

A night photograph of a park path. The path is paved with rectangular stones and is illuminated by warm, yellow streetlights. The trees are dark, but their leaves are highlighted by the light, creating a glowing effect. The overall mood is serene and quiet.

WHEN PARKS GET DARK SO CAN LIFE

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018
Who and how we supported



Bridge has experienced yet another year
of significant change and challenge

Bridge for Asylum Seekers Foundation

The Bridge Committee would like to thank all of our donors: individuals, philanthropic organisations and the NSW ClubGRANTS program[†] alike. It is your generous support that has, again, enabled Bridge to continue to assist so many otherwise destitute asylum seekers and their families during the past year. We also greatly appreciate our volunteers who help with administration, represent us at public events and raise funds.

Bridge was formed in 2003 as a Committee of Uniting NSW.ACT, the community services arm of the NSW Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia. Bridge is a registered charity and has deductible gift recipient status. We greatly value the ongoing support of Uniting, which reflects Uniting's acknowledgment of the work that Bridge does in supporting asylum seekers living in the NSW/ACT community.

We would also like to express our appreciation to Inner West Council (IWC) for their continued financial support. IWC provided \$15,000 for 2017–18, from its humanitarian human rights program, to support Bridge's fund raising and awareness raising activities. The grant allowed Bridge to contract a part-time Grants Officer to write grant applications and acquittals.

Our enormous thanks to Rod Sharples of Datadiction for his probono development of a donor database that was launched just prior to the end of the financial year. The database will allow Bridge to better know its donors and to improve financial management efficiencies e.g. automating our donation receipting process.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Craig Stokoe of LPN who has, again probono, provided his time and expertise to re-brand Bridge and to develop messaging and content for a range of materials and our soon to be re-launched website.

Brad Bellette, of HutSix, has offered to provide development of Bridge's new website at half cost. We are hugely grateful for his generosity. To the anonymous donor who pledged to fund the remainder of the web development costs, thank you for your generosity in making this possible.

Our thanks to Stephen Webb, You Need a Writer, for managing our Facebook page and for his design and distribution of our newsletters.

Last, but certainly not least, Bridge is very grateful for the support of Balmain Uniting Church, which provides our meeting and storage space. Without this support we would not have a home base.

[†]The ClubGRANTS scheme is a shared State Government-Club Industry initiative funded by a 2.25% gaming machine tax rebate provided by the State Government to those registered clubs with gaming machine profits in excess of \$1 million per annum.

Bridge's Key Achievements 2017–18



Supporting
252
people

Including
68
children

Grants plus donation income was
\$337,935.30*

- \$87,877.62 in regular and ad hoc donations from individual donors
[\$116,196 in 2016/17]
- \$33,000 grant through the NSW ClubGRANTS program
[\$26,320 in 2016/17]
- \$217,058.28 from philanthropic organisations
[\$150,350 in 2016/17]

While individual donations often provide the largest component of Bridge's income, this year grant income again outstripped individual donations. The latter nonetheless provided a significant contribution to Bridge's ongoing support for asylum seekers, with regular donations enabling the Committee to plan for the new year.

* See Income and Expenditure Details for 2017-2018 Financial Year

Bridge distributes 99.9% of the funds it raises



Numbers assisted by Bridge funding

In the course of the year we assisted an estimated 252 clients of whom 68 were children. The total funds provided to clients for the 2017-18 financial year were \$364,220 compared with \$217,060 in the previous financial year.

Countries of origin of asylum seekers assisted by Bridge in 2017-18

Bridge clients came from 33 countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma, China, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Ghana, India, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tonga, Turkey, Uganda, and Ukraine.

Distribution of Bridge Funds

Funds are primarily distributed to asylum seekers and their families through our partnership with the Asylum Seekers Centre (ASC) in Newtown.

ASC works with clients to ensure that they are aware of the funding limitations and assists them to move to other workable arrangements as available. Clients transition to Department of Home Affairs (DoHA) funded support, when eligible, are referred on to other community organisations (who provide them with accommodation in addition to a living allowance), find employment or may have their case resolved.

How long do clients remain on Bridge support?

The average duration of Bridge support for a client has almost doubled from 64 to 118 days. This is despite our current policy of funding for only six months, not funding clients whose cases have moved beyond first judicial review and ASC casework’s efforts to transition clients off Bridge support to preserve scarce funds.

A raft of adverse policy changes implemented by DoHA since August 2017 have meant that clients have been exited from/ will not be able to move onto DoHA support and will require support for the longer term. These changes are reflected in the dramatic increase in average duration of support for clients and, naturally, the significantly increased spend this year.

Sharing rooms, or beds,
with others or sleeping
on people’s lounges

Our supporters helped over
250 people from more
than 30 countries

The accommodation status of Bridge clients

Technically, all of our clients are homeless as the level of rent support we provide is insufficient to cover the cost of Sydney rent. Those in private rental will be sharing rooms, or beds, with others or sleeping on people’s lounges.

Where do the majority of our clients live and where is our greatest expenditure?

Our clients resided in 20 Local Government Areas across greater Sydney and NSW/ACT. Aside from some exceptions, our clients live in the western suburbs of Sydney with this trend, unsurprisingly, increasing over time. The table below shows our five areas of highest expenditure during the financial year.

Local government area	2017–18 Expenditure
Canterbury-Bankstown	\$75,880
Cumberland	\$74,945
Inner West	\$46,755
Blacktown	\$33,080
Fairfield	\$28,520

Thank you for your support of Bridge in what ever form it took. Without it, we would be unable to provide the remarkable level of support we have been able to this year to otherwise destitute asylum seekers.

Janet Castle
Chair
Bridge for Asylum Seekers Foundation

The Bridge Management Committee in 2017-18 comprised: Janet Castle (community refugee advocate/Chair/Grants Officer), Noel Hsu (Treasurer), Felicia Tesoriero (Secretary), Wenny Theresia (Legal Officer), Janice Thompson (community advocate), Caroline Mackie (community advocate), and Jorge Rebolledo (Uniting link).

Income and Expenditure Details
2017–2018 Financial Year

Income
Grant and Symposium

Scully Fund		\$50,000
Scully Fund (Emergency Grant)		\$25,000
Sisters of Charity Foundation		\$5,000
Georges River (ClubGRANT)		\$7,000
West Ashfield (ClubGRANT)		\$22,000
Earlwood Bardwell Park RSL (ClubGRANT)		\$4,000
Marian and EH Flack Trust		\$15,800
Collier Charitable Fund		\$31,600
Danks Trust		\$50,000
Sisters of Charity Foundation		\$5,000
Perpetual Impact Philantropy		\$25,000
Perpetual Impact Philantropy		\$9,658.28
Grant and Symposium Total		\$250,058.28
Donations Received		\$87,877.62
Others	Interest \$1,022.44	\$1,022.44
Total Income		\$338,958.34

Expenditure

HALE Fund Deposit Transfer	\$5,480
Grant application project cost	\$3,750
Grants to asylum seekers holding bridging or special category visas	\$383,620
Bank fees	\$373.60
Administration expenses, postage, office supplies, etc	\$685.10
Total Expenditure	\$393,908.70

Uniting Bank Account Balance 30 June 2017	\$146,333.17
Final Income after Expenditure 30 June 2018	–\$54,950.36
Uniting Bank Account Balance 30 June 2018	\$91,382.81
Investment Account	\$0.00
Cheque Account	\$91,382.81
	\$91,382.81

Prepared by Noel Hsu, Treasurer



SCULLY FUND



Collier Charitable Fund

DANKS
TRUST



CENTENARY FOUNDATION: WILLIAM WARDEN and CARLO & ROSYLN SALTERI FOUNDATION