

# Grit and Resilience busy behind– the–scenes and on the ground

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THERE is lots of background work being done to secure ongoing funding for Wangaratta's Grit and Resilience program, according to coordinator Bek Nash–webster.



But as the calendar ticks down to the completion of the program's initial four– year funding arrangement in June, Ms Nash–webster said there was also plenty happening on the ground to illustrate what Grit and Resilience had achieved so far for the local community.

The program began in 2019, supported by \$1.2 million in Federal Government funding, as a community– driven approach to building and sustaining grit and resilience in the Rural City of Wangaratta.

It works to help locals unite and build strength, courage and connection with each other, so they can overcome hardships together.

It is governed by four community partners – Caz Sammon, John Davis, Ronan Holdsworth and Richard Grogan – as part of a consortium which also includes representatives from the Rural City of Wangaratta,

Gateway Health, Northeast Health Wangaratta, Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service, Albury Wodonga Health, Victoria Police, headspace Wangaratta, and The Centre – Sport North East.

“(Funding) is a very complex area, and the consortium and the Rural City of Wangaratta are working hard to keep Grit and Resilience,” Ms Nash–webster said.

“We have been having lots of conversations with multiple people wanting to support our community; we want this to stay for the long–term.

“In the meantime, we are still operational, everything is still running, and we are still partnering with people in the community.”

The program has partnered with Beechworth to Bridge to bring a screening of the documentary ‘Solstice’ to Wangaratta next month, through Demand Film.

This multi-award-winning film about survivors of suicide is described as a 'powerful testament to the human spirit', and it's hoped the Wangaratta screening will raise awareness of issues related to mental health and suicide, and encourage discussion without stigma, awkwardness or judgement.

It will be screened at the Wangaratta Cinema Centre on Wednesday, March 1 from 6.30pm.

Tickets can be reserved by visiting <https://tickets.demand.film/event/12132>

Grit and Resilience has also partnered with LINE Wangaratta to support the Wangaratta LGBTQIA Family

and Friends Group, for parents, families and carers of trans and gender-diverse people.

This social group offers the chance for people to connect and share experiences over a bite to eat, and meets once a month in Wangaratta, with the next meeting on Thursday, February 9 at 5.30pm.

Contact [gritandresilience@wangeratta.vic.gov.au](mailto:gritandresilience@wangeratta.vic.gov.au)

if you would like to attend or want to know more.

The Wangaratta Board Games Club is another group the program is supporting. It will hold its next game day on Saturday, February 11 from 10am to 12 noon at the Wangaratta Library.

Blokes Time Out, Wangaratta Book Circle and Wangaratta Sketch Group also received support from Grit and Resilience around their establishment during 2022, and each are now independently operating with community leaders at the helm, and are continuing to meet regularly.

The Grit and Resilience Program will hold its sixth 'Heartbeat' event for the Rural City of Wangaratta community on Thursday, March 23 between 5.30pm and 7.30pm, with a barbecue dinner and a game of 'footgolf' at the Boorhaman Golf Club.

This will be another opportunity for community members to become involved with the program, and to hear updates about the program, as well as to connect and have some fun with other members of the community.

The program team is keen to share what's planned for Grit and Resilience and to hear from the community about its ideas around building connection and inclusion and supporting community mental health wellbeing.

• If this media article causes you any distress, please phone Lifeline on 131 114 or the Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467.