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Envato Foundation to support Smiling Mind Indigenous mental health program

The Envato Foundation will lend its support to a targeted mental health program in Indigenous communities led by Smiling Mind in partnership with the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council (NPYWC).

Smiling Mind has worked closely with the NPYWC for more than two years, translating its popular in-app mindfulness sessions into the region's Indigenous languages, in order to support the communities' youth with tools in their native language.

The Envato Foundation's \$100,000 commitment will allow Smiling Mind's psychologists to expand their work with senior Anangu and ngangkari from NPYWC's Uti Kulintjaku initiative to develop a series of new resources to support student learning and provide teachers with additional trauma-informed mindfulness training.

The Foundation has now committed more than \$1 million AUD to five organisations and programs across Australia since it launched in 2018.

Chair of the Envato Foundation Briany Kalms said: "Our focus has always been on supporting organisations and partnerships that are committed to the same vision we have: a future where our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have equal opportunity in achieving educational and employment success, particularly through the development and education of children and youth. "

"The program Smiling Mind has embarked on in partnership with the NPYWC is a perfect example of this. Their engaged, collaborative approach has been a great support to the wellbeing of these Indigenous communities, and we are humbled that we have this opportunity to help grow what they have started."

To date, Smiling Mind’s programs have engaged more than 2,500 subscribers in Indigenous communities, with more than 5,000 meditations completed. Three remote schools in the central desert region have also benefited from mindfulness training, where educators were supported to foster positive mental health habits with their students and the wider school community.

Smiling Mind CEO Dr Addie Wootten said, “Mental health support should not be hindered by geographic location, language or cultural barriers. Our work with the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women’s Council is helping deliver easily accessible tools and training to communities that have previously been left behind, supporting the development of new resources, led by the community.

“We are incredibly grateful to the Envato Foundation, whose generous support is allowing us to continue on our mission to provide accessible, life-long tools to support healthy minds, harnessing the power of technology and using it for good”, Dr Wootten concluded.

Commenting on the partnership evolution, Uti Kulintjaku Project Officer Dani Powell reiterated the importance of the planned growth: “Extending the project means customising the mindfulness practices to be more responsive to the emergent needs of people, including children, in this region.”

“With so much instability and uncertainty at the moment, this couldn’t have come at a better time. Properly resourcing this project will provide the means for the senior women and men to be involved at all stages of production.”

ABOUT ENVATO

Location: Headquarters in Melbourne, Australia. Team located around the world.

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