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LOCAL 'INTO OUR HANDS' FOUNDATION WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE OFFICER FOR COMMEMORATIVE YEAR

Sarah Thompson has recently returned to her home town, Wangaratta to assume the position of Executive Officer for the [Into Our Hands Community Foundation](http://intourhandsfoundation.com.au). Sarah replaces Katrina Bendeman who held the role for the past three years and assisted the Foundation to deliver more than \$526,000 in grants back to the Alpine, Wangaratta and Indigo Shires.

Into Our Hands is celebrating five years in operation following their establishment in 2012 and commemorating 10 years since the 2009 Black Saturday Bushfires. The Foundation is gearing up for a range of commemorative activities and events in the coming year, including a commemorative grants round opening August 1, 2018.

Ms. Thompson took over the position on April 3rd after more than four years as Philanthropy Manager for Australian Communities Foundation, one of the oldest and largest community foundations in Australia.

Chair of the Foundation, Loretta Carroll, said it was an exciting time for the Foundation as it embarks on new activities to support its future; *"we were set up with a generous gift in 2012 through government funds, it's now time to build on that and work with the community and local people to ensure the Foundation can continue to operate for the next generation"*.

Ms Thompson has a strong background in community philanthropy, donor stewardship and strategic grant making and will assist the Foundation to achieve new objectives over the next few years.

'I want to start a conversation about giving and giving locally' Ms Thompson said, *"This is a generous community and giving where you live is a powerful and rewarding experience because donors can see the impact of their donation first hand. We encourage people to consider the local community foundation - Into Our Hands next time they give and they will see the results through the many grants we make each year"*, Ms Thompson said.

In her first year in the role, Ms Thompson hopes to build the profile of the Foundation and launch a region wide fundraising appeal. The Foundation relies on donations from the community for future giving and grant making. *"Tax time is a great time to think about giving"*. Ms Thompson said, *"as all donations to the Foundation are tax deductible"*.

For more details about available grants or to enquire about giving to the Foundation please contact info@intourhandsfoundation.com.au or ph: 0466 252 866

About Into Our Hands: We are a Community Foundation that supports projects that enhance community strength, cohesiveness and wellbeing in the Alpine, Wangaratta and Indigo Shires. We invest in initiatives that build community capacity, resilience and sustainability within our communities.

In 2011, Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund allocated \$16 million, to assist in addressing the medium to long-term recovery needs of all the fire-affected communities across the state. The Beechworth-Mudgegonga Fire Complex burnt 33,577 hectares in north east Victoria, impacting on the natural environment, homes and farming land in and surrounding the rural communities of Barwidgee Creek, Bruarong, Dederang, Gundowring, Kancoona, Mudgegonga, Murmungee, Rosewhite and Stanley. The Community Foundation was the tool identified to bring our futures **“INTO OUR HANDS”** and was allocated **\$1million dollars to assist with recovery over 10 years.**

Into Our Hands Community Foundation Limited is a public company limited by guarantee and is not for profit. The company acts as the trustee of the Into Our Hands Community Foundation which is a registered charity.

The Foundation has been a successful vehicle for disbursing Victorian Bushfire Appeal funds in support of our fire affected communities, but it also provides fantastic opportunities beyond the fire recovery focus. As the Foundation is now established, with the support of community it can grow to provide **flexible funding to inspire local communities to develop future projects and activities to help support community initiatives, and build capacity and resilience,**

What is a community foundation?

Community Foundations make it easy for people to contribute to a pool of funds which is used to support charitable projects through purposeful grant making.

They are governed by independent volunteer trustees that steward the growth of the fund, or endowment, to benefit the community in perpetuity.

Community Foundations work in partnership with donors, local organisations and the community to strengthen communities and increase opportunities.

They are uniquely placed to understand and respond to the immediate and long term needs of the community.

For more info : <http://australiancommunityphilanthropy.org.au/what-is-a-community-foundation/>