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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **2024 Innovate with nbn<sup>®</sup> Grants Program winners announced**

A regional West Australian business that aims to bridge the tyranny of distance for those suffering from loss and grief, and provide connectivity, resources and peer support services was last night crowned the 2024 Innovate with nbn<sup>®</sup> Grant Program Champion.

Grief Connect Services, based in Roelands, Western Australia (WA), specialises in grief and bereavement support services in counselling, widowed support groups and The Grief Language Project.

The Grief Language Project aims to deliver grief education content in webinars and courses, making it accessible to people in regional areas – reducing social isolation. Participants will have access to targeted learning modules that include social work practice, knowledge and education, and focus on four pillars of Prepare, Navigate, Survive and Thrive.

Grief Connect Founder and CEO Michelle Moriarty said personal experience led her to begin the Grief Language Project.

“This is not only work for me, but also personal, having become a young widow at 38-years-old and two years ago experiencing the loss of my dad.

“It is personal connection that fuels my passion for providing grief and bereavement services, ensuring those experiencing grief understand what they are going through and staying connected to support networks. Being recognised enhances my commitment to smashing through the stigma around grief, validating it is a natural human experience.

“This recognition reinforces my dedication to educating Australian communities about grief and fostering safe, transformative conversations that can not only be life changing but also be lifesaving.”

### **About Innovate with nbn<sup>®</sup>**

Now in its fifth year, the Innovate with nbn<sup>®</sup> Grants Program is designed to support regional and remote Australian businesses and aims to recognise and highlight individuals, businesses or organisations that are innovators, champions of digital adoption and advocates of their local communities.



There was a total prize pool of \$125,000 – category winners received \$15,000 and the overall champion another \$20,000. More than 150 entries were submitted nationally for an opportunity to win in seven categories including Health, Education, Agriculture, Tourism, Arts, Women in Regional Business, and Indigenous Business.

The awards were held in Sydney and presented in partnership with the Regional Australia Institute.

## **nbn Chief Development Officer, Regional and Remote, Gavin Williams said:**

“Throughout the last five years, we’ve been privileged to share the stories of past program winners, help them on their journey, and see them achieve their vision and beyond. At nbn, our purpose is to lift the digital capability of Australia, and it’s a purpose we share with all our innovate finalists and winners.

“In 2024, we have again uncovered a plethora of passionate regional innovators from across the country, harnessing the benefits of the nbn® network to improve digital participation, productivity and social outcomes.”

## **The 2024 Innovate with nbn® Grant Program Winners**

### **Women in Regional Business and 2024 Champion – Grief Connect (Roelands, WA)**

Specialises in grief and bereavement support services in three areas: counselling, widowed support groups and The Grief Language Project®. The Grief Language Project® is a unique program providing psychological safety education and training that currently provides face-to-face seminars to corporate small business workplaces, communities and groups.

The Project provides grief education and equips participants with the psychological skills to manage their own grief, and become fluent in grief language and communication. Participants walk away with the confidence to hold conversations and space for those who are grieving without feeling awkward or uncomfortable.

### **Health – SimpliMove (Armidale, NSW)**

SimpliMove aims to be best in delivering digital health to improve accessibility of healthcare, health outcomes and health literacy for all Australians. It does this by providing accessible, trusted and cost-efficient online treatment with health advice and rehabilitation programs.

SimpliMove is a mobile and web application that offers:

- Primary care allied health physiotherapy treatment and management using telehealth sessions
- Tailored medical exercise and rehabilitation programs adapted to a user’s ability, pain, medical conditions, goals and interests, plus health education with more than 100 articles designed to improve health literacy about injury management, chronic disease, and general health and wellbeing.



## **Education – Disinfluencer (Merimbula, NSW)**

Australia's first inclusive talent hub, Disinfluencer helps businesses, brands and workplaces to be inclusive. As a certified social enterprise, Disinfluencer offers meaningful paid work and opportunities to people with disabilities who dream of being stars in content like their peers, including in brand advertising, stock photography and through talent representation.

## **Agriculture – GRO Rural (Tamworth, NSW)**

GRO Rural is a digital platform designed to connect and empower professionals, service providers and businesses across Australia's rural, regional and agricultural sectors. Offering tailored industry registries, networking opportunities and professional resources, GRO Rural helps rural professionals showcase their expertise, find job opportunities and build strong connections with organisations in need of services.

A key focus of GRO Rural is supporting the dairy industry, where it provides a specialised platform that enhances visibility for dairy professionals and connects them with businesses seeking their expertise. This initiative contributes to the growth, sustainability and success of the dairy sector, ensuring that skilled professionals are accessible to meet the industry's evolving needs.

## **Tourism – Rocky Trail Destination Pty Ltd (Malua Bay, NSW)**

The Rocky Trail Group is a leading Australian mountain bike event promoter and destination development company. Rocky Trail Destination (RTD) is at the forefront of the group's innovation offerings, specialising in nature and trail-based tourism. RTD is currently developing the 130-kilometre Mogo Trails network in Batemans Bay, NSW, which will host the Sea Otter Australia event in October 2025.

To enhance regional adventure tourism and trail-based activities, RTD is working on a new Destination Zone portfolio, a transformative digital platform to make regional destinations more accessible and well-managed. By leveraging data on trail usage, conditions and visitor demographics, its objective is to enable trail network stakeholders to make informed decisions to improve trail sustainability, optimise maintenance and demonstrate return on investment through increased tourism spend. It will empower travellers to explore, plan and book adventures to ultimately enhance both the visitor experience and regional visitor economies.

## **Arts – Threshold (Kyneton, VIC)**

Threshold specialises in digital interactive and hybrid works that celebrate the poetic and the playful. Co-founders Tahli Corin and Sarah Lockwood collaborate with a team of artists and tech wizards to create artworks that sit at the intersection of visual arts, digital experience and immersive theatre.

From audio theatre experiences to analogue treasure hunts and immersive installations, Threshold's adventures have brought the delight and wonder of theatre to thousands of people across the globe.

Their latest project which they call, *Best. Party. Ever.*, is an innovative Zoom show that connects grandparents and grandchildren globally, offering a creative and playful intergenerational experience. Threshold's audio theatre experience, *Mountain Goat Mountain*, has been translated into Chinese, featured in *The New York Times*, and reached audiences through 29 international venues and festivals.



## Indigenous Business – Lola Digital (Thursday Island, QLD)

Lola Digital is a boutique content and marketing agency based on Waibene (Thursday Island) in Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait).

Founded by Kantesha Takai in 2019, Lola Digital supports businesses and organisations to amplify their key messages and solidify brands with culturally-safe and strategic marketing efforts in website design and development, graphic design, copywriting and across social media platforms.

Lola Digital also supports marketing campaigns with strategic planning and event management, and offers photography and videography packages. As a certified Indigenous business, it makes every effort to employ local Indigenous artists, creatives and subcontractors across its supply chain.

With most of Lola’s services being digital-first, Kantesha has advocated the need for better connectivity in her region to bridge the digital divide and ensure digital inclusion for First Nations people across the Torres Strait.

## ENDS

## Notes to Editors

- For more information, visit: <https://www.nbnco.com.au/campaigns/innovate-with-nbn-grants-program>

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## Resources



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