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Wicking Trust ‘brings death back into life’ across Australian communities

The largest trust in the country dedicated to improving the experience of ageing for Australians has announced the recipients for its latest grant round of \$7 million.

The Wicking Trust, managed by Equity Trustees, announced the funding over the next three years for 20 collaborations dedicated to reshaping the way Australians experience death and grieving.

Addressing systemic challenges for older Australians

The funding aims to address systemic challenges faced by older Australians at the end of life and cover communities around the country – ranging from AI-assisted advanced care planning tools and grief support to more culturally-sensitive end-of-life care and end of life planning tools.

“The Wicking Trust’s goal is to create a more cohesive and inclusive system that prioritises care alongside cure, ensuring that death, dying and grief are acknowledged as natural parts of life and that all Australians have access to a dignified and supported end-of-life experience,” says Susie Meagher, Ageing and Social Impact Specialist, Equity Trustees.

“The Wicking Trust is committed to supporting systemic change to ensure all Australians experience death as a recognised, supported, and valued part of life,” she says. “These grants will help shift the conversation and improve access to compassionate and informed end-of-life care, planning, and support.”

Initiatives funded included in this round include:

1. **A member-led innovation fund** – Enhancing collaboration within the death, dying, and grief sectors. (*The Good Death Impact Network, The Australian Centre for Social Innovation*)
2. **Legal Resources for Solo Agers** – Helping older Australians navigate the legal aspects of dying and death. (*University of Technology Sydney & Council of the Ageing Australia*)
3. **End-of-Life Planning Tools** – Providing accessible resources on advance care planning, palliative care, and voluntary assisted dying. (*QUT’s Australian Centre for Health Law Research, Go Gentle Australia, Advance Care Planning Australia, Palliative Care Australia*)
4. **‘Akira Says Goodbye’** – A micro-learning tool designed to help aged care workers discuss death and dying with older people. (*Meaningful Ageing Australia*)
5. **Community of Practice for Compassionate Communities** – Supporting grassroots, community-led approaches to caring, dying, and grieving. (*Compassionate Communities Australia & Perron Institute*)
6. **Specialised Legal Support in Regional Victoria** – Offering workshops and pro bono legal guidance to help older Australians plan for their future. (*Justice Connect*)
7. **‘VOICES’ for Palliative Care** – Integrating lived experience into National programs and discussions on advanced illness care. (*University of Melbourne*)
8. **Sacred Spaces in Emergency Departments** – Creating peaceful environments and educational initiatives to support holistic end-of-life care in hospitals for patients and clinicians. (*Alfred Health/Monash University/Bethlehem Griffiths Foundation*)



9. **Collaborative End-of-Life Hub** – Connecting organisations and experts to maximise the impact of Wicking Trust grant-funded initiatives. (*Melbourne Ageing Research Initiative (MARC), led by National Ageing Research Institute (NARI)*)
10. **Death Literacy for Medical Trainees** – Piloting a program to transform medical culture and support patients, families, and doctors in facing death. (*University of Melbourne, Meaningful Ageing Australia, Grief Australia, AMSA*)
11. **Culturally-Appropriate Advance Care Planning for Anangu Elders** – Developing resources to support end-of-life discussions. (*NPY Women's Council, Anangu Elders, TPC CA*)
12. **AI-Powered Grief Support** – Offering personalised emotional and practical guidance for older adults experiencing bereavement. (*QUT & People Tech Revolution*)
13. **'I Am Living' Docuseries** – Showcasing real narratives of the terminally ill and their families to normalise end-of-life discussions. (*Calvary Care*)
14. **Culturally-Sensitive End-of-Life Care** – Providing tools and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to navigate a loved one's last days. (*HammondCare & Murrumbidgee PHN*)
15. **AI-Assisted Advance Care Planning Tool** – Co-designed with older Australians and healthcare professionals to provide a personalised approach to planning for end-of-life care. (*Deakin University, Touchstone Life Care*)
16. **Community Services Directory** – Integrating with Violet's AI-enabled platform to connect Australians with vital end-of-life care services. (*Violet & Portable*)
17. **'Voices of Diversity' Study** – Exploring views on voluntary assisted dying within culturally and linguistically diverse communities to develop tailored resources. (*Western Sydney University, South Western and South Eastern Local Health District*)
18. **Seed funding** - designed to empower grassroots efforts and foster stronger, more connected communities in the death and dying space. (*Proveda – Dying to know Day*)
19. **Nurturing compassionate communities** across South Australia and Victoria through structured, accessible engagement systems for individuals, carers, businesses, and organisations. (*Palliative Care SA & Palliative Care Victoria*)
20. **Mobilising care and capturing connections** for older Australians around death, dying and grieving. (*Palliative Care Australia and La Trobe University Public Health Palliative Care Unit*)

Ms Meagher adds, "John and Janet Wicking were generous in life and in death. They were committed to a path of dignity in ageing and in dying. By partnering with organisations working to 'bring death back into life' we hope to honour their wishes and legacy and begin a long and inclusive conversation with Australian communities."

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