



**Our Community Project**

# **Annual Report**

**FY 2022 - 2023**



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# About Our Community Project

**Our Community Project** aims to work within the community to create and implement projects to alleviate the suffering, distress, misfortune and poverty of disadvantaged members of our community. We use people centred innovation and social enterprise to employ and build access, equity, social action and community spirit. We seek to support and motivate, using a citizen driven approach that recognises the value of all people to contribute.

ABN | 21 271 844 991

Legal Status | Company Limited by Guarantee, Charitable Institution

Tax Concessions | Public Benevolent Institution with GST Concession, Income Tax Exemption and FBT Exemption Date Established: August 31, 2004

Total Income | FY 2022/23: \$2.7M



## Our Ventures

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**Our vision** is to contribute to building a vibrant, creative, resourceful and resilient community where people and the planet are valued.

**Our mission** is to work with the community using people-centred innovation, co-creation, collaboration and social enterprise to empower, build access, equity, social action and community spirit

## Our Values

- **Respect for people and care for the planet**  
OCP is committed to fairness and social justice and to respecting the natural environment.
- **Lifelong Learning and Sharing**  
OCP is committed to fostering skills development, information sharing, and a spirit of cooperation.
- **Sustainable and Viable**  
OCP acts with integrity, accountability and transparency.
- **Pioneering and Innovative**  
OCP embraces leadership, agility and creativity.
- **Grounded and Authentic**  
OCP nurtures a strong sense of local identity and fosters a sense of belonging and inclusion.

# Company Structure



**No Interest Loans**

**Tender Funerals Illawarra**

**Community  
Development**

**Culture Bank**

**Port Locals**

**Jam n Bread**

**Mens Group**

**Sewing Group**

# Board of Directors

## President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer



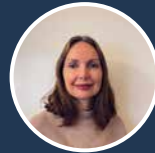
**Ann Martin**  
President



**Pam Thorton**  
Treasurer



**Thomas  
McColl**  
Vice President



**Karen Kirk-  
Torresan**  
Secretary

## Directors



**Blake Osmond**  
Director

# Staff

## Our Community Project



**Moray Ralph**  
General Manager



**Sri Pasztor**  
Finance  
Coordinator



**Chantelle  
Davis**  
Community  
Development  
Manager

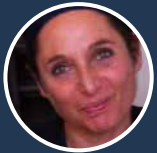


**Leila Buik**  
Administration



# Staff

## Culture Bank



**Lara Seresin**  
Culture Bank  
Wollongong

## Jam n Bread



**Ann Lehmann-Kuit**  
Jam n Bread  
Facilitator

## NILS



**Keri Fuller**  
Nils Consultant



**Misty Gurtala**  
Nils Consultant



**Tina Howard**  
Nils Consultant

## Tender Funerals Illawarra



**Nadine Giles**  
General Manager



**Amy Sagar**  
Funeral Director



**Wes Bas**  
Funeral Director



**Lauren Clinch**  
Funeral Director



**Jade Kelly**  
Funeral Director  
/ Volunteer Co-ordinator



**Ashten Strong**  
Funeral Director



**Aimee Milthorpe**  
Funeral Director



**Julieanne Ward**  
Funeral Director



**Ciaran Keaveney**  
Casual Funeral  
Director



**Angelique Halpin**  
Administrator

# Funders

- Department of Justice & Communities
- Fair Trading NSW
- My Community Project
- National Australia Bank
- Bendigo Bank
- Wollongong City Council
- Port Kembla Community Investment Fund
- AMP
- Multicultural NSW
- Stronger Communities Funding
- SEFA
- Good Shepherd Australia
- Collins Booksellers Thirroul
- Your and Owls
- Illawarra Festival of Wood
- Sharpe Advisory

# Supporters and Partners

- Social Ventures Australia
- University of Wollongong
- Port Kembla Public School
- Coomaditchie United Aboriginal Corporation
- Beyond Empathy
- Mike Malone
- CustomLAN
- FAMS
- Fran and David Curtis
- Women Illawarra
- Community Industry Group
- Port Beirut
- Kind Art Ed
- Wollongong City Council

# Chair Report



**Ann Martin**

Planner | Southern Region

NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

The last year has seen many changes, though fortunately, most of the changes have not been as severe as the past Covid years.

Our staff, volunteers, past and present Board Members worked together to ensure that we could continue to deliver our programs, projects, and community support activities, while, in the case of nearly all our programs, we have continued to grow and adapt as new needs and opportunities arose.

In early 2023, our long term energetic and much-loved General Manager Jenny Briscoe-Hough moved across from Our Community Project to head up Tender Australia, along with Pam Thornton, our Business Development Manager. We greatly thank Jenny for her 20 plus years of service, her energy and drive to help us become, with our fantastic staff and Board the organisation that we are today. Thank you to Pam Thornton too who has worked closely with our Finance Coordinator, Sri Pastor and our new General Manager Moray Ralph who joined us in February to transition her oversight role of our finances, while continuing to work with the Board as Treasurer, on our financial planning. We greatly appreciate the incredible work Pam has done for OCP over our development and delivery of all our programs and projects for over many years. I and the Board thank Pam and Jenny for their dedicated service, along with our other Board Members- Secretary Karen Kirk -Torresan, Vice President Tom McColl and Blake Osmond. I look forward to recruiting additional Board members this year.

During the last reporting period, we introduced a new office for the No Interest Loans scheme in Nowra that has been busy almost from the moment it opened. Our Board delivered the priorities from the last strategic plan, and is now launching a new and ambitious program, including investigating a Not-for-Profit Property Management and Real Estate initiative which is currently in development stages. We will continue our exemplary work with Culture Bank, Tender Funerals Illawarra, support and information sharing and training for Tender Australia, the No Interest Loans Scheme, our Community Development program, Jam n Bread, the Men's group, the Sewing Group and our Bush care program while our volunteers across the organisation have been helping us with our work and keeping things going at OCP with their time, and energy.

We had another wonderful Lantern Parade partnership with Port Kembla Primary School. Hosted learning, community meetings activities and community events in our hall, garden swap meets outside in our centre garden and will soon celebrate the end of the year with our communities at King George V Oval.

Thank you to our funding bodies, including Multicultural NSW, the Port Kembla Community Investment Fund, and Communities and Justice NSW and financial supporters for all our programs. We cannot operate without our core funding, including the underwriting from the National Australia Bank and funding support from The Good Shepherd and Fair Trading NSW, for funding the No Interest Loans Scheme. Culture Bank members and contributors continue their generous contributions to support over \$10,000 worth of creative projects across the Illawarra. While we generate our own funding to an extent, we cannot provide our work and passion for community development as an organisation without the help of our funding bodies, staff, financial supporters and Board.

I also offer my thanks to Wollongong City Council who have been incredibly helpful in the delivery of our upgraded hall and kitchen while working on the design, planning and delivery of the next centre upgrade for a new office, amenities, and outdoor area.

While we welcomed Moray into OCP, we also saw Board members Linda Campbell, Ridsen Knightly, and Anna Ambrose retire from OCP's Board. On behalf of the Board, I thank all past and present Board members for their service and contribution both to the Board, to the program and communities we serve at Our Community Project.

Once again, I am excited about what the next year will bring to Port Kembla and our communities across the Illawarra. I think and hope it will be a great year, and I am confident that we will, alongside our great staff and new General Manager and the Board as well-as all those many others who are part of the Our Community Project story, look forward to another great year of value led community focussed activities

Thank you all.

# General Manager's Report



**Moray Ralph**  
General Manager  
Our Community Project

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land the Dharwal people of the Wodi Wodi nation on which we work and I acknowledge elders past present and emerging and thank them for their care of country. We deeply appreciate their continued support to do our work in this place.

After years of hard work to build an organisation of dedicated and wonderful people delivering a diverse range of projects, Jenny Briscoe-Hough has taken up the role as the CEO of Tender Funerals Australia and I commenced as the new General Manager of OCP in Feb 2023. While some of the OCP personnel may have changed during the year our focus has remained the same. To work with and within community to deliver programs and projects which support, empower and help build healthy, compassionate, vibrant and creative communities. This is both challenging and inspiring work which we are all in together.

Over the last 12 months there were many highlights:

## **Tender Funerals Illawarra**

The completion of the landscaping at Tender Funerals Illawarra has metamorphosed the premises from bare earth to a calm space for reflection. Many thanks and acknowledgement to Nadine and the team at Tender Funerals Illawarra for working hard to deliver a sensitive and caring service through phenomenal growth in the last 12 months.

The brilliant Tender Funerals Illawarra Team lead by Nadine have delivered 464 funerals in the last 12 months. The staff at Tender Funerals Illawarra are dedicated, hardworking and huge hearted. Tender Funerals Illawarra always feels welcoming, and we are so proud of the work they do and how they do it.

## **Community Development**

Following an extensive recruitment campaign Chantelle Davis was awarded the position as Manager of Community Development in May 2023 following the departure of the previous Manager at the end of March 2023.

Highlights include:

- Introduction of three very popular spoon carving workshops in the community hall on Friday nights
- The very popular Lantern parade has been going from strength to strength. It was a huge success with amazing community engagement and incredible media coverage again this year.
- Social Circus at King George V oval was also very successful again this year. Providing access to healthy snacks after school, engaging local young people of all ages and abilities in social activities and in learning circus skills.

Thanks so much to Chantelle for her work and positive attitude this year, Chantelle is key to the success of OCP in our local community as she is constantly finding funding and developing new projects.

## **Jam n Bread**

Ann Lehmann's continued commitment to Jam n Bread is inspiring. Jam n Bread partnered with Wollongong City Council in the Culture Festival to extend the reach of Jam n Bread's work to include new Artists and venues. The New Gen Global Sounds Jam n Bread project saw 8 young musicians mentored by CALD professionals to create music inspired by their own heritage. They recorded their songs at Stranded Studios in Bellambi which has been released on streaming platforms. Her creativity is endless and her commitment to inclusiveness unwavering.

# General Manager's Report (continued)



**Moray Ralph**  
General Manager  
Our Community Project

## **Culture Bank**

Lara Seresin commenced as the new coordinator of Culture Bank in Dec 2022 and in that time Culture Bank has funded 6 new arts projects providing grants to the creatives of the Illawarra, providing a total of \$10,000 in much needed funds.

## **Port Locals**

The Men's group meet every Wednesday in the Hall and in the Men's Shed at the rear of the hall. They have been a constant support throughout the year voluntarily caring for the gardens, volunteering to support the lantern parade and making small items required by the community.

Christine organises the sewing group who meet once a month in the Hall and recycle waste into usable items such as the pillows for Tender Funerals Illawarra.

## **No Interest Loans**

No interest loan (NILs) team have increased the number of loans made to low-income households to 816 loan applications approved over the last 12 months. Misty, Tina and Kerri have done a brilliant job this year. Kerri has delivered Southern Nils operating in Nowra, Misty and Tina have worked tirelessly overseeing the growth of NILs in Nowra and in Port Kembla with compassion and practicality to deliver this service, the values of which are so closely aligned with OCP's. They are calm, steadfast and so effective in all that they do.

## **Volunteers**

We could not do the work we do without the dedication and hard work of all our volunteers working in all aspects of OCP projects, in no interest loans, community development, Tender Funerals Illawarra and in Port Locals.

## **Business and Financial Management**

Our Business Manager Pam has also left OCP to take up the position as Chief Operating Officer at Tender Funerals Australia. We are fortunate to have retained Pam as the Treasurer of OCP, and continue to benefit from her experience, skills and advice.

I want to thank Sri our Financial Coordinator, who has provided accurate financial reporting to all OCP operations and keeps everything functioning, and everyone paid. OCP is a complicated organisation to navigate in its diversity of funding, budgets and social business areas, Sri does this with grace, patience and a wonderful sense of humour her work touches the whole of our organisation, she keeps us going and we are so lucky to have her.

Finally, thanks to Ann Martin and the board of OCP for their continued good governance and support.

The 2023 Community Service Awards Night of the Community Industry Group was a huge success for OCP staff and volunteers with 5 individuals being acknowledged for their contributions to the community services sector.

- Angelique Haplin – was the winner for the small organization category for Star of the future
- Nadine Giles – was awarded highly commended for her Leadership
- Laurie Edwards – was awarded highly commended for going above and beyond
- Misty Gurtala – was a finalist for going above and beyond
- Thony Van Der Mol – was a finalist for going above and beyond



OCP and Tender Funerals Illawarra staff, volunteers and Chair at the Community Industry group awards night



# Our Ventures Annual Reports





# Culture Bank

Welcome to the Culture Bank Wollongong Report for 2023. Assisting the new Culture Bank Coordinator, Lara Seresin has been OCP Chantelle Davis, who offers her advice, ideas. I want to thank Chantelle for her prize winning proof reading and excellent encouragement. Mike Malone (website backend work) has offered to assist us in streamlining the CBW 3 payment channels currently in use, into one channel, through Squarespace and the Stripe. I am hopeful this will be locked in in 2024.

New Culture Bank Wollongong brochures were designed and printed. A job long overdue.

Several shows funded by CBW were attended by Lara Seresin wearing her CBW hat. Dire Theatres Animal Farm. Lucy Mills album launch at the Forge and recently the 2-day SCW True Story Festival at Coledale Community centre. The Circus WOW Show A Comedy of Errors will be performed in December. The Gammin at The Knockout video is nearly at completion and Oh My Goddess heading towards performance stage.

**This year we had one funding round in June and received an extraordinary 27 applications. The largest amount ever received.**

Many amazing ideas are out there waiting to be supported. The \$10,000 funded 6 projects. It would've been so incredible to fund more projects. The proposals were inspired. The successful grant applications from the June Decision Dinner were as follows:

First Malika Reese "I am writing and researching a theatre piece called "A Gentle Talk About Death for Little Ones" which is a theatre piece with 1-3 performers. Research supports that talking with children about death early helps enormously. By discussing death in a simple, matter-of-fact way, we learn to accept death as an inevitable part of life without worrying about it. Losing loved ones is challenging. Talking openly about it is a tremendous gift for everyone. Exploring life and death with curiosity and creativity prepares us for when death eventually touches our lives. We live in such a death averse society. I have been teaching music to toddlers for nearly 20

years and have been a funeral celebrant for nearly 6. Blending these two skills together, I am excited at the possibility of having a conversation, that many think is too hard, for 4-10 years old.

Second Ali Jane Smith to create "Oh My Goddess" a one person show about collective experience "I have been looking for ways to write about collective experience and collective action, an important part of the culture and daily life of Wollongong. While the tradition of Wendy Richardson's Windy Gully, Katherine Thompsons Diving For Pearls and Rachel Browns The Dapto Chaser has seen depictions of working class life in the region recent work that accesses experimental and innovative theatrical traditions Such as The Strange Ways Ensembles 'Trash Talk 'and The Society of Histrionic Happenings/ Merrigong Theatre co production have demonstrated that work that addresses the issues people face can take many forms ". As a writer for the Sirens Return ,Ali Jane Smith had the opportunity to create a work that used the details of everyday life to draw out deeply felt issues of gender culture domestic and working life in Wollongong. Oh My Goddess makes use of this same strategy but with time rather than place as the focus of the story. An obscure but undaunted Goddess who has lived through both extraordinary and intimate events all over the world through thousands of years reflects on her life and decides to take the monumental step of becoming an everyday person with skin in the game of life.

Third Melissa Andrews from Beyond Empathy "We will work with local young people to produce music video to promote our Gamin at the Knockout song release. Gamin at the knockout is a rap song celebrating the resilience and creativity of young Aboriginal people in the Wollongong area. This project aims to create a music video for the song and conduct promotional activities including launching the video at the 2023 Koori Knockout on The NSW

Central Coast . Overall the project seeks to promote greater understanding and appreciation for Aboriginal culture and identity while showcasing the talent creativity and resilience of the Aboriginal people in Wollongong .

Fourth Adam O'Brien from the Dire Theatre Company . "The Dire Theatre Company Radio Variety Hour is a project from The Dire Theatre Company that meshes the historic brilliance of Orson Welles Mercury Theatre Radio plays with the modern day immediacy of theatre. By combining the two very different types of performance through the mode of sensory deprivation (audiences are blindfolded for the duration of the show) we are going to bring to our region fresh, independent, original creative opportunities as well as offering local performers the opportunity to utilise their skills and be paid for their effort. It's a special thing to be able to create and be paid for it, to supply our region with creative capital and be acknowledged for it. It's a beautiful thing." "We are so thankful for the support Culturebank is providing! As the region's only independent, semi-professional, multidisciplinary arts collective, we rely on benevolence and hard work to keep the doors open and to fund new and exciting independent projects. The support we've received from Culturebank will ensure that the current project we're working on is as close to exactly what our region deserves: quality indie art that not only provides opportunity for local artists and entertainment for local audiences, but also an avenue that gives us the tools to continue to incite change, without fear."

Fifth Circus WOW " A Comedy of Errorials" a show where women come together to share stories of triumph and disaster while creatively tackling life's mishaps. A Comedy of Errorials will provide performance opportunities for Circus WOW members to share their misses and their marks through laughter and movement. Our often overlooked and trodden upon crash

mats will be the celebrated stars of the show. Like a calm best friend these lovely pillows of protection are honest, loyal and soften the blow of unexpected faceplates. Funding will largely go into purchasing new crash mats. Circus Wow has for many years been a solid and enriching organisation in the Illawarra encouraging women to run away to the Circus.

Sixth Caro Baum for project True Story Festival. "Last year's inaugural True Story Festival was a toe in the water to gauge response; the response was so positive our audience begged for more. We are back with a program that builds on the foundations of the first with new elements and a return of the most popular, to bring readers in the Wollongong area a feast of voices and ideas to stimulate their thinking and reading and to start new conversations between strangers and friends. This year we have had several businesses join Culture Bank which is a real thrill for us. They are as follows. Yours and Owls Music promoters & local legends. David Sharpes "Sharpe Advisory " Collins Booksellers Thirroul, Illawarra Festival of Wood, Illawarra Lymphedema Clinic.

Our next funding round will be opened on Friday January 26 -February 2024.

I take this opportunity to invite members of the OCP Board who are not currently Culture Bank Members to consider signing up via our website today - and to encourage friends in their circles to join also. Over the past eleven years, it has been demonstrated time and time again - that many people who sign up as new members do so from direct personal encouragement from other individuals. Signing off now. Wishing everyone a beautiful Xmas and holiday. See you in 2024.

# Some new Culture Bank sponsors in 2023 include:





Hey thats a great idea!

Hey Karen , are you a member of CultureBank?If you care about culture in the Illawarra check it out Its brilliant



Culture Bank Wollongong is an independent and diverse organisation of residents from Wollongong and its suburbs who all share a common passion for nurturing and developing a richer cultural environment for everyone to enjoy. Using a grassroots crowd funding model of raising money within the community. We offer an effective and simple way to nurture and develop creativity that is free of bureaucracy and generous in spirit. Culture Bank Wollongong funds artists and other creative people through a democratic process that actively involves members.

# Jam n Bread

Over the last ten years, Jam n Bread has enabled diverse cultural communities to come together to jam, bake bread and share culture. Featuring musicians and dancers from different cultural backgrounds, Jam n Bread follows a participatory model, breaking down the barrier between musician and audience by inviting participants to engage in both music making and bread baking of the culture featured. Participants bring their own instruments and additional instruments are provided. All ages & all abilities welcome.

Jam n Bread New Gen Global Sounds project will be launched on streaming platforms in December. Our New Gen Global Project in partnership with Our Community Project's Jam n Bread saw the final mixes of 7 young people's original songs. Shalani Thomas, Grace Mae, Ava Dupont, Matilda Dickson, Ryan Pring, Josh Hinton and Dom Hinton – were mentored by local musicians Sako Dermenjian, George Stanton and Ann Lehmann. The young song writers were encouraged to create original music influenced by their own heritage and multicultural influences and were joined in the studio by culturally diverse session artists. Jam n Bread New Gen Global Sounds project will be launched on streaming platforms in December.

With support from New Gen artists, Jam n Bread is working on growing the demographic of participants 18-34 years who participate in sessions. Jam n Bread has a mailing list of over 200 people and a strong Facebook presence with 709 likes • 797 followers <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Music-Jam-n-Bread>

We look forward to a special 10th year celebration of Jam n Bread in 2024.

## Jam n Bread Lineup:

Feb 19, 2023 **Songs and session with The Other Noonans & Shalani Thomas**

28 present in person  
863 reached on facebook

March 26, 2023 **Indian Music Bollywood and beyond featuring George Stanton (Electric Korma), Ananth Narayan Bhat on vocals and tabla and Ajit Godbole on sitar.**

25 present in person  
845 reached on facebook

May 21, 2023 **Internationally renowned sarangi player Sanjeet Mishra and accompanied by local Illawarra table virtuoso Chris Fields sharing their music at Music Jam n Bread at the Servo**

20 present in person  
290 reached on facebook

July 16, 2023 **Hindustani voice & harmonium with Janhavi Godbole**

20 present in person

352 reached on facebook

Aug 5, 2023 **Jam n Bread received a grant from Culture Bank for film maker Elizabeth Tadic & producer Sarah Hudson to make a film about the Latvian Upenieks sisters sharing their Latvian musical culture in the Illawarra.** The film which can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/Tz8Gxxch198> was launched at a memorial for Maija Upenieks at the Coledale Hall

Oct 2, 2023 **Colombian song and rhythm with Annamaria Gomez Jaramillo**

40 present in person  
291 reached on facebook

Oct 21, 2023 **Culture Mix Festival:**

Jam n Bread coordinated four cultural workshops for the Culture Mix festival for people of all ages and abilities to share culture through interactive workshops at the Music Lounge, Wollongong Town Hall. They were:

- Colombian Songs and Rhythms with Anamaria Gómez
- Hindustani Voice, Harmonium and Raga with Janhavi Godbole
- Macedonian Song, Rhythms and Dance Music with Balkan Boogie
- Māori Song, Poi and Ukelele with Earnie Beach and Nga Hau e Wha

Jam n Bread also ran an outreach program with The WollCon Junior Strings ensemble learning folk tune arrangements especially for the Culture Mix festival. The project was the vision of Jam n Bread coordinator Ann Lehmann-Kuit who was also in the Culture Mix Advisory Group.

Vēsma Putniņa arranged the Latvian song Daugav Abas Malas for Junior Strings, and WollCon ChiME teacher Anamaria Gómez arranged the Colombian song Duérme Negrito. The Junior Strings performed with Vēsma Putniņa and her two daughters and Anamaria Gómez at the Culture Mix festival at the Church on the Mall hall 2.15 - 2.35pm. A very receptive crowd, mostly of family and friends attended. WollCon Junior Strings conductor Adrian Davies commented that this was a remarkable experience for the orchestra.

In addition Jam n Bread provided video documentary which formed the base for promo advertising Culture Mix

<https://www.facebook.com/cityofwollongong/videos/1005037807363234/>

# Connecting with culture through music, bread making & baking.





Music of India with Internationally renowned Indian sarangi player Sanjeet Mishra accompanied by local Illawarra virtuoso Chris Fields (tabla)



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Music of India with Internationally renowned Indian sarangi player Sanjeet Mishra accompanied by local Illawarra virtuoso Chris Fields (tabla)







Balkan Boogie at Culture Mix



Vēsma Putniņa and daughters at Culture Mix with WollCon Junior Strings with conductor Adrian Davies



Janhavi Godbole at Culture Mix



Vēsma Putniņa and daughters at Culture Mix with WollCon Junior Strings with conductor Adrian Davies

# No Interest Loan Scheme

Southern NILs was established in 2005 and began offering affordable finance to low-income earners living in the southern suburbs i.e., Port Kembla, Berkeley, Cringila and Warrawong to purchase household goods and services. Over the past 18 years of providing loans to our area we have changed, but our principal remains the same – to assist clients to become more financially independent.

This is our fifth year using a new NILs model of being a Collaborative Loan Provider. Southern Nils do interviews for the whole of the Illawarra/Shoalhaven area (alongside other providers). We also assess loans throughout NSW and have significant ties with other community organisations.

During 2022-2023 the amount of our loans increased to borrow up to \$2,000. Our loan purposes were also expanded to include Bond, Rent in Advance, Rates and Costs associated with natural disaster. The eligible income amounts were increased to earning less than \$70,000 annual income (before tax) as a single person or \$100,000 annual income (before tax) for a couple or family.

In October 2022, our team was fortunate to attend the NILs Conference “Recharge & Refresh” in Melbourne. It was a wonderful time, meeting people and acquiring expertise so we can increase our assistance to our clients. Tina and Misty were awarded a “Recognise Award for ongoing work with clients.”

## Staff and Volunteers

The NILs team comprises of Misty and Tina in Port Kembla and Keri in the Shoalhaven area. Misty continues to be the back bone of Southern NILs and has been servicing our community for over 13 years.

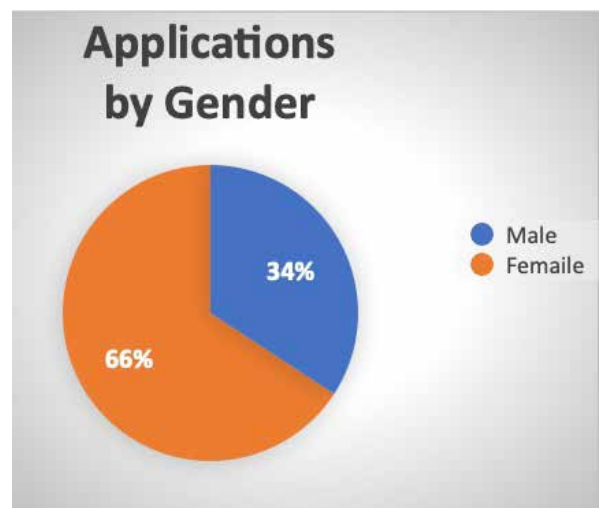
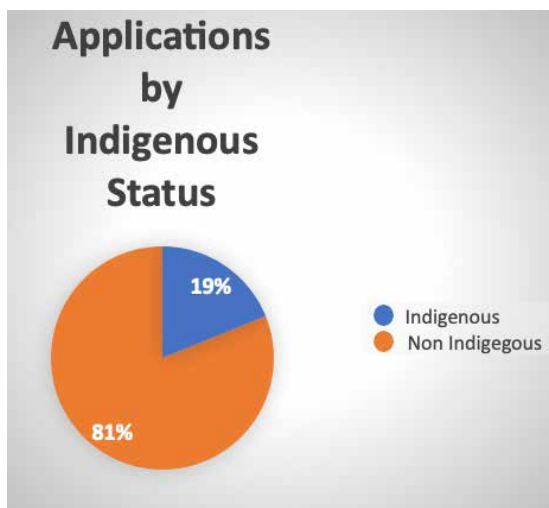
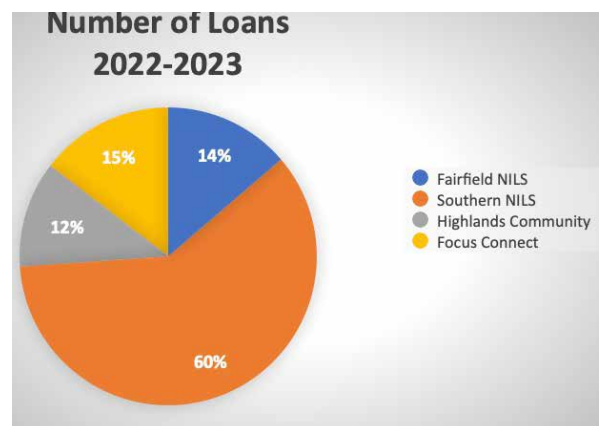
We welcomed back Anne Steyer in 2022-2023 as a volunteer with OCP, specifically Southern NILs. Anne has been volunteering with NILs on and off for over 16 years and is a much-appreciated wealth of knowledge. NILs lost Chantelle Davis from our team, but she didn’t go far, taking on the OCP Community Development role.

The 2022-2023 financial year saw Southern NILs approving 816 people with a no interest loan. This is a substantial increase from loans provided in 2021-2022 of 593 loans.

In 2022-2023, we conducted 491 interviews, and the rest were interviewed by our Client Support Providers. 816 households have been assisted. Previously the loan purpose trend was for white goods however, over time car registration and repairs are taking over.

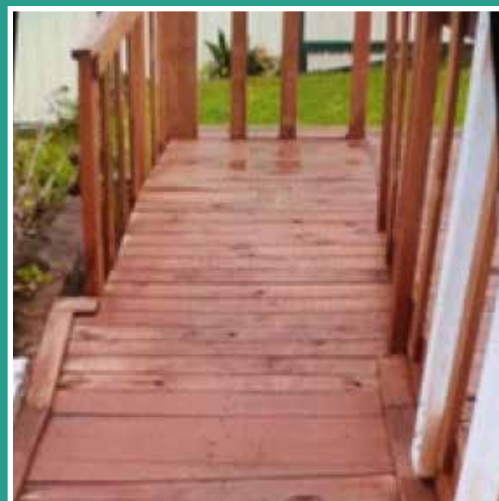
Other interesting statistics are of the 816 people we assisted with a loan; 66% were made by a female applicant and 19% identified as indigenous.

We continue to assist our community with providing Electricity Vouchers to those in need. As costs of living continues to increase, including electricity, we are seeing an increased need for this service.



*"Hi, thanks very much. It's so much appreciated. You are the most caring lady I have met in a very long time. Keep up the fantastic work. Thanks again"*

*"Thank you Misty! I'm so thankful for the support you provide, it has a big positive impact on our day-to-day standard of living. Have a wonderful weekend"*



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*"Hi Tina. Just like to say thank you with our NILS loans, we really appreciate it. If it wasn't for NILS loans we would not have all our furniture. Thank you all. Thank you Misty and staff. We appreciate it."*



*"Hi Tina, thank you very much for all your help. We really appreciate it"*

# Tender Funerals Illawarra

This has been an exciting year for Tender Funerals Illawarra with significant growth in funeral numbers, our space and the team. This financial year we have supported 464 funeral client families to farewell someone in the way that was meaningful for them.

Helping families to have the funeral that's right for them at a cost that is affordable, our Benevolent fund contributed over \$42,000 to support financially disadvantaged members of our community who struggled to meet funeral costs.

End of life rituals and ceremonies continue to be incredibly diverse and eclectic, and we loved supporting families in these opportunities to challenge what having a funeral looks like.

Being guided by the families needs, we've helped arrange funerals from a strict Orthodox Mass, a simple service in the Crematorium Chapel to a 'bush doof' that was a weekend long celebration of life.

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## Our People

Going from 295 to 464 funerals this year has meant a lot of change and restructuring of roles. We farewelled our Operations Manager, Angela Figluizzi who resigned to take on a new career path.

We separated the elements of this role and created positions for Jade Kelly as the Volunteer Coordinator/ Funeral Director and Wes Bas as Operations Coordinator/ Funeral Director.

Angelique Halpin joined the team as a part time administrator to support the Funeral Directors and General Manager with her expertise in finance and administration.

Lauren Clinch returned to join the team again as a part time Funeral Director and Amy Sagar returned from maternity leave as a part time Funeral Director also. We welcomed Ciaran Keaveney to our casual pool replacing Susan McMurdo who stepped away from her role.

We have a tight team of about 20 regular volunteers that give their valuable time and skills to make all of this possible and we could not do any of this without them.

Our two University of Wollongong Social Work students, Elle McCormish and Chloe Clifford both completed 500hrs of placement and made valuable contributions to the newsletter and the volunteer trivia night.

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## Tender Funerals Illawarra Renovations

With the completion of the first round of works funded by the Port Kembla Community Investment Fund grant, we were able to move into the new office space and start using the refrigeration and family wash and dress

rooms. This beautiful new space has been invaluable, accommodating the growing team, but more importantly allowing more families to be involved in the care of their person.

The final stage of our renovation, the landscaping was made possible with another contribution from the Port Kembla Community Investment fund of \$280,415.

Works kicked off in May and by the end of June the site had been excavated, concrete laid and the feature wall constructed. With final landscaping completed by October 2023.

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## Funding and Support

We are grateful this year to receive additional funding from Wollongong City Council Heritage Grant Fund for \$3,650 to go towards the repainting of the building frontage and conservation of the fire station door.

The Department of Social Services granted us \$4,917 as part of its 2022-23 Volunteer Grants Project. This will be used for a printer/scanner and program for helping families make slideshow presentations and for covering the cost of Police Checks for Volunteers and some equipment for the garden.

We are very thankful for some other community contributions like a defibrillator from Bendigo Community Bank Oak Flats Helping Hands to Save Lives Campaign, several Surface Pro laptops from Novigi and one of our long-term volunteers bought us a dishwasher for the new kitchen.

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## After Care Program (Artists in Residence & Community Events)

The Tender Funerals Illawarra choir and sewing group continues to be a beneficial program providing heartfelt connections and support. Early in the year, Michele held a flower pounding workshop that was well attended and the choir performed beautifully at our annual memorial event at Mt Keira.

This year Our Community Remembers Memorial Event was well attended by about 70 people and was featured by WiN news and The Mercury. This reached some people outside of our normal community and it was inspiring to hear feedback from those people saying how helpful and healing the experience was and how glad they were they took the risk to come and check it out.

*"All the people we met at Tender made our family, and myself especially, feel at ease, so very comfortable, understood & accepted as to our wishes for .....*

*We loved your facilities at the old fire station – no piped music, no velvet curtains etc – just a natural setting and like a family home in a lot of ways – we all commentated how nice it was and how what we dreaded would be a cold & difficult process to be endured, was in actuality, a warm loving process for us all."*

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*"I want to thank you for facilitating such a rich learning experience for our social workers. They all have feedback how useful the excursion and presentation has been especially in relation to Tender's affordability and family -centric approach.*

*You are truly a gift to the Illawarra!"*

*This financial year we have supported 464 funeral client families to farewell someone in the way that was meaningful for them.*





A decorative white line graphic consisting of a long, sweeping curve that starts from the left edge, rises to a peak, and then descends to form a loop before ending on the right edge.

# Community Development Annual Report



## **OCP Community Development Statement**

This year the position of Community Development Manager has slightly changed from previous years. The community development funding this year allowed for the recruitment of our Admin position Leila, and the Community Development Manager Chantelle who started the role in June. OCP community development has continued to function throughout the year as normal by successfully supporting current and a couple of new projects whilst seeking innovative project ideas for community targeting early intervention and community capacity building within 2022 - 2024. We saw a reflection of the hard work at the Annual Lantern Parade which despite potential unexpected concerns on the night of the event, ended up being a welcomed community gathering event and success with over 300 people attending and enjoying the festivities of the night.

## **Department of Communities and Justice**

Community development at Our Community Project (OCP) funding is from the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), previously known as FACS (Family and Community Services) for programs and community capacity building to Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI).

DCJ funding pays for Community Development projects, Jam N Bread, Culture Bank and contributes to the administration of OCP.

We are continuing to report in Dex (data exchange) as required in our funding agreement and working closely with DCJ and Community Industry Group (CIG) to ensure we are updated on relevant information and information relating to reporting requirements.

# Annual Lantern Parade

Our amazing winter Annual Lantern Parade was held again this year with over 300 people who attended and supported this spectacular community event. Although the weather was wet to begin with, and an unexpected blackout which affected Port Kembla (including Port Kembla Primary School) just prior to the event starting, it was still not enough to affect or dampen the excitement and enthusiasm of all those who showed up for this anticipated community event. With their creative lanterns, festive music, captivating stories, a display of artistic lanterns, fairy lights with great entertainment and good food ensured it was another great night amongst community & friends.

This year we continued to work with Port Kembla Primary School, who throughout the year did lantern making in class so students could bring their creative lanterns on the night. Kind Ed Art led the parade also provided entertainment throughout the night and was amazing at keeping everyone involved.

After community feedback we decided to start the Lantern Parade at the beautiful Coomaditchie Lagoon. Then the lantern parade made its way from Coomaditchie Lagoon along the path to Port Kembla Primary School where we had light up stilt walkers, performers, music, hot beverages, biscuits, and delicious food available.

As with previous years we engaged and worked with several people and groups to ensure this event was a success and some of the people we would like to thank are:

- Ms Lucie Robson and the amazing staff at Port Kembla Primary School

- Matilda & friends for the music at Port Kembla Primary School
- Honora Jenkins – Kind Ed Art, who is the amazing MC and lantern inspirer
- Lillian Pang – The Storyline, for her captivating stories
- Nina Cantina – catering the delicious minestrone soup prior to the Lantern Parade
- The Port Kembla Primary School Canteen providing food throughout the festivities after the parade
- Geoff and the Port Kembla Men's group for handling logistics on the day and for providing hot beverages throughout the night.
- Circus Wow and the amazing stilt walking perfumers
- Our amazing OCP Staff and volunteers who helped throughout the event with setting up and providing hot chocolate.
- Casey Mitchel and Lake Illawarra Police Department
- Sheppos Shuttlebus Service
- Tim and the Fire and Rescue NSW Warrawong Fire Station
- James Patrick Photography – Video photographer
- Kelly Ryan Creative – Photographer

We would also like to thank the amazing community members and OCP staff who volunteered their time to assist on the night and everyone who attended and made this magical night possible and an event to remember.



*300 people attended and supported this spectacular community event.*



# Spoon Carving

The opportunity for a spoon carving workshop were possible due to the success of funding through Wollongong City Councils Small Cultural Grants. Two workshops were able to be completed in September and November. The workshops were facilitated by the creative talents of Will Mitry and hosted by OCP. The opportunity which was 4 lessons over the duration of 4 weeks, allowed for participants to learn the skills and techniques to carve from a block of wood and shape it into unique wooden spoons!

The wood carving workshops have several benefits besides creating an artistic and

functional wooden spoon. The process is therapeutic, a relief from stress, anger, or anxiety, transforming them into something beautiful and meaningful with a sense of achievement.

This second class for this year was conducted throughout November and has been a success with both classes at full capacity.

This great opportunity for community was a good example of a community initiative supported by OCP.



*This great opportunity for community was a good example of a community initiative supported by OCP.*



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# Community Awards Night - Community Industry Group

Our Community Project is proud to have some of our amazing staff and volunteers recognised at the recent CIG Community Awards Night in September. It was a great night for all who were able to attend and an opportunity to celebrate our amazing community workers and work they do daily. OCP recognises that within our roles it's not often opportunities are available to commend and showcase our dedicated staff and volunteers who work tirelessly to provide crucial services and quality care to our community, and an opportunity to show our gratitude. We had nominated staff and volunteers over several categories and after the judges reviewed all the nominations, we were successful in the following awards:

Angelique Halpin (Tender Funerals Illawarra) won the Sector Star of the Future Award.

Nadine Giles (Tender Funerals Illawarra) received highly commended in the Leadership Award.

Laurie Edwards (Tender Funerals Illawarra) received highly commended in the Above & Beyond Individual category.

Misty Gurtala (NILS) and Thony van der Mol (Tender Funerals Illawarra) were both finalists in the Above & Beyond Individual Awards.

Having so many of our staff recognised is a true indicator of the hard work and dedication our amazing staff and volunteer do and an amazing achievement.



*Our Community Project is proud to have some of our amazing staff and volunteers recognised at the recent CIG Community Awards Night*



# Social Circus

Social Circus began in 2022 as a collaboration between OCP and Women Illawarra after two years of lockdowns to provide a socialising opportunity for kids and parents to meet once a week to play, create, learn fun games and, most importantly, socialise.

Behavioural science studies have shown that lack of socialization has led to various cognitive and mental health issues and opportunities such as the regular Social Circus has attracted community of all ages and abilities throughout 3 terms in 2022 - 2023.

This program has included an opportunity for community to attend two Circus Equipment making workshops through OCP to make juggling balls and Hoola Hoops for participants to take home and practice. Kind Art Ed has been contracted and continued to lead the events and workshops along with staff from OCP and Women Illawarra and the opportunity to engage with individuals, families, and communities to support wellbeing and increase capacity will be continuing in 2024.



# Sewing Group

The Sew for Zero Waste Group have continued to meet every 1st Saturday of the month to provide an opportunity for community members to attend, socialise, learn, or develop on sewing skills in a friendly environment. The sewing group run by Christina, Lisa and Eileen has been functioning since 2011 to help make reusable and sustainable bags and was formed by a group of community volunteers that wanted to rid the environment of single-use plastic bags. The group is also an opportunity for community members to get

assistance and support with their own sewing projects. Since July 2022 the sewing group have produced 179 pillows for Tender Funerals Illawarra and has been involved in OCP events as well as other local events selling reusable bags and aprons made from donated materials to fundraise money for the Australian Seabird Rescue South Coast.





# Annual Christmas Feast



OCP annual Christmas Feast at King George V Oval on the 15th of December 2022 and was a great night of festivities and brought together staff, board, and community to share some good food while enjoying local music and entertainment. The event was supported by local services and was the last session of the year for social circus allowing participants from previous sessions showcase their developed circus skills as well as an opportunity to develop some new sewing skills.

# Men's Group



The Port Kembla Men's Group has played a pivotal role in supporting several of our events and programs throughout the year. As well as their weekly program every Wednesday the men's group have been maintaining the gardens, fulfilling community and other service requests for a small donation to make specific items. This opportunity is a reflection to the wealth of knowledge and skills amongst the men who attend the regular group. Currently the Men's Group has an average of 12 members each week and provides an opportunity for all ages and abilities to come together socialise and learn woodwork and metal skills.

# Community Hall

For bookings

Email: [admin@ocp.org.au](mailto:admin@ocp.org.au)

Phone: (02) 4276 3433



*The upgrade to the hall has been well received by the community.*



A decorative teal line graphic that starts as a wide arc on the left, curves downwards and to the right, loops back to form a circle, and then continues as a thin line towards the right edge of the page.

# Business and Financial Report

**ALEX WHITEHEAD** BCom LLB CPA  
Certified Practising Accountant  
ABN 74 912 871 902

Level 1, 310 Pacific Highway Crows Nest  
PO Box 642 Crows Nest NSW 1585  
Phone (02) 9966 4499

AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION  
UNDER SECTION 307C OF THE CORPORATIONS ACT 2001

To the Directors of Our Community Project

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June, 2023 there have been:

- (a) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Corporations Act 2001 in relation to the audit; and
- (b) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Alex Whitehead  
Sydney  
4 December, 2023



OUR COMMUNITY PROJECT  
ACN 634 229 959

DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

In the opinion of the directors:

- (a) The company is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements. Accordingly, as described in note 1 to the financial statements, the attached special purpose financial statements have been prepared for the purpose of complying with the Corporations Act 2001 requirements to prepare and distribute financial statements to the members of the company;
- (b) The attached financial statements comply with the Corporations Act 2001, the Accounting Standards as described in note 1 to the financial statements, the Corporations Regulations 2001 and other mandatory professional reporting requirements;
- (c) The attached financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June, 2023 and the performance of the company for the year ended on that date.
- (d) There are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed this fourth day of December 2023 in accordance with a resolution of the directors.



.....  
Director

OUR COMMUNITY PROJECT  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT 30 JUNE, 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash		527,061	408,776
Receivables-trade debtors		44,148	98,752
Prepaid expenses		<u>19,254</u>	<u>2,326</u>
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>590,463</u>	<u>509,854</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	2	<u>663,493</u>	<u>689,785</u>
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>663,493</u>	<u>689,785</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<u>1,253,956</u>	<u>1,199,639</u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade creditors		238,521	231,192
Loan from Social Enterprise Finance Australia Ltd		27,000	27,000
Provision for employee entitlements		82,263	88,206
Provision for unexpended grants		36,542	113,816
Grants received in advance		<u>22,250</u>	-
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>406,576</u>	<u>460,214</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Loan from Social Enterprise Finance Australia Ltd		199,475	219,283
Provision for employee entitlements		<u>39,692</u>	<u>70,269</u>
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>239,167</u>	<u>289,552</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<u>645,743</u>	<u>749,766</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<u>608,213</u>	<u>449,873</u>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained surplus		<u>608,213</u>	<u>449,873</u>
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<u>608,213</u>	<u>449,873</u>

The above statement of financial position is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

OUR COMMUNITY PROJECT

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2023

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
<b>INCOME</b>		
Grants - government	616,932	343,160
Interest	1,418	217
Other	<u>2,233,148</u>	<u>1,812,109</u>
	<u>2,851,498</u>	<u>2,155,486</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Audit	2,500	-
Depreciation	26,292	28,171
Salaries and on-costs	1,180,142	922,499
Other	<u>1,484,224</u>	<u>1,297,707</u>
	<u>2,693,158</u>	<u>2,248,377</u>
Profit/(loss) for the year	158,340	(92,891)

The above statement of comprehensive income is to be read in conjunction with the attached compilation report



OUR COMMUNITY PROJECT  
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2023

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Cashflows from operating activities		
Grants – government	561,908	313,626
Interest	1,418	217
Other income	2,287,752	1,732,637
Payments to suppliers	<u>(2,712,985)</u>	<u>(2,464,268)</u>
Net cash provided/(used) by operating activities	<u>138,093</u>	<u>(417,788)</u>
Cashflows from investing activities		
Payments for building renovation	=	<u>(168,130)</u>
Net cash used by investing activities	=	<u>(168,130)</u>
Cashflows from financing activities		
Increase/(repay) borrowings	<u>(19,808)</u>	<u>99,204</u>
Net cash (used)/provided by financing activities	<u>(19,808)</u>	<u>99,204</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	118,285	(486,714)
Cash at the beginning of the financial year	<u>408,776</u>	<u>895,490</u>
Cash at the end of the financial year	<u>527,061</u>	<u>408,776</u>
Reconciliation of Net cash provided/(used) by operating activities to Profit/(loss) for the year		
Profit/(loss) for the year	158,340	(92,891)
Depreciation	26,292	28,171
Changes in operating assets and liabilities		
Decrease/(increase) in receivables	54,604	(79,472)
(Increase) in prepaid expenses	(16,928)	(2,326)
Increase in trade creditors	7,329	39,912
(Decrease)/increase in provision for employee entitlements	(36,520)	21,265
(Decrease) in provision for unexpended grants	(77,274)	(232,148)
Increase/(decrease) in grants received in advance	<u>22,250</u>	<u>(100,299)</u>
Net cash provided/(used) by operating activities	<u>138,093</u>	<u>(417,788)</u>

The above statement of cash flows is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

**ALEX WHITEHEAD** BCom LLB CPA  
Certified Practising Accountant  
ABN 74 912 871 902

Level 1, 310 Pacific Highway Crows Nest  
PO Box 642 Crows Nest NSW 1585  
Phone (02) 9966 4499

COMPILATION REPORT TO  
OUR COMMUNITY PROJECT

I have compiled the accompanying detailed statement of comprehensive income of Our Community Project ("the Company") for the years ended 30 June, 2023.

*The responsibility of the directors*

The directors of the Company are solely responsible for the information contained in the accompanying detailed statement of comprehensive income and have determined that it is appropriate to meet their needs and for the purpose that it was prepared.

*My responsibility*

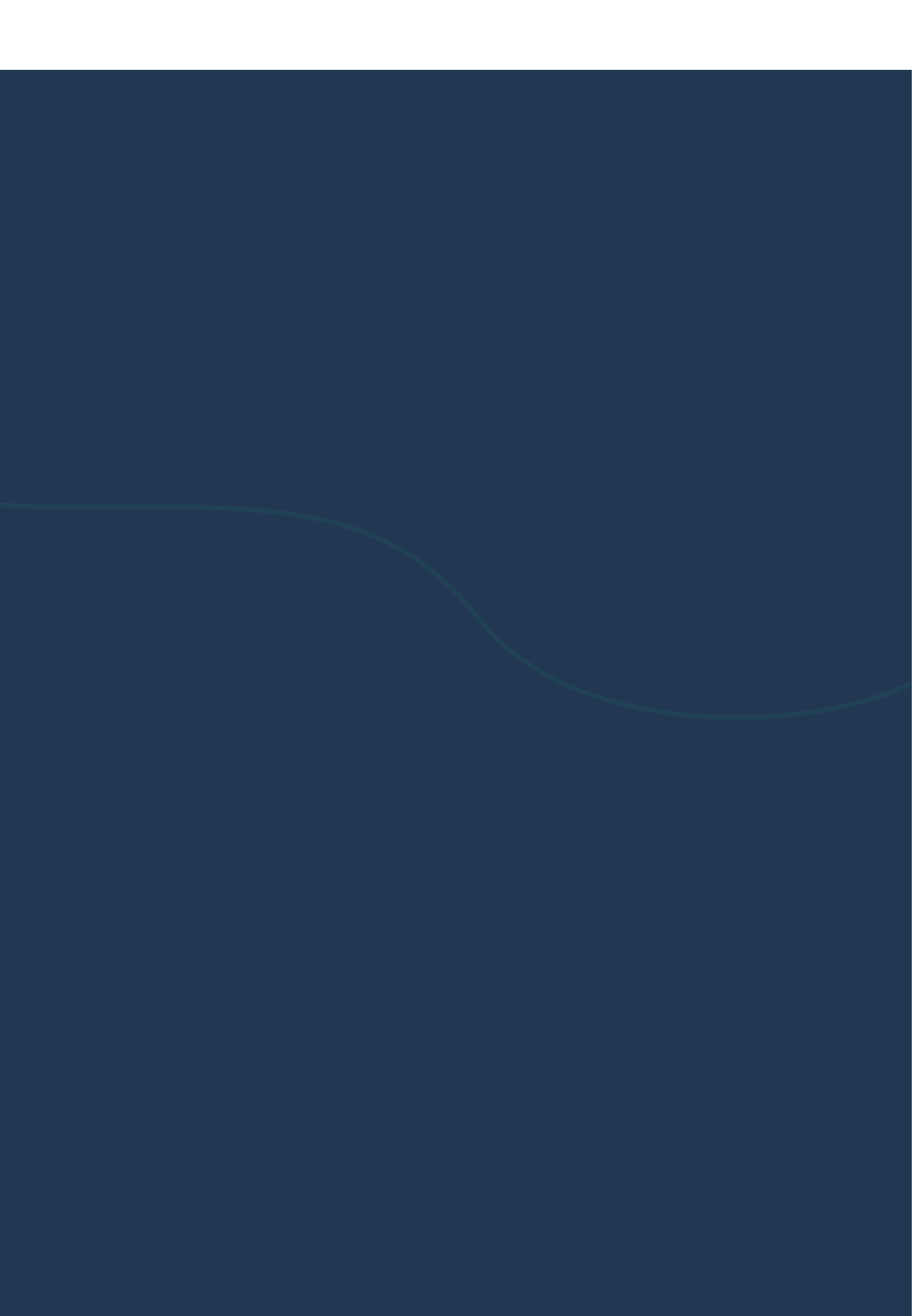
On the basis of the information provided by the directors I have compiled the accompanying detailed statement of comprehensive income in accordance with APES 315 *Compilation of Financial Information*.

My procedures use accounting expertise to collect, classify and summarise the financial information, which the directors provided, in compiling the accompanying detailed statement of comprehensive income. My procedures do not include verification or validation procedures. No audit or review has been performed and accordingly no assurance is expressed.

The accompanying detailed statement of comprehensive income was prepared exclusively for the benefit of the directors. I do not accept responsibility to any other person for the contents of the detailed statement of comprehensive income.

Alex Whitehead  
Sydney  
4 December, 2023







## Our Community Project

(02) 4276 3433 | [admin@ourcommunityproject.org.au](mailto:admin@ourcommunityproject.org.au)  
PO Box 9, Port Kembla NSW 2505

DESIGNED BY

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studio