kitchenette cabinetry, children's toilet area and new vinyl flooring
- Revitalised outdoor space with a new mural, planter boxes, increased outdoor play space
- Commenced the creation of a painted mural at building entry by local artist, Mia Emily Freeman to beautify the entrance to the centre
- A new comprehensive suite of Children Services Policies

In early 2021 we farewelled longtime Child Care educator Shaiqa Hasmat, who retired to spend time with her family and interim Child Care coordinator Glynis Jackson who assisted Bridge Darebin in the coordination of the childcare services prior to the permanent appointment of a Child Care manager. We thank them both for their contribution.

Events celebrated despite lockdowns and restrictions:

Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Fathers Day, Easter, Book Week, Children's Week, Naidoc Week, Recycling Week, Christmas celebrations, Lunar New Year, Anzac Day, Halloween.

2021 in numbers:

Total sessions booked: 2, 939

Total children enrolled: 72

New families onboarded: 20

2021 Ups

- Overhaul of Thornbury Child Care, including mural, planter boxes & growing arch, increased outdoor space and upgrade of the bathroom
- Bridge Darebin Green transformation and installation
- Upgrade of the Annex to include combi oven & stainless steel benches
- Installed a purpose-built cool room
- Developed and implemented Bridge Darebin's Risk Management Framework and Risk Register
- Developed and implemented Bridge Darebin's Emergency Management Plan
- Developed and implemented a suite of new policies and procedures for Bridge Darebin and Children Services
- Commenced the creation of a painted mural at building entry by local artist, Mia Emily Freeman
- Celebrated Chris Lombardo's 20th Anniversary with Bridge Darebin
- Celebrated the end of the year with staff, volunteers and Board celebration
- Welcomed back staff, students and community members after numerous lockdowns
- $4465 raised in our Laneway Lunches 'Shout A Local Lunch' fundraising campaign
- $28, 891 tax deductible donations received

2021 Downs

- Significant loss of COVID-19 Job Keeper assistance, equal to $630,000+ income support
- Numerous lockdowns
- Farewelled Tim Beacham long time trainer and IT support
- Farewelled Shaiqa Hasmat Childcare Educator of 10 years
- Farewelled the dynamic duo of Sam and Ally Fisher
- Farewelled cafe wiz Nancy Fogg
- Farewelled facilities guru Leanne Lewis
- Farewelled Community Education Officer Prue Challis

Where to from here?

As we continue into 2022 and beyond, we are looking to further establish a Covid-normal service and evaluate our offerings and adjust accordingly so as to engage with, and further meet the needs of, our wider community who are facing a different employment, study and family landscape for the foreseeable future.

Venue Hire & Facilities

Snap lockdowns, density limits and community hesitancy brought with it many challenges to our venue hire operations, but while bookings were down from previous years, Bridge Darebin was able to secure more long-term hirers and develop new spaces to ensure steady growth and stability of this important revenue-raising part of the business.

Many of our long-term hires continued despite the ups and downs of lockdown after lockdown, Bridge Darebin also welcomed new groups as many businesses and organisations pivoted their services and activities.

Ongoing hirers included:

- Office space for Minus 18
- Melbourne Food Hub packing local produce
- Bootcamp classes to keep warm in the winter months
- Training organisations
- Art therapy
- Lego club
- After school tutoring
- Support groups
- Olive oil maker
- Dance classes and choirs
- Church groups

We continued to offer free venue hire to local climate action groups supported by City of Darebin. We now have new spaces available at our recently established 261 High Street site, directly opposite Moon Rabbit Café.

These additional offices and consulting rooms as well as a boardroom-style training room will allow us to extend our venue hire offering in 2022.

Bridge Darebin took advantage of the 'down time' to undergo some significant upgrades and improvements to our facilities.

The year began strongly with the installation of our new Bridge Darebin Green garden. Replacing our former Child Care yard at Preston with purpose-built, wheelchair-accessible wicking beds was no small undertaking but the hard work was well and truly worth it.

The upgrade to the annex included a new combi oven, stainless steel benches and the addition of a purpose-built cool room meant that we could extend our food relief program and catering offerings through Moon Rabbit.

We welcomed Carli to the team as operations coordinator, with John A, John B and Alan rounding off this capable and dedicated team.

2021 in numbers:

Number of ongoing hirers: 27

Number of casual hires: 48

Financial Statement

Expenditure:	2021:	2020:
Advertising & Marketing	$22,053	$31,501
Audit Fees	$2,550	$2,300
Bank Charges	$6,078	$1,819
Board Governance Costs	$1,891	$6,773
Cafe Expenses	$113,304	$148,722
Cleaning Expenses	$7,607	$8,920
Client Support Services	$26,759	$33,649
Communications, Telephone & Postage	$20,652	$16,895
Computer Costs	$40,213	$27,666
Consulting Fees	$6,300	$29
COVID-19 Expenses	-	$5,406
Depreciation	$43,427	$26,258
Equipment Expenses & Leasing	$13,508	$58,089
Fundraising Costs	$480	$140
Insurance	$6,722	$2,611
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	-	$5,931
Meeting Costs	$2,444	$211
Membership Fees	$3,490	$4,140
Minor Assets under $5,000	$6,590	$19,883
Motor Vehicle Costs	$10,904	$6,869
Printing & Stationery	$6,792	$6,136
Property Costs & Utilities	$38,226	$20,084
Repairs & Maintenance	$7,075	$9,078
Salaries & On Costs	$2,072,739	$1,619,721
Scholarship Fund	$14,000	$2,000
Staff Amenities	$8,017	$6,171
Staff Training	$17,993	$7,562
Sundry Expenses	$14,382	$24,649
Venue Rent & Charges	-	$600
Volunteer Costs	$5,414	$3,223
TOTAL EXPENDITURE:	$2,519,610	$2,107, 036

Revenue:	2021:	2020:
Grants	$1,333,537	$943,893
Child Care Income	$287,757	$259,155
Course Fees	$144,279	$22,953
DGR Deductable Donations from the Public	$28,891	$38,145
Fundraising Income	$4,465	$4,226
Moon Rabbit Income	$238,399	$227,172
Sundry Income	$22,293	$20,970
Venue Hire Income	$79,495	$34,433
Interest received	$1,316	$3,905
Sponsorship Income	$15,000	$19,980
COVID-19 Related Assistance	$167,751	$805,750
TOTAL REVENUE:	$2,323,183	$2,380,582
Net surplus/(deficit) attributable to the Association:	-$196,427	$273,546

Financial Statement

Throughout 2021 the COVID-19 pandemic continued to present Bridge Darebin with significant challenges and uncertainty but also provided opportunities. The flexibility, resilience and dedication of the entire team at Bridge Darebin have been critical to our success in 2021.

- Grant Income of $1,333,537 made up of local and State recurrent and non-recurrent funding. Grant Income has increased from the previous financial year with increased grant applications being submitted and the Working for Victoria funding
- COVID-19 Related Assistance $167,751 made up of JobKeeper Subsidies, and Business Support Grants
- Children Services Income $287,757, an increase from 2020 income of $259,155
- Course Fees of $114,279 have increased from 2020 income of $22,953
- Combined Fundraising Income and DGR Deductible Donations from the Public donations for the public $33,356 decreased from 2020 income of $42,371
- Moon Rabbit Café Income $238,399 increased income from 2020 of $227,172. Moon Rabbit continued to pivot through COVID 19 and numerous lookdowns
- Venue Hire Income $79,495 has increased from 2020 income of $34,433 despite COVID 19 and extensive lockdowns
- Salaries and Wages expenses increased from $1,619,721 in 2020 to $2,072,739 due to several funded projects and the Working for Victoria contract
- Substantial support from Local Community Foundations and Philanthropic Trusts, Corporate Business, Government funding and the local community have been essential to supporting Bridge Darebin in 2021
- Computer expenses increased from $27,666 in 2020 to $40,213 in 2021 due to a complete system audit and long overdue upgrade to IT infrastructure, resulting in improved efficiency and security
- Scholarship expenses increased from $2,000 in 2020 to $14,000 in 2021 to support community members to access subsidised courses, activities and Child Care
- Staff Training expenses increase from $7,562 in 2020 to $17,993 in 2021 to support and empower staff and volunteers in their professional and personal development
- Property and utilities increased from 2020 to 2021 due to the leasing of 261 High Street

The 2021 Financial Statements prepared and audited by our appointed auditor, Collins and Co, have been found to be true and accurate.

Bridge Darebin

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