

Grow Together

Scaling Up Sustainable Food Solutions for Families and Young People in Melbourne's South East



Project summary

Enliven Victoria will partner with Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) and eight local Neighbourhood Houses to scale-up the 'Grow Together' pilot; a grassroots project designed to sustainably increase food security for vulnerable families and young people in Greater Dandenong, Casey and Cardinia during the COVID-19 pandemic. This project will involve distributing 700 'planter kits' (vegetable and herb seedlings, planter bag, potting mix, organic fertiliser and growing resources) to families and young people who are vulnerable to food insecurity, to promote growing their own food at home. Neighbourhood Houses will be supported to identify planter kit recipients through existing networks, and work together with DFFH to engage and deliver at least 40% of their allocated planter kits to local public housing residents, youth in residential units, and people living in supported residential services, rooming houses and caravan parks.

Project partners

- enliven Victoria
- Department of Families, Fairness & Housing (DFFH)
- Springvale Neighbourhood House
- North Dandenong Neighbourhood House
- Bunyip & District Community House
- Hampton Park Community House
- Balla Balla Community Centre
- Doveton Neighbourhood Learning Centre
- Oakgrove Community Centre
- Upper Beaconsfield Community Centre

Key responsibilities

enliven Victoria:

- Lead and coordinate project planning and evaluation
- Sourcing planter kit materials and donations
- Development of planter kit resources
- Assembly of planter kits and delivery to Neighbourhood Houses

DFFH:

- Participate in project reference group workshop
- Facilitating engagement with local young people and families living in residential units, public housing, supported residential services, and caravan parks
- Supporting Neighbourhood House network to engage with above settings

Neighbourhood Houses:

- Participate in project reference group workshop
- Identify planter kit recipients
- Distribute planter kits to recipients (pick up, delivery or other alternative)
- Work with DFFH representative to support engagement with local young people and families living in residential units, public housing, supported

residential services, and caravan parks
- Supporting evaluation activities

Who this project will benefit?

This grant will directly benefit over 700 families and young people in Melbourne's South East who are experiencing hardship and/or food insecurity. Seven-hundred 'planter kits' will be distributed by a network of eight Neighbourhood Houses.

At least 40% (280) planter kits will be distributed among young people and families living in our region's local youth residential units, public housing, supported residential services, or caravan parks. The remaining 60% of kits will be distributed to vulnerable local community members accessing the Neighbour House programs and food relief services. Many of the participating Neighbourhood Houses have identified their main demographics as migrants, international students, refugees and people seeking asylum.

Neighbourhood Houses will work with enliven and Department of Families, Fairness and Housing to engage and identify appropriate planter kit recipients, and to identify opportunities to further link recipients into programs and activities run by the Neighbourhood Houses. Neighbourhood Houses may also leverage the support of their existing groups (community gardens to help grow seedlings, sewing groups to sew planter bags, etc.) to further enhance and support the project, and provide additional opportunities for social connection, volunteering and community participation.

How will the funding be spent?

The funding will be used to resource the project management (staffing, administration, planning and evaluation), to purchase materials needed for the planter kits (seedlings, planter bags, potting mix, organic fertiliser, hard-copy growing resources), and to deliver the planter kits. To support the organisations who will be contributing to the project, Enliven proposes an allocation of between \$400 - \$600 to each participating Neighbourhood House to assist with partially covering administration and project costs (community engagement, administration and planter kit distribution).

What change do you expect to see from this project?

The project hopes to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increase the capacity of the local community to grow, harvest and consume produce grown at home
- Reduce reliance on local food relief services
- Increase the resilience and sustainability of our local food systems
- Increase accessibility of fresh, healthy, safe and affordable food
- Improve physical and mental health of community through participation in gardening
- Increase participation and engagement of young people and families in Neighbourhood House programs and activities

A detailed program logic and evaluation framework will be developed by enliven's health promotion team.

Key project milestones

July	Recruitment of project officer
July	Establishment of Project Reference Group to co-design project plan and engagement strategy (1 x 3 hour workshop)
August – September	Sourcing and coordinating planter kit components and resources
October	Assembly and distribution of 700 planter kits
November	Evaluation activities and report