

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS APPROACH



THE GRIT AND RESILIENCE PROGRAM

This document has been prepared by the Grit and Resilience Program in consultation with Upper Hume Murray Primary Care Partnership.

The Grit and Resilience Program came about after the Rural City of Wangaratta and community rallied in 2018 to address mental health and suicide in the municipality.

Coordinated by the Rural City of Wangaratta, the Program is guided by a consortium of agencies along with four community partners.

The program is evidence informed and uses a collective impact approach to co-design a series of community-based interventions, supports and resources.

Within the Program there are three priority areas, two of which were directly nominated by community. These priorities are:

- Creating connections – improving opportunities for people to connect.
- Including and involving – promoting inclusion.
- Postvention - promoting a change in community attitudes and in the response of services before and after a death by suicide within our community.

The Grit and Resilience Program purpose is to *“Build an inclusive, supportive, and well-connected community, with the capacity to improve well-being from within”*.

The priority of the Program is to work with communities to build the Grit and Resilience of all people within the Wangaratta community to achieve long term, sustainable and transferable positive outcomes.

The Grit and Resilience program values are as follows:

- We are community focused, led and designed.
- We strive to ensure that our activities are relevant to the entire local government area.
- We recognise the interdependence of wellbeing across our community and that social and environmental determinates of health are critical.
- We will actively work together.
- We support and facilitate inclusion and acceptance.
- We will communicate with each other and all members of our community with respect, honesty and in good faith.

Working together to build and sustain Grit and Resilience across the Rural City of Wangaratta community

P: (03) 5722 0888 | E: gritandresilience@wangaratta.vic.gov.au | W: www.wangaratta.vic.gov.au

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PROGRAM AIMS

The program aims to deliver benefits for our community, including but not limited to:

- Strengthening community connections.
- Strengthening community support for positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Changing attitudes to mental health, including towards those affected by suicide.
- Developing inter-community links for those impacted by suicide and mental illness.
- Reducing suicides within the Rural City of Wangaratta community.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Grit and Resilience Program is evidence informed and uses a Collective Impact approach, which adheres to the following:

- A common social agenda.
- A shared measurement framework.
- A shared plan of action for mutually reinforcing activities.
- Open communication fostering genuine collaboration.
- A backbone organisation with the skills and resources to keep everyone on track.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS APPROACH

The Grit and Resilience Program is committed to working with people from the Rural City of Wangaratta community to ensure the Program's activities are informed by community knowledge, experience and skills.

The Grit and Resilience Program will initiate, facilitate and support community participation in planning, implementing and monitoring initiatives in keeping with the Program's values.

Community Partners will be engaged as members of the Consortium, to ensure the Program's strategic direction is informed by community perspectives and knowledge.

The Grit and Resilience Program is building the capacity of community members and member agencies across the Rural City of Wangaratta to:

- Increase community engagement and participation of community members.

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS APPROACH

- Deliver community driven initiatives.
- Facilitate a mentorship process with the aspiration of embedding a Community Partner Chair into the Consortium.

METHOD

To formally partner with Community Partners the Grit and Resilience program will:

- Engage a minimum of two Community Partners to become valued members of the Program Consortium.
- Undertake transparent recruitment by:
 - Providing robust and accurate position descriptions.
 - Broadly disseminating invitations (online and hard copy) to participate or providing a rationale explaining why particular community members are being targeted for recruitment.
 - Providing accurate documentation which outlines the purpose of participation, timelines, selection criteria, processes and support options.
- Ensure opportunities for reviewing community participation processes and providing and receiving feedback.
- Work with Consortium Members to address access issues such as:
 - Using plain language documents.
 - Considering the convenience of meeting locations and times for Community Partners.
- Value diversity in Community Partners and all views by:
 - Consistently asking 'who is missing?' and 'how can we hear their view?'
 - Having equal regard for the views, knowledge and experiences of Agency Representatives and Community Partners.
- Acknowledge Community Partner participation through a 'voluntary gift card honorarium' system detailed in the position description.
- Provide capacity building and support for Agencies and Community Partners through:
 - Program orientation (including a buddy system for all Community Partners).
 - Workshops*
 - Training*
 - Mentoring for taking leadership roles within the Consortium*
 - Buddy systems processes*

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS APPROACH



- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Ensure feedback about participation outcomes is communicated to all participants.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The aim of the Grit and Resilience Program evaluation is to support innovation and assist in guiding adaptation of the Program to ensure optimal outcomes for the Rural City of Wangaratta community.

Therefore, the Grit and Resilience Program is working with external evaluators who are seeking to explore:

- How well the Grit and Resilience Program engages the Wangaratta community in a Collective Impact approach.
- How effective the Consortium is at overseeing and supporting the progress of the program.
- What information or issues emerge as the Grit and Resilience Program takes shape?
- What initial results reveal about expected progress of the Program?
- What variations in effects are seen, including what works and what does not?
- How different values, perspectives, and relationships have influenced the Program's innovation and its outcomes.
- How the capacity of the Wangaratta community is changing in relation to identifying and implementing locally responsive initiatives that improve grit and resilience.
- How the larger system or environment is responding to the innovation.

Community Partners will be included in the evaluation process to ensure the Program builds an evidence base in understanding of how the Community Partner role influences the above areas of exploration.

*LEADERSHIP AND MENTORING PROCESS

The intent of the Grit and Resilience Leadership and Mentoring process is to provide current and future Community Partners with leadership and mentoring opportunities within the Grit and Resilience Consortium.

In July 2021, the Grit and Resilience Program adopted four leadership and mentoring opportunities for inclusion in the Community Partnership Approach in the hope of achieving the aspiration of having a Community Partner as the Chair of the Consortium. The four opportunities are:

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS APPROACH

- Boosting the Buddy System
- Partnership with Alpine Valleys Community Leadership
- Governance Training
- Shadow the Chair

With Community Partners bringing a vast array of experience, education, and capability to the Consortium, some of our existing Community Partners have already undertaken training and/or have significant experience in chairing or have been involved in high level meetings, whereas others have not.

The inclusion of all four options of leadership and mentoring in the Community Partnership Approach, considers the differing needs and requirements of all Community Partners. However, no one of these options will guarantee that a Community Partner will subsequently nominate to be the Chair of the Grit and Resilience Program into the future. The Leadership Mentoring Program is intended to provide a support system for Community Partners to participate if they so choose and to broadly support development of community leaders.

Boosting the Buddy System

Grit and Resilience 'Buddies' are recommended to establish general guidelines for their work together. The Buddy system is not a compulsory activity for our Community Partners. It is expected that at the beginning of a Buddy match, a structure and a clear set of expectations will be documented so all participants have a strong foundation to work from. This also ensures consistency across the Buddy system and support for evaluation.

Step 1:

Community Partners and Organisational Representatives mutually agree on a partnership.

Step 2:

At the first meeting, the Buddy system agreement (appendix 1) is discussed, completed and agreed to.

Step 3:

Buddies meet at their agreed time for a period of six months. At the six months point, the agreement is reviewed, amended and approved for an additional six months if both parties believe that the match is valuable. A reflective journal is then completed individually by each party and submitted to the Grit and Resilience evaluators to be included in the evaluation.

Step 4:

Cycle repeats.

Shadow the Chair

Shadow the Chair is an opportunity for a Community Partner to express an interest in shadowing the Chair of the Grit and Resilience Program for a period of five months.

The Community Partner would shadow the Chair for a five-month period and participate in all activities under the mandate of the Chair. This would provide an opportunity for the

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS APPROACH



Community Partner to gain a real time understanding of the role requirements, supports and resources needed to be the Chair of the Grit and Resilience Program.

It would be expected that by the two-month mark of shadowing, that the current Chair of the Grit and Resilience Program would 'step back' into the shadowing seat and allow the Community Partner to 'take the reins' of the Chair position. This would also be the time at which the Community Partner could withdraw from the shadowing program if they did not feel comfortable to take on the responsibilities of the role.

Step 1:

At every Community Partner briefing (conducted on the Monday prior to the Consortium meeting), every Community Partner will be asked if they would like to take up this opportunity.

Step 2:

If a Partner decides to participate then the following steps will be enacted:

- a) Current chair is informed and introduced to their new 'shadow'.
- b) Support officer includes/invites Community Partner to all meetings scheduled for the next two months with the Chair.
- c) Community Partner is included into all communication between the Chair and the Program team for the next two months.
- d) At the conclusion of the two months, the following steps are enacted:
 - i. Community Partner will be invited to 'take the reins' of the Chair position for a three-month period, where the current chair will 'step back' into the shadowing seat. If the Community Partner agrees to this invitation, the following steps will be enacted:
 - Support Officer includes/invites Community Partner to all meetings scheduled for the next three months as the Chair.
 - Community Partner is documented and recognised as the Chair of the Grit and Resilience Program for the period of three months.
 - The Community Partner will have a reflective session with the current Chair directly after each Consortium meeting, to receive feedback, it is also an opportunity for questions to be asked and for planning to take place for the next meeting.
- e) If the Community Partner decides to withdraw from the 'Shadow the Chair' program, then the Community Partner will be asked to complete a reflective journal documenting their reflections and learning during this experience. This will be submitted to the Grit and Resilience evaluators to be included in the evaluation.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS APPROACH

If the Community Partner completes the five months 'Shadow the Chair' program, the Community Partner will be asked to complete a reflective journal documenting their reflections and learning during this experience, and it will be submitted to the Grit and Resilience evaluators to be included in the evaluation.

Conditions:

- By participating in this program, the Community Partner is under no obligation to nominate for Chair of the Grit and Resilience Program.
- If a Community Partner undertakes this program, and it overlaps with nominations (February each year), the Community Partner can nominate without having to complete the program at all or part thereof. Additionally, if the Partner decides not to nominate and another Chair is elected, then the new chair will carry on supporting the Partner, with agreement from the Partner.
- It is recommended that only one Partner participate in the program at a time. (Meaning there are only two opportunities per year for a Community Partner to participate.)

Partnership with Alpine Valleys Community Leadership

This activity would be a partnership between [Alpine Valleys Community Leadership – Inspiring Tomorrows Leaders Today \(avclp.org.au\)](http://avclp.org.au) (AVCL) and the Grit and Resilience Program.

This opportunity would support the Grit and Resilience Program Community Partners to undertake programs on offer within AVCL.

Step 1:

At every Community Partner briefing (Conducted on the Monday prior to the Consortium), every Community Partner will be asked if they would like to take up an opportunity within AVCL. Opportunities could include:

- a) To participate in a short course from AVCL.
- b) Sponsor a Community Partner to participate in the Annual Program within AVCL.
- c) Offer Community Partners the opportunity to participate in leadership skills workshops hosted by AVCL.

Step 2:

If a partner decides to participate in any of these opportunities, then the following steps will be enacted:

- a) Contact is made with AVCL.
- b) Support Officer works with Community Partner on which activity they will be engaging in, the Support Officer organises payment (currently budgeted).

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS APPROACH

- c) For any program being undertaken by the Community Partner, a reflective journal will be requested from the participant (at appropriate intervals) about their reflections and learning during this experience. It will be submitted to the Grit and Resilience evaluators to be included in the evaluation.
- d) There will be a cap on the number of training sessions financially supported by the Grit and Resilience Program, this will be based on available funds. However, if need arises, alternative funding streams will be investigated to support our Community Partners if they are interested in this option.

Governance Training

There are several online options that Community Partners could participate in. With the support of the Grit and Resilience Program. Community Partners will be given the opportunity to register, attend and complete governance training during their own time. Community Partners will be able to pick the programs that meet their own individual skill level and needs with the aim of improving the likelihood that they nominate as Chair of the Consortium.

Step 1:

At every Community Partner briefing (conducted on the Monday prior to the Consortium meeting), every Community Partner will be asked if they would like to take up an online Governance Training opportunity. It will be the responsibility of the Community Partner to identify the training opportunity that best suits their needs and requirements.

Step 2:

If a partner decides to participate in these opportunities, then the following steps will be enacted:

- a) Contact is made with the online training provider.
- b) Support Officer works with Community Partner on which activity they will be engaging in, Support Officer organises payment (currently budgeted).
- c) Any program being undertaken by the Community Partner, a reflective journal will be requested from the participant (at appropriate intervals) about their reflections and learning during this experience. It will be submitted to the Grit and Resilience evaluators to be included in the evaluation.
- d) There will be a cap on the number of training sessions financially supported by the Grit and Resilience Program, this will be based on funds available. However, if need arises, alternative funding streams will be investigated to support our Community Partners if they are interested in this option.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS APPROACH



APPENDIX 1: BUDDY SYSTEM AGREEMENT

Name (s)

Date:

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Agreed times and dates for meetings:

Date	Time	Mode (Face to face or online)

If we are unable to meet at these agreed times, we will: insert agreed actions that will take place if this occurs.

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What are the 3 expectations for each member?

Member 1	Member 2

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Name 3 areas of interest you would like to work on/examine with your Buddy?

Member 1	Member 2
1:	1:
How would you score your current knowledge of this topic? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	How would you score your current knowledge of this topic? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2:	2:
How would you score your current knowledge of this topic? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	How would you score your current knowledge of this topic? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3:	3:
How would you score your current knowledge of this topic? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	How would you score your current knowledge of this topic? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How will we track our progress?

Member 1	Member 2

How will we navigate potential challenges?

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS APPROACH



Review Date:

Signed:

Signed:.....

Date:...../...../.....

Date:...../...../.....

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