



MEDIA RELEASE

STORYTOWNS AWARDED NATIONAL GRANT TO SUPPORT INNOVATIVE REGIONAL TOURISM

29 October 2020

Storytowns are thrilled to share they have been named as an AMP Tomorrow Maker in the 2020 line-up, sharing in \$1 million of grants from the AMP Foundation's Tomorrow Fund. This prestigious title is awarded to 40 outstanding Australians each year who are doing great things in their communities.

The AMP's Tomorrow Fund is an initiative of an Australian wealth management company called AMP. The fund was created to reward hard working individuals who have developed an innovative service or product that positively impacts on other people. It's designed to provide new opportunities and possibilities to deserving creatives who work across a range of fields including science, social innovation, sport, technology, disability advocacy, education and more.

Storytowns received a total of \$20,000 in support, which will allow them to launch their highly anticipated travel app that uses geo-mapping technology and town-specific podcasts. Through interactive maps and engaging podcast stories, Storytowns showcases regional and rural towns, highlighting the folk that live there and local hidden gems.

Storytowns were selected as a Tomorrow Maker because their freshly launched, immersive audio guides are focused on promoting local business and boosting the regional economy. The team enthusiastically encourage people to explore their own backyard, as there is so much that is undiscovered. It also provides the opportunity for people to connect with the communities they are visiting. It might be an artist, the local cafe owner, a historical site or maybe a hidden gem even a frequent visitor didn't know existed. All of the best kept secrets are revealed.

To date, Storytowns has released several interactive podcast tours, including Grampians Way Podcast Tour sponsored by Grampians Tourism, Warrnambool Street Art Podcast Tour funded by the Warrnambool City Council and the Silo Art Podcast Tour developed with Wimmera Mallee Tourism.

Founder of Storytowns and former radio producer, Jarrod Pickford, said "I have always sought out people's unique stories, taking me as far as Azerbaijan, Wales, Italy and Peru."

"After years of hearing these stories I saw a benefit in sharing unique stories about people, places, foods or local history in an accessible way. It is a crucial time to support our local Australian communities and businesses to grow again. Storytowns is very well placed in this set of circumstances and it will encourage visits to regional Australia."

AMP Tomorrow Fund 2020 recipients' range in age from 15 to 62 and come from across Australia - from Perth to Townsville, rural Victoria to inner-city Sydney and regional New South Wales.

The Tomorrow Makers' projects also reflect major social challenges and issues faced in Australia today including addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the current economic climate, Storytowns have arrived at the perfect time as they have developed a creative solution to re-boot regional economies across the entire state of Victoria. Storytowns are passionate about ensuring every special small community not only survives but also thrives through this period, and in the long-term too.

Media Contact - Emily Edge
0427933016
emily@storytowns.com.au

Head of the AMP Foundation, Helen Liondos, commented:

“Every year, hundreds of hard-working and innovative individuals apply for grants from the AMP Tomorrow Fund. The beauty of this unique program is that it’s open to any Australian, of any age, from any part of Australia. All they need to have is an unrelenting commitment to what they’re trying to achieve and to contribute to our community.

“Award winners can use their grants to fund a wide range of items to help them achieve their goal - whether it’s a vital piece of equipment, training or expert support. These boosts can make all the difference to a project’s success. Despite all the disruption of this year, so many Australians remain committed to making a positive impact on their communities. These individuals, who continue to train hard, create new art, search for scientific or social solutions, are not only inspirations but also confirmation that Australia has a wealth of exceptional individuals to take us into better days.”

Storytowns established themselves in 2019, after winning Warrnambool’s ‘The Ideas Place’ project competition. The innovative program was funded by LaunchVic in partnership with Warrnambool City Council, Corangamite and Moyne Shire Councils, Deakin University, South West TAFE and the Great South Coast Food and Fibre Council. The program was launched to create regional start-ups and support them to build their ideas into sustainable businesses. Storytowns has seen rapid growth in the region and enabled Jarrod Pickford & Co-Founder Emily Edge to build this business and create local jobs in new media.

As a Tomorrow Maker of 2020, Storytowns are looking forward to putting their funding towards the company’s technology and podcasts so that they can deliver the highest quality experience to their audience. Listeners will be able to participate in a revolutionary immersive travel experience that has never been on offer before.

Storytowns would like to thank AMP for making this award possible and selecting them as a Tomorrow Maker amongst an impressive line-up.

For the full list of 2020 Tomorrow Makers, plus profiles and videos, visit www.ampstomorrowfund.com.au.

[END]

Media Contact - Emily Edge
0427933016
emily@storytowns.com.au