

## What does your organisation do?

Yungaburra Worm Watchers (YWW) is a community organisation established with the aim of preserving and passing on knowledge and skills in worm watching to future generations. Members attest to such benefits as improved health and wellbeing by contributing to community through various projects, sharing skills and avoiding isolation through social connection.

Our organisation:

- Provides opportunities for people of all abilities to participate in worm watching and worm preservation activities
- Fosters worm watching development
- Builds community spirit through events, activities and workshops
- Provides opportunities for young people in the local area to participate in worm watching activities
- Provides opportunities for participation by priority target groups, including youth at risk, people with a disability, Indigenous Australians and people from non-English speaking backgrounds

## **What area do you service?**

Yungaburra Worm Watchers services the entire Tablelands region and welcomes members of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. The organisation draws 85% of its members from the Tablelands Regional Council area, with the remaining 15% travelling from the adjoining Mareeba shire.

## **What groups do you service?**

Yungaburra Worm Watchers specifically services the following groups:

- Everyone from 10 to 101
- People of all abilities
- Youth at risk
- Indigenous Australians
- People from non-English speaking backgrounds

## **What benefits do you provide?**

Yungaburra Worm Watchers provides a broad range of benefits for members and the local community, including without limitation:

- Providing opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to participate in worm watching, keeping them connected and promoting sustainable worm care
- Promoting inclusiveness
- Offering social connection
- Building community spirit

## **Outline the benefit to your organisation and the community if this application is successful?**

This project will benefit Yungaburra Worm Watchers (YWW) and our local community by providing a safe, secure worm watching platform and shade structure. The project will enable YWW to better serve current members, attract more members and accommodate visitors to the organisation's facility.

YWW offers a welcoming environment for people to gather, share skills and participate in vital social engagement. Many of our members come from difficult home situations and the association offers a safe, secure environment to engage with like-minded people.

For many members, gathering together to watch and care for worms reduces stress and anxiety, while providing both mental and physical stimulation. According to a recent study by Central Queensland University (*Worm Watching Benefits in 2022*), calming activities such as worm watching result in a significant decrease in anxiety and depression. The proposed worm watching platform will provide additional opportunities for members and visitors to watch and engage with worms, ensuring that a greater number of members can participate in association activities simultaneously. The platform will also enable the association to effectively accommodate visitors, thereby exposing more local people to the benefits of worm watching.

The proposed platform will adhere to *AS/NZS 4893:2219 Suspended viewing platforms*.

As worm watching is most popular during the warmer months of the year, coupled with the organisation's location in Far North Queensland, the current lack of shade at the association's facility results in significant sun exposure for participants. The association is conscious of its responsibilities and wishes to provide a sun-safe viewing area for members and visitors and the broader community.

Time spent outdoors participating in recreational activities can lead to sun exposure and UV damage to skin. Cancer Council Australia reports that sunburn causes 95% of melanomas, the most deadly form of skin cancer. In Australia, 1 in 8 adults and 1 in 5 teenagers are sunburnt on an average summer weekend (SunSmart Victoria, 2015, Shade Guidelines, Cancer Council Victoria, Melbourne).

As YWW currently offers no shade provision, the association has determined that shade over the new viewing platform is required to protect participants from the very real dangers of skin cancer. According to the SunSmart Shade Guidelines, shade is one of the most effective ways to protect against UV radiation. Good-quality shade can reduce UV exposure and prevent most cases of skin cancer by up to 75% (SunSmart Victoria, 2015, Shade Guidelines, Cancer Council Victoria, Melbourne).

This project will enable YWW to meet its duty of care to all current and future members and visitors.

## **Will this application provide an opportunity for your organisation to generate income if successful?**

The proposed worm watching platform with shade will enhance opportunities for YWW to generate more income through membership growth, worm watching equipment rental and kiosk sales.

The much-needed worm watching platform will allow the association to improve its participation experience for all members and visitors. This will assist in retaining existing members and is expected to help drive future membership growth. Following the provision of more comfortable viewing facilities, YWW anticipates that more members and visitors will attend. Those who do attend will stay for longer, as they will be able to enjoy a sun safe and cooler facility. With greater attendance, for longer periods of time, the association's revenue will increase markedly.

By providing a sun-safe worm watching platform for the benefit of all members and visitors, this application will enable YWW to continually accommodate increasing membership. This will result in greater income generation through membership fees.

## **Will this application provide benefit to more than one not-for-profit organisation, if successful?**

This project will provide benefit to several not-for-profit organisations.

Each year, YWW facilitates worm watching classes and worm care education sessions for several local not-for-profit organisations. Some of these organisations include:

- The Yungaburra 'Friends of Ants' Society
- Yungaburra Butterfly Appreciation Group
- Yungaburra Community Centre

This project will enable YWW to offer more appropriate, safer worm watching facilities for the benefit of other local community groups.