

Connection, collaboration, community.

Paul Ramsay Foundation
2023 Annual Review

paulramsay
FOUNDATION



Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr and Lucy Armstrong from Gapuwiyak Arts & Culture, with dyed pandanus. Gapuwiyak Arts & Culture is a Yolngu-owned remote art centre in East Arnhem Land that participated in a business incubation program with Enterprise Learning Projects, who received a PRF grant in 2023. Photo credit: Kate Atkinson.

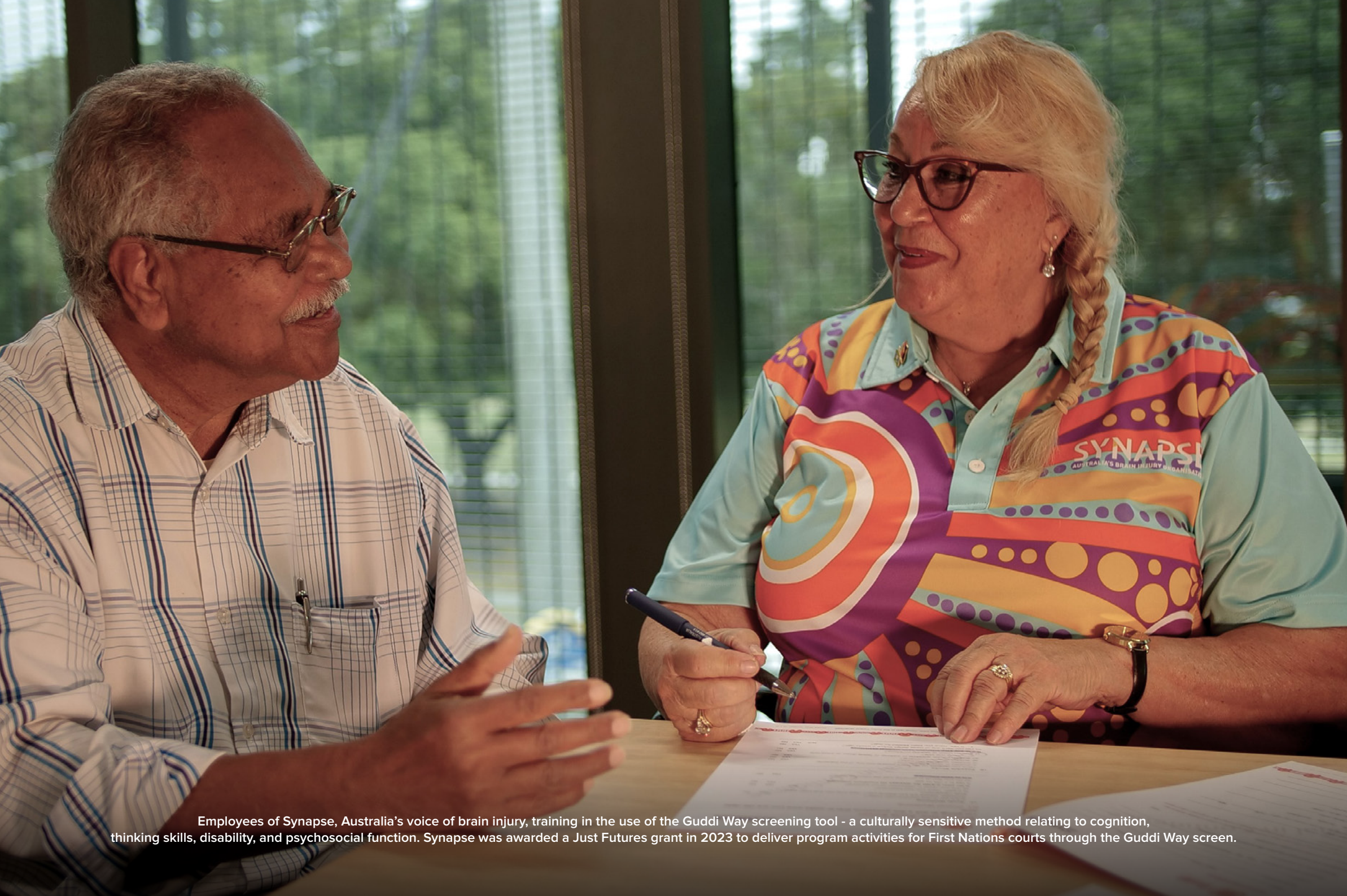
In the spirit of reconciliation, Paul Ramsay Foundation acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia, and their connections to land, waters, and community.

We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

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In this document we report on financial information for the financial year 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023.



Employees of Synapse, Australia’s voice of brain injury, training in the use of the Guddi Way screening tool - a culturally sensitive method relating to cognition, thinking skills, disability, and psychosocial function. Synapse was awarded a Just Futures grant in 2023 to deliver program activities for First Nations courts through the Guddi Way screen.

Our year in numbers

At Paul Ramsay Foundation (PRF) we believe in a world where all people can live their best lives.

Our purpose is to help end cycles of disadvantage in Australia by enabling opportunities for people and communities to thrive.

The Foundation was established by the late Paul Ramsay AO in 2006 and, after his death in 2014, he left most of his estate to continue his philanthropy for generations to come.

As one of the largest philanthropic foundations in Australia, we take our social responsibility seriously and aim to make a lasting contribution to positive change.



Message from the Chair

Our founder, Paul Ramsay, earned a reputation in his life for being one of those outstanding entrepreneurs who had the rare gift that Kipling so eloquently described as the capacity to ‘walk with Kings, nor lose the common touch’.

In the evolution of the Paul Ramsay Foundation, founded by dint of Paul’s incredible generosity, this was a year where we really aimed to listen to Kipling – and honour the spirit of our founder.

For those of us on the Board, it was grounded in a powerful and defining retreat in March with the senior management team in Dubbo. The objective was to listen to and learn from what is happening in community, with community leaders and the day-to-day issues they deal with at the centre of our conversation.

It was in equal measures informing, practical, challenging, and inspiring.

The retreat crystallised an emerging strategic direction of being focused on what real partnership looks like in community, with the respected voice of community leaders at the centre. It also drew on the lessons and learnings from our increasing preparedness to take risk and use our throw weight as one of Australia’s largest foundations to influence the public debate and to work more closely with government to make the kind of large-scale changes consistent with our aspirational purpose: to break cycles of disadvantage.

Our commitment as a major funder of the Voice campaign reflected a belief that, implemented well, a Voice reflecting the centrality of community engagement and leadership could make a real difference. This was a practical reflection of what we know to be the truth – that respectful engagement with communities where exclusion and disadvantage are major barriers to full participation in society is a non-negotiable in the programs that make a difference.



While the outcome was not to be, our practical commitment to the moral and economic logic of supporting empowered local voice will continue to be a practical and central anchor to the work we do in Indigenous communities and more broadly.

The Board is proud to work with a committed and passionate team at the Foundation. Our new CEO Kristy Muir has rapidly earned a reputation for the kind of practical and cross sectoral engagement that underpins the Foundation’s partnership approach to making a difference.

It is a continuing privilege for us to work with an aligned team that cares so deeply about making an impact in their work, and recognising and learning where the challenges are.

Michael Traill AM
Chair Paul Ramsay Foundation

Message from the CEO

Welcome to our 2023 Annual Review.

It’s been a year of connection, collaboration, and community.

We connected, not only visiting our partners in place, but seeking out peer and sector collaborations and opportunities to do this work together.

We’ve learned from some incredible partners and peers about their context for operating, about what works, and what it looks like to trust an organisation to create the change they’re seeking.

Events, research, and learning sets that bring our partners together has demonstrated great potential in PRF’s role as a convener. We hosted a Thriving Children Convening in June bringing together 50 partners to focus on how, over the next ten years, Australia can enable all children, especially those experiencing disadvantage, to thrive.

We have lifted our gaze and sought partnerships beyond our network, through four open grant rounds across our early childhood, domestic and family violence, employment, and justice portfolios.

And we continue to look to the incredible communities around Australia that are tirelessly working to shift the conditions that are keeping people from thriving. We are here for the time that change takes. And we know the path is not linear.

What we have seen in 2023 is progress towards change at both an organisational level and importantly, in the ongoing call for First Nations self-determination.

We proudly supported the YES campaign and, while saddened by the Referendum result in October, acknowledge the momentum built by the inspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who led this campaign for many years, and the tens of thousands of volunteers who stood alongside them.



The question that has been brought sharply into focus, is how we can now continue to work together for better outcomes for First Nations kids, families, and communities.

PRF has reaffirmed our commitment to listen to the voices of First Nations people and support communities to have a greater say in the issues and decisions that affect them.

At an organisational level we’ve continued to make progress and evolve for impact this year, refining our organisational structure and continuing to mature our approach to philanthropy. In April we welcomed Michelle Steele to the Executive Team as Chief First Nations Officer, to help guide our work with First Nations partners and communities.

Thank you to the PRF Board, First Nations Advisory Council, and Investment Committee for your effective engagement and support, to the PRF team who remain incredibly committed to purpose and live our values every day, and to our partners, for the transformative work you do to enable people and places to thrive.

As we look towards 2024, we will continue to make progress, evolve our philanthropy and our strategy to ensure our focus remains on being responsible and positively impactful ancestors of the future.

Professor Kristy Muir
CEO Paul Ramsay Foundation

Our approach

We **invest** in and partner with organisations and communities across Australia that focus on enabling people and places to thrive. We **build** the capability of organisations and the for-purpose sector, and we aim to **influence** through collaboration and advocacy.



1. Invest

We grant to, and invest in, organisations across Australia that enable conditions for people and places to thrive.

Initiatives include

- Grant funding from early exploration to substantial investment
- Impact investing



2. Build

We’re committed to building evidence, insights and knowledge in the areas we’re working, while also building capability within the organisations we partner with.

Initiatives include

- Reviewing projects to better understand what works
- Commissioning research to bridge knowledge gaps
- Organisational and sector capability building (including Social Enterprise Incubator)



3. Influence

As one of Australia’s largest philanthropic foundations, we are uniquely positioned to use our platform to amplify other voices. We aim to positively influence policy outcomes through collaboration and advocacy.

Initiatives include

- Funding to advocacy and intermediary organisations
- Peer philanthropy
- Government engagement

Our strategic impact areas

Thriving children

Enabling kids to arrive at school ready to thrive and increasing the number of young people who finish school with a pathway to a life they value.

\$46.2m committed in FY23

Employment

Reducing barriers to employment so all people have equitable access to secure work and economic dignity.

\$53.9m committed in FY23

Justice & safety

Preventing and reducing further contact with the criminal justice system; increasing the safety of women and young people escaping violence.

\$32m committed in FY23

Place

Supporting communities in place to strengthen social capital, improve social outcomes, and ultimately ensure communities can determine their own futures.

\$11.5m committed in FY23

An additional \$36.4 million was committed in FY23 to organisations outside of these portfolios

Paul Ramsay Foundation 2023 in review



Community members catch-up outside Tiraapendi Wodli, a community-led space in Port Adelaide where Australian Red Cross walks alongside the local Indigenous community to address underlying causes of crime. In 2023 Tiraapendi Wodli received a grant from PRF to bolster program capacity and commence a community-based evaluation of its justice reinvestment approach. [Click here to hear more from Tiraapendi Wodli.](#)

Our partners in 2023*

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability Enterprises• Ability Works Australia• Aboriginal Biodiversity Conservation Foundation• Aboriginal Justice Agreement Governance Committee• Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT)• Aboriginal Tourism Western Australia• Annamila First Nations Foundation• Arise Foundation• Asylum Seekers Centre• Aurora Education Foundation• Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration• Australian Business and Community Network Scholarship Foundation• Australian Centre for Rural Entrepreneurship• Australian Communities Foundation• Australian Council of Social Service• Australian Democracy Network• Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network• Australian Human Rights Commission• Australian National University• Australian Red Cross• Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth• Australian Scholarships Foundation• Australian Spatial Analytics• Australians for Indigenous Constitutional Recognition (Yes23)• Australians Investing in Women• BackTrack• Banksia Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beacon Foundation• Benefolk Foundation• Black Dog Institute• Blacktown Youth Services Association• Boys to the Bush• BRAVE• Bridges Australia• Brother to Another• Brotherhood of St Laurence• Bryan Education Foundation• Bularri Muurlay Nyanggan Aboriginal Corporation• Cape York Institute• Central Land Council• Centre for Social Impact UNSW• Change the Record• Closer Productions• Collaboration For Impact• Colman Education Foundation• Community First Development• Community Foundations Australia• Community Legal Centres Australia• Community Living Association• Community Resources• Community Restorative Centre• Confit Pathways• Deakin University• Dismantle• Dubbo Neighbourhood Centre• Economic Justice Australia• Enterprise Learning Projects• Environment Victoria• Fighting Chance• First Australians Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal• Foundation for Young Australians• Foyer Foundation• Fremantle Foundation• Ganbina• Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council• Generation Australia• Give Where You Live• GiveOUT• Global Sisters• Good Cycles• Good Sammy Enterprises• Goodstart Early Learning• Green Collect• Green Fox Training Studio Limited• Griffith University• Gujaga Foundation• Happy Paws Happy Hearts• Health Justice Australia• High Resolves• Human Rights Law Centre• Impact Seed Partnerships• Impact Seed Pty Ltd• Infoxchange• Inner North Community Foundation• Innovation Unit• Jarjum Centre• Jawun• JCP Youth• Jigsaw Group• Judge Rainbow Memorial Fund Inc• Just Reinvest NSW• Justice Reform Initiative• Justice Reinvestment Network Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kalyuku Ninti - Puntuku Ngurra• King’s Narrative• Koondée Woonga-gat Toor-rong• Koori Mail• Kowa Collaboration• LeaderLife• Learning Creates Australia• Lord Mayor’s Charitable Foundation• Maari Ma Health• Mannifera• Many Rivers Microfinance• Melbourne Institute• Menzies Foundation• Miyay Birray Youth Service• Monash Sustainable Development Institute• Moriarty Foundation• Mornington Peninsula Foundation• Mullumbimby & District Neighbourhood Centre• National Indigenous Youth Education Coalition• Ngarluma And Yindjibarndi Foundation• Northern Australia Aboriginal Kakadu Plum Alliance• Northern Rivers Community Foundation• NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group• NSWALC Employment & Training• Olabud Doogethu• Original Power• Outback Academy Australia• Parenting Research Centre• Parkville Institute• Philanthropy Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plate it Forward Ltd• Police Citizens Youth Clubs NSW Ltd• Prisoners Aid Association of NSW• Public Interest Advocacy Centre• Purpose Enterprises• Rekindling the Spirit• Resilient Lismore• Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology• Safe + Equal• Save the Children• Scaling Impact• Second Out Round 2• Seed Foundation Australia• SEFA Partnerships• SHINE for Kids• Single Mother Families Australia• Sisters Inside Inc• SisterWorks Inc• SNAICC - National Voice for our Children• Social Enterprises Council of NSW & ACT• Social Ventures Australia• South Australian West Coast ACCHO Network• South East Queensland Indigenous Chamber of Commerce• STREAT• Success Works Partners Inc• Sydney Community Foundation• Sydney Policy Lab• System 2 Limited• Take2 Australia• Talbragar Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation• The Antipoverty Centre• The Australian Centre for Social Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Conversation• The Front Project• The New School of Arts Neighbourhood House• The Smith Family• The Westerman Jilya Institute for Indigenous Mental Health• The Wyatt Benevolent Institution• Two Good Foundation• United Way Australia• Uniting NSW/ACT• University of Melbourne• University of New South Wales• University of Technology Sydney• University of Technology Sydney & Western Sydney University• WEAVE Youth & Community Services• Westjustice• Worldview Foundation• Wungening Aboriginal Corporation• Xceptional Academy• Yadu Health Aboriginal Corporation• YMCA Youth & Community Services
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*Organisations that received a commitment of funding in the form of a grant, donation, or program related investment in FY23. Visit our website for a full list of existing grant or program related investment partners receiving funds committed in previous years.



1. Invest

“It’s very hard for someone that’s been through the system to try to find a job. All we need is a chance to... prove ourselves.”

Daniel (pictured right), Crew Leader at YMCA ReBuild

YMCA ReBuild is a commercial construction social enterprise providing jobs and training to young people who’ve been in contact with the justice system. In 2023 YMCA Youth & Community Services received \$1 million in funding for YMCA ReBuild as part of a \$7.5 million package of grants designed to support people who’ve had contact with the justice system into employment.

[Click here to hear more from Daniel and YMCA ReBuild.](#)



Grant partner spotlight: SNAICC - National Voice for our Children (SNAICC)

Investing in the early years

PRF has long had a focus on early childhood education and care, as the evidence clearly shows that early participation is critical for children’s cognitive and social development.

The evidence also shows that due to a range of access barriers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children attend early learning at a lower rate than non-Indigenous children, particularly in remote areas. Research has found that access to early years services increases, and early years services are more effective, when they are culturally safe, community-led, and employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

“We know that our services are best placed to transition our children to school as ready and confident learners, proud in their identity and cultural connection,” says Jo Goulding, National Director for Early Years support at SNAICC, the national peak for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. “But we know that, of the 108 Aboriginal community controlled early years services across Australia, many operate with insufficient funding or a funding model inconsistent with service mission, and that the sector grapples with many significant structural, service and community challenges.”

In 2021, PRF provided \$3.9 million to SNAICC to develop SNAICC Early Years Support, which supports and represents Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled early years services to deliver high quality, responsive, accessible, and culturally strong supports for their children, families, and communities, and to do this in a coordinated way. In 2023, PRF invested a further \$6.92 million over five years in core funding to SNAICC to strengthen their advocacy and reach.

“We are building a collective voice for our services, providing a platform to share their stories, a cultural way of knowing, doing and being,” continues Jo. “We are supporting them with advocacy and the strategies needed to build early years supports that give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families, and communities opportunities to thrive.”

SNAICC Early Years Support works with 36 early years services across WA, NSW and Victoria, and in the past 18 months has secured more than \$1 million in funding for services, with a number of current active fundraising opportunities supported for infrastructure, expansion and program funding, brokered partnerships with funders and other service providers, facilitated training and capacity building, and developed resources and policies. Most recently, SNAICC has been appointed as the Sector Strengthening Partner by NSW Department of Education to work with government funded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled pre-schools, increasing their reach from 17 services across the state to more than 40.

“It is just great to have someone who understands our battles and advocates for us,” says one of the NSW centres supported by SNAICC. “We bring forward Aboriginal voices from our communities, though at times we are not listened to. SNAICC has given us the opportunity to voice our Aboriginal communities’ concerns, barriers, and stresses.”

“SNAICC is central to the early years and child and family safety ecosystem in Australia and are leaders in child and family services reform agendas,” says Jackie Ruddock, PRF’s Acting Head of Early Childhood.



“We are building a collective voice for our services, providing a platform to share their stories, a cultural way of knowing, doing and being.”

Jo Goulding, National Director for Early Years support at SNAICC

Staff member and child at the Lake Tyers Early Learning Centre, Bung Yarnda (Lake Tyers), Victoria. Lake Tyers is one of the services supported through SNAICC’s Early Years Support.



Granting in place: Flood affected areas of the Northern Rivers

Investing in community

One of the more important levers in philanthropy's toolkit is the ability to step in and invest in ways that can achieve rapid changes without the burden of bureaucratic red tape so often seen with other funding mechanisms.

In early 2022 the Northern Rivers region of NSW experienced record rains, flooding and landslides, causing extensive damage to homes, businesses and recreation areas. The region-wide disaster is widely acknowledged as one of the most severe in Australia's recorded history.

PRF committed \$5 million to support vulnerable communities in the region, awarding grants to six grass-roots organisations to aid recovery and build community resilience including Rekindling the Spirit, Koori Mail, Mullumbimby Neighbourhood Centre, the New School of Arts Grafton, Northern Rivers Community Foundation, and Resilient Lismore.

"PRF felt a responsibility to spread our investment across a variety of locally led organisations with deep connections to the region," says PRF's Head of Place Galina Laurie. "We wanted to acknowledge the community's resources and strengths, and the unique opportunity community-led initiatives provide in response to adversity, not just in the aftermath of the disaster, but over the longer term."

More than 5,000 homes in the Northern Rivers were badly damaged, with 2,267 in the Lismore local government area alone, and 2,045 of those were deemed uninhabitable.

In August 2023, \$1.02 million of the flood delegation was provided as untied funding to Resilient Lismore to bolster their disaster recovery and resilience work, as well as support ongoing capacity and community development. One of the programs Resilient Lismore is delivering in the region is Two Rooms, a volunteer-powered initiative where teams of volunteers build walls in two rooms of local residents' houses. They are also coordinating trades to rebuild people's homes.

Lismore local Leisa says that despite having 25 years' experience with tools, she still felt daunted by the task of rebuilding her home.

"As the hubs, charities and voluntary groups closed down and left town and the government schemes and assistance seemed doubtful, the urgency of rebuilding pushed me to ask for help," she says.

"Resilient Lismore remained for the community, offering a helping hand through their volunteers, tool and equipment library, and moral support."

Leisa's home is one of more than 300 that Resilient Lismore has helped to rebuild so far in Lismore and neighbouring communities but Elly Bird, Resilient Lismore Executive Director, says the organisation is about more than just helping to rebuild homes.

"We are focused on building long-term partnerships to build community resilience. At the height of disasters, we help connect resources and volunteers with the people who need them, but we're also very committed to preparing for future events as well as sharing our learnings and plans with other communities. We are committed to regional collaboration, to place-based community organising and to linking the community services sector with formal emergency management structures."

"Resilient Lismore remained for the community, offering a helping hand through their volunteers, tool and equipment library, and moral support."

Leisa, local Lismore resident

Flood devastation in the City of Lismore. Photo credit: P Derrett for Getty images.

Investing for impact

Rising rents and a significant shortfall in social housing has left many Australians without a safe, appropriate, and accessible home and, according to Census data, homelessness is worsening across Australia.

Despite the Commonwealth Government's commitment to fund 50,000 new social and affordable housing properties over five years, a social housing shortfall remains for around 125,000 people, some of whom have been on the waiting list for more than 10 years, while many others are living in unaffordable or inappropriate housing.

Bridging some of this gap is Conscious Investment Management (CIM), Australia's largest non-bank financier of social housing. CIM works in genuine partnership with Community Housing Providers to identify, acquire, and provide social housing across Australia.

PRF invested in CIM's first Social Housing Fund in 2021, providing a cornerstone investment in the first privately funded social housing in Australia. Social Housing Fund I, which operates exclusively in Victoria, has housed more than 400 people to date, across 260 dwellings, including Lee-Anne, who was born with a mild intellectual disability.

A successful dog-groomer, Lee-Anne never thought she'd be able to afford to live independently, and lived with her parents well into her twenties before they sold the family home. Now 27, Lee-Anne lives in a place of her own in Box Hill, a property acquired through CIM's Social Housing Fund I. "It's the first time I have lived by myself, and it was a bit challenging at first," says Lee-Anne. "Now I feel like I am independent and don't have to rely on my parents so much."

In 2023, PRF became anchor investor in CIM's second Social Housing Fund which will operate across Australia and anticipates providing housing for 800 people who are on the social housing waitlist.

"PRF brings much more than capital to its investments, but also advice, structuring expertise, and connections."

Matthew Tominic, CIM Chief Investment Officer

The ability of philanthropy to invest in this way is critical in leveraging further capital and unlocking innovative approaches to often complex and expensive social issues.

PRF's Head of Impact Investing, Ben Smith says, "CIM has developed an excellent track record over the last four years, demonstrating both impact and financial returns.

"CIM's Social Housing Fund II offers an exciting opportunity to employ CIM's model nationally which will result in even more Australians having access to housing."

To date, PRF has invested \$60 million in CIM across the two Social Housing Funds and CIM's Summer Housing Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) fund.

CIM's Chief Investment Officer Matthew Tominc says, "PRF's support has been invaluable for CIM. PRF brings much more than capital to its investments, but also advice, structuring expertise, and connections.

"Impact investing is an emerging sector in Australia, and PRF's values alignment has absolutely let us invest and grow with the authenticity we aimed for."



Lee-Anne, a tenant living in social and affordable housing, funded through CIM.



2. Build

“Bringing us all together [exposed] common threads that ran through our work... Being able to work through a couple of those sticky issues together is priceless.”

Drew Miller, an attendee of PRF’s Thriving Children Convening

PRF’s Thriving Children Convening brought together more than 50 grant partners focused on early childhood development and school-age learning, including a specific convening for First Nations partners. The event, held in June 2023 at the State Library in Victoria, was an opportunity to strengthen our network of grant partners and together explore the question, “Over the next ten years, how can Australia enable all children, especially those most disadvantaged, to thrive?”

Pictured: Attendees of PRF’s Thriving Children Convening.



Building social enterprise capability

When Andrea Comastri applied for PRF's Growth Incubator in December 2022, he knew his social enterprise needed help to mature and grow and hoped to secure a place in the new incubator program delivered by Sefa Partnerships.

"We were on a fast growth trajectory and like any business at that critical stage, we experienced some growing pains," he says. "We had a clear vision but lacked solid processes and some of the people to bring our vision to life."

Andrea is the Co-Founder and CEO of Hotel Etico, a boutique hotel in Sydney's Blue Mountains and Australia's first social enterprise hotel, which provides employment and independent living opportunities to young people with disability, helping them to achieve their independence goals.

Hotel Etico is one of eight organisations from across Australia selected to participate in the Growth Incubator. The program, designed to fill a gap in the social venture ecosystem, commenced in February 2023.

"Many social enterprises have a proven track record of delivery," says Abhilash Mudaliar, PRF's Chief Impact Officer, "but require support to stabilise and accelerate their growth."

"The Incubator was designed to help grow the impact and pool of sustainable social enterprises in Australia by supporting the organisations through customised coaching and support, capability building through experiential learning, connection with peers, and potential access to capital."

During the 10-month program, up to four team members from each enterprise worked with dedicated coaches to identify and support business needs and ambitions, participated in two in-person team 'sprints' focused on impact, strategy, finance, and growth, at the Yirranma Place for-purpose precinct, and joined their fellow participants for peer learning and network building. The eight enterprise leaders also took part in a complementary program to enhance their leadership skills and help them steer their organisations through this period of change.

Andrea says participating in the Incubator has been more about the journey than the destination but has nevertheless proved transformational for Hotel Etico.

"I believe we were in the right place at the right time. We've been able to implement new systems, make significant structural changes to reshape roles, and develop a really engaged culture."

"The ingredients were already there, but we've been able to make the right changes, supported by expert guidance through the Incubator."

In July this year, Hotel Etico was awarded a \$400,000 short-term capacity building grant to support the social enterprise to refine operational efficiencies and focus on business development.

"The grant has given us a great injection of oxygen," continues Andrea. "We've got the clarity of vision, the right team structure, and now the funding and capacity to do exactly what needs to be done."

"We've got the clarity of vision, the right team structure, and now the funding and capacity to do exactly what needs to be done."

Andrea Comastri,
Co-Founder and CEO Hotel Etico



Employees at work at Hotel Etico, one of eight participants in the Growth Incubator.



“Since the Paul Ramsay Foundation first supported Yuwaya Ngarra-li in 2018, each year has seen momentum and outcomes grow in anticipated and unanticipated ways.”

Associate Professor Ruth McCausland, UNSW Director of Yuwaya Ngarra-li

Dharriwaa Elders Group’s Rick Townsend being interviewed by the ABC about Walgett’s water quality.

Grant partner spotlight: Yuwaya Ngarra-li

Building community-led change

Walgett is a remote town in north-west NSW on the Namoi and Barwon rivers, 650km northwest of Sydney. About 2,000 people live in the town and nearby villages of Namoi and Gingie, more than 50% of whom identify as Aboriginal.

The local Aboriginal community has great strengths including the strong advocacy and leadership of local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), and also faces a number of barriers which prevent families from thriving, such as water and food insecurity, high rates of youth contact with the justice system, disrupted connection to Country and culture, and a chronic housing crisis.

For the past five years, PRF has supported Yuwaya Ngarra-li, a unique partnership between the Dharriwaa Elders Group, a respected local ACCO, and UNSW Sydney working together over the long-term to improve the wellbeing, social, built and physical environment and life pathways of Aboriginal people in Walgett. Prioritising the self-determination of the community, striving to make a difference with solutions that they knew would work, was a key factor in PRF’s decision to invest in Yuwaya Ngarra-li.

Following a development grant in 2018, PRF provided \$5.3 million over five years to the partnership in 2020 with a specific focus on Youth Justice and Wellbeing, Water and Country, and Aboriginal Community Capabilities and Control. In 2023 PRF awarded a further \$6.5 million to Yuwaya Ngarra-li to support their core operations and continue working towards their long-term goals for change.

Centred on the aspirations and priorities of Aboriginal people, Yuwaya Ngarra-li’s community-led, long-term approach is not only creating tangible change for the Walgett community, but also having a growing influence on government policy, university partnerships, place-based initiatives and the practice of community organisations.

“Since 2020, thousands more people have heard of the Dharriwaa Elders Group and our vision for change,” says Virginia Robinson, Secretary of Dharriwaa Elders Group. “We have spoken up about the state of our rivers, of our drinking water, of governments failing to act to protect our community during COVID, about over-policing and homelessness in Walgett. And we have worked to build community-led and evidence-based solutions that create long-term change and that others can learn from.”

In youth justice and wellbeing, Yuwaya Ngarra-li’s Two River Pathway to Change model has enabled an effective community-led approach customised to the Walgett context that gives necessary simultaneous attention to working directly with children and young people, building and supporting community leadership and family engagement, and influencing and ensuring accountability of agencies and services.

The work to date provides evidence of the effectiveness of an ACCO-led model of diversion, with a significant reduction in Aboriginal children and young people from Walgett appearing in court to 7.8%, and 83 outcomes documented at the individual, Aboriginal community, place-based and systems levels since 2020 from this work alone. (Yuwaya Ngarra-li defines outcomes as actions by or changes for individuals, organisations, groups influenced by Yuwaya Ngarra-li, not activities or actions taken by Yuwaya Ngarra-li.)

“Since the Paul Ramsay Foundation first supported Yuwaya Ngarra-li in 2018, each year has seen momentum and outcomes grow in anticipated and unanticipated ways,” says Associate Professor Ruth McCausland, UNSW Director of Yuwaya Ngarra-li. PRF’s Head of Justice and Safety Dominique Bigras says, “The outcomes of the partnership tell a story of the deepening local and broader impact of Yuwaya Ngarra-li and represent significant progress towards Yuwaya Ngarra-li’s long term goals.”

Grant partner spotlight: Quality Teaching Rounds

Building quality teaching

Evidence shows that quality teaching is the most important in-school factor affecting student outcomes. And strong student outcomes mean that Australia's young people are leaving high school with an array of options in employment, further education, and training.

To support teachers to enhance their practice and produce better outcomes for all students, the University of Newcastle's Teachers and Teaching Research Centre developed the groundbreaking Quality Teaching Rounds (QTR) approach to professional development.

QTR brings teachers together to learn from each other, working through a process of observation, analysis, and discussion of teaching.

An initial randomised control trial involving 25 NSW schools in 2014-15 demonstrated the positive impact of QTR on teaching quality and teacher morale. Based on the early success of QTR, in 2018 PRF invested \$17 million over five years – in partnership with the NSW Department of Education and University of Newcastle - to support the scaling of QTR, to undertake a rigorous program of evaluation of the impact of QTR on student outcomes, and to help the team develop a financially sustainable model for program delivery.

"While we understood the program improved teacher outcomes," says John Bush, PRF's Head of School Age Learning, "we did not yet have a clear picture of the impact on students."

Three new randomised controlled trials showed promising impact on student outcomes. Primary students in NSW and QLD showed an extra two or three months of progress in maths and reading, compared to students whose teachers hadn't participated in QTR.

Despite disruptions from ongoing school lockdowns due to COVID-19, since 2019 QTR has been delivered in 1,300 schools, to 4,500 teachers, and to the benefit of 800,000 students.

Greg, a primary school teacher and QTR participant, says he noticed a significant improvement in classroom engagement and comprehension.

"There was a significant improvement because I was teaching a bit differently. [The students] were taking in the work and they were much, much more driven."

Laureate Professor Jenny Gore, Director of the University of Newcastle's Teachers and Teaching Research Centre, says the partnership with PRF has demonstrated that building capacity for quality teaching is key to delivering better educational outcomes.

"Quality Teaching Rounds has delivered unparalleled positive effects for teachers and students and shown clear potential for making a difference for those in disadvantaged schools and communities."

Earlier this year, PRF provided the University with an additional \$4.28 million to support the implementation of QTR in a whole-of-school approach, focused on schools that serve communities with high rates of disadvantage.

"The new grant continues our partnership with the NSW Government and the University," says John, "and is aligned to our belief that quality teaching can improve student achievement and help ensure that all children finish school ready to thrive in life."



“Quality Teaching Rounds has delivered unparalleled positive effects for teachers and students.”

Laureate Professor Jenny Gore, University of Newcastle

Laureate Professor Jenny Gore with a student from Hambledon Public School and QTR participant and Hambledon Public School teacher Kaitlin Heggen.



3. Influence

“No one wins when families face a daily struggle to hang on for economic survival. We’re thrilled to see single mothers given some dignity back.”

Terese Edwards, CEO Single Mother Families Australia

In 2022, Anne Summers was appointed a PRF Fellow to research the prevalence and consequences of domestic violence in Australia, revealing the stark choice facing many Australian women who have experienced violence: do they stay and risk the violence continuing, or leave and face the high probability of a life of ‘policy-induced poverty’?

Building on this work, and on the back of decades of advocacy and research, PRF was introduced to Terese Edwards, CEO of Single Mother Families Australia. Terese’s organisation was among those that lobbied the Commonwealth Government to enable single parents to remain on the Parenting Payment (Single) until their youngest child is 14 – up from eight – instead of having to move to the much lower JobSeeker rate. PRF donated a small amount of \$27,000 to Single Mother Families Australia to hold a Women’s Economic Security Forum at Parliament House in 2023 and secure lived experience participation of single mothers experiencing economic insecurity. The legislation passed and the change came into effect in September 2023.



Single mother helps son with homework. Photo credit: Brendon Thorne for Getty images.

Grant spotlight: Yes23

Listening to Voice

This year, following an invitation from First Nations leaders in the 2017 Uluru Statement from the Heart, Australians voted in a Referendum to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution and to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

PRF supported the YES campaign proudly and publicly, awarding \$7 million in funding to Australians for Indigenous Constitutional Recognition for Yes23, with with significant funding leveraged through philanthropic peers.

“History showed us that winning a referendum in Australia was going to be both difficult and very expensive,” says PRF CEO Professor Kristy Muir.

“As an organisation, we believed it was incredibly important for us to declare our support for a Voice because, from our experience working with First Nations-led organisations and programs around the country, we’ve learned that the best outcomes emerge when the voices of those affected are heard.”

In the wake of the Referendum result, PRF strengthened its commitment to listen to the voices of First Nations people and support communities to have a greater say in the issues and decisions that affect them.

“Philanthropy’s support did not begin with the Referendum, nor will it end with it,” continues Kristy.

“The powerful movement that we’ve built over these past few months won’t just go away.”

Dean Parkin, Yes23 Campaign Director

“We will strengthen our work alongside First Nations partners and support their efforts to achieve better outcomes for families and communities and continue to advocate for evidence-based systemic change.”

Dean Parkin, Yes23 Campaign Director says the campaign demonstrated the enormous progress that’s been made, but the result reveals the long road left to travel.

“The powerful movement that we’ve built over these past few months won’t just go away,” he says. “Now, we must continue to work together to ensure that our kids have a say over their own destinies and can walk safely and proudly in two worlds.”



Team PRF for YES in front of the gates at Yirranma Place in Sydney's Darlinghurst.



“EJA will continue to advocate for changes to restore a fairer social security system with a strong safety net that is accessible to all that need it.”

Kate Allingham, Acting CEO Economic Justice Australia

Queue outside Centrelink. Photo credit: William West for Getty images.

Grant spotlight: Economic Justice Australia

Beyond Robodebt

Economic dignity is at the heart of an individual’s financial wellbeing. And debt, particularly when it comes as a shock, can be devastating to people and families who are already living below the poverty line.

The Robodebt Scheme, which operated in Australia from 2015-2019, was designed to recover supposed overpayments from welfare recipients, dating back to 2010.

The automated debt recovery tool, touted by the Government at its inception as an innovative use of technology to contribute to the Government’s fraud and non-compliance savings goals, has since been maligned as a massive failure of public administration and subject to a Royal Commission in 2022.

The Scheme had far-reaching effects on recipients and their families including financial impacts, emotional and psychological effects, and stigmatisation.

Approximately 5 million Australians receive income support payments, or almost one quarter of the population aged 16 and over. Income support recipients include intersecting groups - such as single parents, victim-survivors of family and domestic violence, refugees, people with disability, and First Nations people - known to have disproportionately high rates of social security debt and who face a risk of harm through the use of automation.

In October 2022, PRF funded Economic Justice Australia’s Automation in Social Security project to build the capacity of the community legal sector to hold government to account and influence its future use of automation in the social security system.

“Our automation project is not just about avoiding another Robodebt,” says Kate Allingham, Acting CEO of Economic Justice Australia, “it is also about understanding the implications of automation for vulnerable and disadvantaged people seeking to access and navigate the social security system.”

Economic Justice Australia (EJA) is the peak organisation for community legal centres providing specialist advice regarding social security issues and rights. It draws on its members’ casework experience to identify systemic policy issues and provide expert advice to government on reforms needed to make the social security system more effective and accessible.

Alongside a coalition of advocates, EJA and its members’ testimony to the Royal Commission contributed to an announcement that external contracting for Centrelink debt collection will stop.

In May this year, following extensive advocacy by EJA and its members and allies, the Department of Social Services (DSS) implemented six of EJA’s key recommendations, making changes to its Guide to Social Security Law.

“The impact of these changes to DSS policy,” says PRF’s Head of Employment Josephine Khalil, “has had tangible positive effects for people receiving payments.”

EJA will continue to play a powerful public interest role supporting members to identify systemic issues. “Community legal centres are the canary in the coalmine,” continues Kate Allingham. “When things go wrong in the social security system, like with Robodebt, they are the first to notice. EJA will continue to advocate for changes to restore a fairer social security system with a strong safety net that is accessible to all that need it.”

Our Yirranma Place community

PRF's home in Sydney's Darlinghurst is a community precinct for social purpose. In 2023 we shared Yirranma Place with the following for-purpose organisations.

- Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network
- Brave Foundation
- Burraga Foundation
- Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia
- Community Resources
- The Foyer Foundation
- Global Sisters
- FYA (Foundation for Young Australians)
- For Purpose Investment Partners
- Justice Reform Initiative
- New South Wales Council of Social Services (NCOSS)
- Philanthropy Australia
- Primer
- Shelter NSW
- SMART Recovery
- Sefa
- Two Good Co.
- Youth Action

Pictured: The community enjoys snacks from social enterprise café Two Good Co. on the portico at Yirranma Place. Ceiling artwork and iron gates by Willcania-based Barkandji artist William Brian 'Badger' Bates.

Paul Ramsay Foundation 2023 in review

‘Yirranma’ is translated from Gadigal to ‘many-create’, reflecting the purpose of the precinct – a place where people come together to create and connect in the neighbourhood.



Our Board

In March 2023 Julia Davison, former Goodstart CEO and long-time not-for-profit leader, joined PRF's Board of Directors. In August PRF Head of Legal Jo Lennan was appointed to the role of Company Secretariat. We thank all our directors for their contribution and guidance throughout 2023.



Michael Traill AM (Chair)



Ilana Atlas AO



Julia Davison



Sir Bill English



Peter Evans



Kathryn Greiner AO



Robert McLean AM



Michael Siddle



Natalie Walker



View of Dubbo NSW, the location of the Board's 2023 strategic meeting. Photo credit: John Carnemolla.

Governance and human rights

We recognise the importance of good governance in ensuring we operate responsibly, remain aligned to our charitable purpose and are responsive to changes in partner expectations and the sectors in which we work. We also recognise that respecting and promoting human rights is central to achieving our vision of a world where all people have opportunities to thrive. In 2023, we've sought to strengthen how we do this.

Investment Policy Statement

We revised the PRF Investment Policy Statement, which governs the way in which PRF's funds are managed. This revised Statement introduces responsible investing through five core activities:

- **Selection.** The necessity for a documented approach to the way in which Fund Managers, which PRF invests into, consider Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors in investment selection and management.
- **Screening.** Preventing investments into the direct producers of gambling, pornography, tobacco, weapons.
- **Impact risk analysis.** Conducting continual thorough impact risk analysis to identify holdings which may undermine and / or prove counterproductive to PRF's pursuit of its charitable purpose, or which pose a reputational risk to PRF.
- **Stewardship.** PRF places a strong emphasis on stewardship and engagement. PRF's Stewardship Policy provides guidance on when and how stewardship and engagement activities may be most appropriate to create the positive change PRF wishes to see.
- **Reporting** on responsible investing characteristics in accordance with the Statement, to support informed decision-making by PRF's Investment Committee.

MORE INFO

Email impactinvesting@paulramsayfoundation.org.au for more information.

Human Rights Commitment Statement

The Human Rights Commitment Statement outlines the principles and range of actions that guide the Paul Ramsay Foundation to embed human rights across all aspects of our operations and impact. This Commitment recognises our role as:

- a funder
- an employer
- an investor
- a purchaser of goods and services
- a partner and an enabler.

The Human Rights Commitment Statement demonstrates PRF's public commitment to operationalising human rights principles across all areas of our operations and the expectations of our employees, partners and communities with whom we work.

MORE INFO

The Human Rights Commitment Statement is available to [read by clicking here](#).

Feedback & Complaints Policy

This Policy outlines how PRF will receive and respond to external feedback and complaints made about any of its programs, grants, or other activities.

- In receiving feedback and complaints, PRF is committed to:
- enabling grant partner organisations, their employees, program participants and other stakeholders to give feedback and make complaints about our programs, grants, or other activities
 - responding to complaints in a timely manner
 - responding on a non-discriminatory, inclusive basis
 - ensuring that any person or organisations who makes a complaint does not receive any adverse treatment by us as a result of making that complaint
 - communicating to complainants the outcomes of our deliberations
 - ensuring that complaints are dealt with by appropriately knowledgeable and senior staff, and
 - improving our practices.

MORE INFO

The Feedback and Complaints Policy is available to [read here](#) or email Feedback@paulramsayfoundation.org.au



Connect with us

W: paulramsayfoundation.org.au

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Social Enterprise Growth Incubator participants enjoy a networking event during their program induction at Yirranma Place.