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Ms Tracey Sharpe
Committee Clerk
Legislative Council Committee Office of Western Australia
Parliament House
4 Harvest Terrace,
WEST PERTH WA 6005

Via: www.parliament.wa.gov.au/subportal

Dear Ms Sharpe

**INQUIRY INTO THE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF HOMELESSNESS
SERVICES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the above inquiry by the Estimates and Financial Operations Committee.

Please find attached Lotterywest's submission to the inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Ralph Addis
Chief Executive Officer

Estimates and Financial Operations Committee

INQUIRY INTO THE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF HOMELESSNESS SERVICES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Lotterywest Submission

Lotterywest as a grant maker

Under the Lotteries Commission Act 1990 (the 1990 Act), Lotterywest distributes the net proceeds from lottery games to not-for-profit organisations and local government authorities for charitable or benevolent purposes. Grants cannot be made to individuals.

As a discretionary grant maker, Lotterywest does not fund on-going service delivery, operational costs or expenditure that is the responsibility of other government departments. Lotterywest supports eligible organisations to achieve their objectives through discrete, time-limited initiatives and by adding value to other sources of support.

Lotterywest also plays a significant role in terms of grant and community development through acting as a connector and facilitator for organisations who are working in the same sector and/or locality as well as sharing knowledge and lessons learned from with others.

Lotterywest's grant making is underpinned by the Community Investment Framework (the Framework, see Attachment 1). This contains a range of priority areas and outcome statements determined by the Lotterywest Board of Commissioners.

Lotterywest grants related to addressing homelessness in Western Australia

Lotterywest's approach to grant making in the area of homelessness aligns with the Department of Communities "All Paths Lead to a Home – WA's 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness" and the associated Action Plan 2020-2025. Lotterywest and Department of Communities staff meet where relevant to discuss potential grant opportunities.

There are multiple priority areas and outcomes in the Framework which relate to addressing homelessness in WA. One of the closely connected outcomes in which Lotterywest provides grants is 'Reducing vulnerability and disadvantage'. In this outcome area, a wide range of grants are provided to help support the immediate needs of those experiencing disadvantage, including people who are currently experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness.

Lotterywest grants also support prevention and early intervention initiatives, sector collaboration and capability, and piloting innovative ways of working (such as No Wrong Door Approaches) and new housing solutions.

The total value of Lotterywest grants with an Emergency Relief (ER) and/or homelessness focus since the launch of the Framework is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Key Lotterywest grant statistics relating to ER and homelessness, 2018/19 to 2021/22

2018/19 - 2021/22* ER and homelessness	
Number of grants	Total grant value
397	\$59,525,538

* Grants approved by Premier as at 10 March 2022.

1. Supporting those experiencing or at risk of homelessness

Prior to COVID-19, Lotterywest typically distributed around 5% of its direct grants budget for ER. These grants enabled organisations to provide essential support needs for individuals and families in immediate crisis. While not specifically targeted as such, this support would have significantly helped people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Between 2013 and 2019, this support totalled around \$5 to \$6 million per year.

Demand for ER increased significantly with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Significant numbers of additional people experienced crises, including housing stress for the first time, putting severe pressure on service providers. Increased demand was experienced across Western Australia for support towards paying for food, rent, utility bills, clothing and other necessities which translated into a high demand for grants

In addition, organisations supporting our communities' most vulnerable people were themselves experiencing challenges trying to deliver services in an accessible way to ensure help continued to reach those who needed it most when lockdowns and other restrictions meant their delivery mechanisms needed to adapt.

Lotterywest responded quickly to the pandemic creating a COVID-19 Relief Fund (Fund) which distributed a total of \$159 million in grant support to communities across WA between March 2020 and June 2021.

Of this, around \$22.5 million supported crisis and emergency relief (151 grants to 139 organisations). This included grants to:

- new providers as one-off arrangements; and
- existing providers – either at their usual level or topped up to meet additional demands resulting from the pandemic.

This was in addition to the \$19.75 million over 71 grants provided towards prevention and early intervention initiatives. This included grants contributing to reducing the risk of homelessness.

A mix of target cohorts were supported through the Fund including: people experiencing homelessness; unemployed people; women; women and children escaping family and domestic violence (and consequently experiencing homelessness); young people; and, more generally, those on low income. Support was also directed to new cohorts for Lotterywest such as international students and backpackers.

Closure of remote communities also dramatically increased the need for support to these areas, whilst highlighting the inaccessibility of mainstream providers to many Aboriginal people.

Support was provided through the Fund for traditional ER as well as towards new and emerging needs such as white goods, return to Country costs, dongas, new tenancy bonds, increased service delivery, complex case management and a range of other supports to help meet the needs of this cohort.

Table 2: Lotterywest grant examples – Supporting those experiencing or at risk of homelessness

Organisation	Amount granted	Summary of project supported
Ruah Community Services	\$4 million (over 2 grants)	Women's and Children's Wellbeing and Recovery Centre to assist women escaping family and domestic violence with wraparound support services and short-term accommodation
One Voice for Aussie Youth	\$62,500	Mobile shower van for homeless people without access to amenities, linking with other crisis support services
St Patrick's	\$630,927	20 Lives, 20 Homes, a collaborative Housing First project seeking to address homelessness through sustainable housing
Anglicare WA Inc	\$219,400	Operational and vehicle costs for outreach services to enhance safety for women and children impacted by Family and Domestic Violence in regional WA

2. Supporting collaboration and sector knowledge to address homelessness

Lotterywest has provided grants to increase the capability and collaboration of organisations addressing homelessness. This has included research and evaluation projects, the development of toolkits and resources aligned to best practice, awareness raising events and investment in collaborative initiative including the WA Alliance to End Homelessness.

Table 3: Lotterywest grant examples – Supporting collaboration and sector knowledge

Organisation	Amount granted	Summary of project supported
Shelter WA	\$416,854	WA Alliance to End Homelessness to assist the social housing and homelessness sector with Housing First approaches and to become more collaborative in their crisis response to COVID-19
Shelter WA	\$164,059	Building the capability of regional and remote housing and homelessness service providers to work collectively
Wungening Aboriginal Corporation	\$999,534	Homelessness research project to develop culturally appropriate responses to support Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness
Shelter WA	\$160,745	Development of an online toolkit and resources that will build the capacity of local government authorities to respond to and address homelessness
UnitingCare West	\$55,364	Community Connector Program to understand current community capacity, research innovative service models and build partnerships across a wide range of sectors to support people at risk of disadvantage and hardship.
Ruah Community Services	\$234,453 (one of two grants totaling \$365,797)	Evaluation of the 50 Homes, 50 lives collective impact project aiming to harness existing services to improve outcomes for people experiencing entrenched disadvantage
Ruah Community Services	\$1,182,854	Emergency relief and project costs for the By Name List and Connections Week to support people who are experiencing homelessness or financial crisis

3. Supporting innovation in housing solutions

Lotterywest is not able to support the supply of social housing as this is considered a core government responsibility. However, Lotterywest has supported the pilot of innovative approaches to connect people experiencing or at risk of homelessness to housing solutions in line with Housing First approaches.

Table 4: Supporting innovative housing solutions

Organisation	Amount granted	Summary of project supported
St Patrick's – My Home	\$2.2 million	Innovative social enterprise model to support older women experiencing homelessness to have long term housing in prefabricated, architecturally designed homes
Hygge Community Life Limited	\$121,127	'Homes for Good – COVID-19 Response Project' to identify un-utilised accommodation and works with community sector organisations and individuals to provide a matching service for people in housing need.

Current situation

In July 2021, Lotterywest returned to grant making under the Community Investment Framework. Grants remain available for organisations supporting those experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

Between 1 July 2021 and 10 March 2022, ER and/or homelessness grants totalling \$9,379,266.00 were approved (representing 15.7% of all direct grants approved in the same timeframe).

Lotterywest has been consciously not funding projects directly related to supporting tenants impacted by the end of the moratorium on rental evictions that came into force during the pandemic, given significant impacts and debt levels involved which are typically not able to be resolved through normal ER in the context of the direct grants budget overall.

Attachment:

- Community Investment Framework

Community Investment Framework

Priority areas	<p>Inclusive thriving community</p> <p>Supporting the diversity of Western Australians to actively engage in community life.</p>	<p>Connected cultural experiences</p> <p>Bringing people together through the arts, heritage and cultural activities.</p>	<p>Protected sustainable ecosystems</p> <p>Supporting our community to sustain and enhance our unique species and environments.</p>	<p>Smart innovative society</p> <p>Optimising our community's talent and capability.</p>	<p>Active healthy people</p> <p>Assisting our community to be more active and support initiatives which promote healthy lives.</p>
	Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More people have a stronger sense of belonging in their community • Vulnerability and disadvantage is reduced across our community • Raised community connection and participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our community is connected through arts and cultural activities • Indigenous heritage and culture is respected, acknowledged and embraced • Western Australia's cultural heritage is shared and preserved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our community is connected with, and cares for, our natural heritage • Ecosystems and endangered species are protected and restored • Our community's impact on the environment and animals is reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western Australia is a leader in new thinking and innovation • Knowledge and capability are shared for the benefit of our community • Talent is attracted to and retained in Western Australia
<h2>Grant programs</h2>					
<p>GRASSROOTS & COMMUNITY INITIATIVES: to help build stronger and healthier communities by supporting local activities and regional community initiatives</p>		<p>DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS: to assist the development of solutions that will have a greater community impact</p>		<p>COMMUNITY LEGACY: to invest in collaborative initiatives that will make lasting and significant change for the community</p>	