Konnections

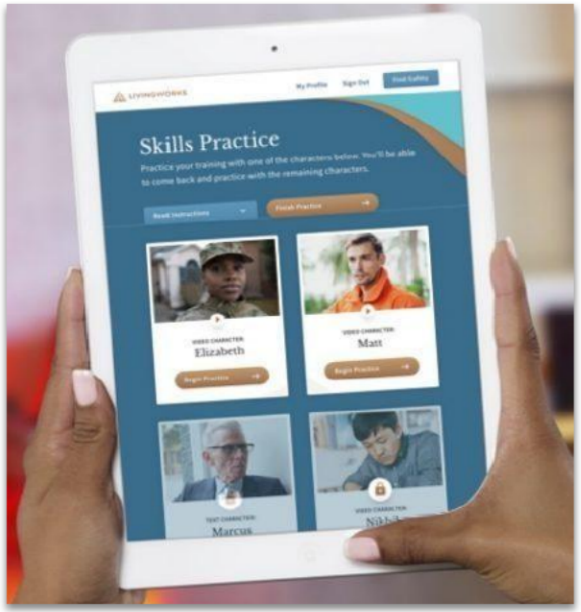
Progress update - Feb 2022

Building skills for Mental Health awareness

The Konnections program is underpinned by the principle of health by stealth, with a focus on creating an inclusive space and inviting people to join our community and participate in events and activities. Ideally this helps increase their connection with others, reducing feelings of social isolation, and in turn having a positive effect on mental health.

While designing Konnections, we recognised the challenges of identifying when someone is struggling, in particular if that person is new to the community. In response the **LivingWorks Start** online education training was made available and completed by the entire team, upskilling them to recognize when someone may be at risk of suicide and how they may respond to keep them safe. This training will continue to be encouraged for all new volunteers at the space.

Ross Evans, who is part of the team and a clinical psychologist, also helps by advising opportunities to identify and support people who may be at risk in our community.



Events we have planned and hosted

Lockdown troubles behind us, 2022 is off to a great start.

Completed events

Family Dinner	The grand re-opening for the Kommune after government restrictions lifted. A catered dinner, allowing us to reconnect and announce the Konnections program. Limited to 25 participants.
Kris Kringle Christmas Party	A tradition at the Kommune, the Christmas party is one of our most popular events to celebrate the year end. Open to everyone.

Planned events

High Country	Four days and 1,000 km through the Victorian high country. Limited to 20 riders.
Trivia Night	A motorcycle themed trivia night to socialise and create friendly competition. Open to everyone.
King Lake Ride	A day ride through one of Victoria's most iconic routes, with several stops and lunch. Limited to 20 riders.
Secret Camping	Leaving from the Kommune, riders enjoy a 2 hour trip following a leader into the countryside, without knowing the destination. On arrival at a vineyard they are greeted with a fully set up camp, entertainment and food.
Yarra Ride	A day ride through the Yarra Ranges national park with several scenic stops and lunch. Limited to 20 riders.
DGR Ride	One of our most popular events, our community donates and rides together in the Melbourne ride. Open to everyone.

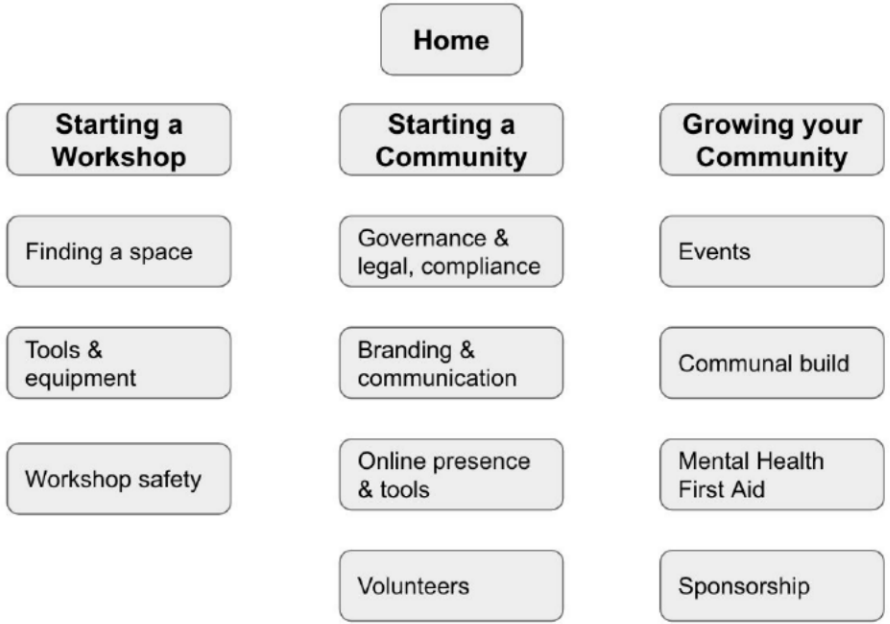
Sharing the knowledge with other communities

We are developing an online knowledge base that other motorcycle community leaders can access for free. We are calling it **The Workshop Manual.**

The Workshop Manual will consist of online how-to guides for:

1. Starting a workshop
2. Starting a community
3. Growing an existing community

The first iteration of The Workshop Manual will consist of written material accompanied with images and videos where possible.



Laying the foundation for **The Workshop Manual**

Our Content Management System (CMS) is a WordPress platform with a variety of templates and components.

The CMS, templates and components have been built and are currently being trialled on **Kommune.social**, which is our own community social space.

Steps to deliver **The Workshop Manual**:

- Conduct user research: a survey to community leaders to identify the content that should be further developed or where direct support is needed.
- Writing content/playbooks: writing how-to guides for each aspect of starting a workshop, starting a community or growing the community.
- Design: defining the layout of content, fonts, colors and images used throughout each webpage.
- Development: configuring the existing templates and components with the design styles and inserting the content.
- Deploy: testing the final version and distributing to the pilot group for feedback.

The Workshop Manual will be hosted on https://workshopmanual.co/

Community built motorcycles

Allowing our participants to connect by overcoming challenges and create something together.
25 participants split into two teams, each building their own custom motorcycle.

The Communal Build started with one motorcycle, but the high turnout persuaded us to start a second motorcycle so everyone has an opportunity to get fully involved. We are pleased to see that the participants come from a wide range of skills, ages and experience, demonstrating that the Konnections program has a wide demographic appeal. **Konnections.social** is further strengthening the relationship amongst our teams, as a place for the teams to share ideas and coordinate between sessions.

In the first 5 sessions, the teams have:

- Researched their inspiration and design
- Developed designs and part lists
- Stripped and clean the bikes to the frame

Over the next 7 sessions, the teams will:

- Craft oil and petrol tanks
- Assemble suspension, breaks and drivetrain
- Build an exhaust, seat, fenders and number plates
- Install dash, electrics and lights
- Paint and assemble
- START THE ENGINE and RIDE!

Flat Tracker team

The bike



The vision



Scrambler team

The bike



The vision



- **Social Klub events:** A calendar of events; several highlights included monthly single day rides, larger multi-day rides, community dinners, and a swap meet. By hosting a range of different events, we could attract people with varying interests and riding skills.
- **Communal motorcycle builds:** Participants were placed into two teams, each rebuilding and customizing a team motorcycle. Allowing participants to connect by learning new skills and working together. Teams meet each Thursday and collaborate to design and build their motorcycle. Social Connections leaders facilitate the groups to keep the projects on track, and also to promote a healthy, inclusive, and safe space to work. We focused on creating social connections and promoting activities that can have positive impacts on mental health. Participants are encouraged to continue working outside of the Thursday evening sessions to keep on schedule. The communal build sessions ran over 25 weeks.

Measures of success:
[What were the measures of success for the project? (Refer to your Program on a Page}

1. Sustain & expand workshop participants and memberships
2. Orchestrate and execute multiple social events for members and non-members
3. Create an online playbook/knowledge-base to assist other community leaders (or would-be leaders) worldwide who are seeking to start their own DIY space.
4. Improving quality social connections for participants

Contributors to effective programming that need further exploration (Extended Pilot):

[What are some of the identified early factors or elements which you feel contribute to the potential for the program's success that need further exploration through an extended grant?]

At the program beginning, we hosted events that did not directly involve motorcycle riding or building; for example, a Family Dinner at the workshop. This allowed us to introduce the program and our community without participants needing motorcycle riding skills or mechanical knowledge. We learned that it's important for the first events to remove factors that could intimidate and discourage potential participants. As participants learn about our community and the [little] skills needed to ride with us, their confidence grew and they become more involved with our community. Participants described growing confidence and connections beyond organised activities. These observations do not establish clinical outcomes.

We want to further explore creating a calendar of events that are designed to progressively introduce participants to riding and our community; each event growing their motorcycle skills, knowledge, and importantly community participation.

The community builds nights have been very successful in bringing people together and received a lot of positive feedback. Having now run these for the first time, we feel there are many learnings we could apply going forward to even further improve their impact.

Description of planned milestones for funding period (Final Report – Option 1)

Please populate the table below and add additional rows as required.

Key Project Milestones (as per funding agreement)	Commentary on progress and any changes to planned milestones during this reporting period

Program Reach and Recruitment (Both Options)

1. Please briefly describe the channels and methods you used to promote your program's activities to your target audience. If there are particular reasons why you used these approaches, for example based on what worked well or didn't work well during piloting, please also describe these reasons.

Various approaches were used to promote the program and its activities. These included social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and the Kustom Kommune blog and development of a digital social platform. Activities were promoted on the Kustom Kommune website, via the Kommune newsletter and by emailing Kommune members or past members and other people in the community who have previously provided their contact details to receive such communications. Using digital platforms is an easy way to reach a large number of people. Social media has been used effectively by Kustom Kommune for some years to reach the motorcycle community and has a large following. The program was also discussed regularly with the Kustom Kommune committee and volunteers, who were then encouraged to bring attention to the program when speaking directly with members of the Kustom Kommune or with people in the wider community. Speaking with people face to face allows for good discussion and engagement directly with interested parties and a back and forth for any questions people may have. Participants of the program were encouraged to speak with people in their own social networks about the program and events and were encouraged to bring them along at will to events.

2. Please summarise the reach of any promotional activity you have undertaken (for example, # of views of Facebook posts or ads).

The Konnections program was promoted to our following with dedicated posts:

Channel	Following	Posts	Reach
Instagram	18k	26 posts	1,028 Likes
Facebook	18k	42 posts	617 likes
Emails (contain program info)	22,496 (in the distribution list)	19 emails sent	6,694 opens

Additionally, we posted content that promoted the community, which indirectly benefited the Konnections program:

Platform	Total Posts	Total Rach	RSVPs (events)
Instagram posts	170	433,195	-
Instagram stories	294	142,773	-

Instagram reels	20	79,327	-
Facebook	208	408,912	-
Facebook events	14	20,721	607
Website events	22	N/A	112
Blog Posts - Konnections	22	N/A	-

Program Delivery (Both Options)

Program engagement and retention

3. Please summarise, to date, how many participants have engaged in your program's key activities. Include the number that have started, dropped out or completed your program. If relevant, include how many sessions on average participants engaged in. If relevant, include a breakdown of the gender of participants. You can adapt the below table to fit your specific outputs as needed.

Engagement outputs [insert more rows as required]	Number
# of participants who started the program - e.g. registered to attend an event	78
# of participants who completed program - e.g. attended 3+ events	27
# of participants who attended 1 or 2 events	18
# of participants who dropped out - e.g. attended 0 events	33
Please add any notes in relation to your outputs below as required: Participants who engaged in the Communal Build activities attended anywhere between 1 to 30 sessions and counting. Of the 35 sessions held to date, on average around 15 participants (and non-participants) attended each night.	

4. Please briefly describe the strategies or approaches you used to encourage participants to continue attending and participating. Please include any rationale for why you selected those strategies. You can adapt the below table to fit your response as needed.

After attending an event participants were sent follow-up emails, thanking them for attendance, providing information about the project and encouraging them to attend upcoming events. Whatsapp groups were started for interested participants for various events to promote ongoing attendance and engagement. Participants were spoken to face to face when in the garage. Social media was also continually used to promote engagement.

Impact of COVID

5. Please briefly outline the impact of COVID on your project. What strategies/iterations did you implement to address or overcome any challenges?

Melbourne lockdowns were significant, with public gatherings restricted for 368 days until 29 October 2021. The workshop re-opened on 13 November, delaying the project by nearly 5 months. The program had several false starts as lockdowns were reinstated, resulting in diminished interest. Most detrimental was the loss of Kommune members because memberships were not financially viable without access to the workshop. The Kommune lost over half its members through the lockdowns, resulting in a much smaller group that we had contact details for to reach out to directly and recruit to the program (when a membership is cancelled often the consent to email/call the person is also revoked).

Challenges (if relevant)

6. Please briefly outline the impact of any other unexpected factors on your project and the strategies/iterations that you implemented to address or overcome the challenges.

During December and January, it was difficult to continue work because most volunteers were absent. Due to the lockdowns, volunteers had built-up lots of leave with their work. As restrictions were lifted they used the leave and became absent for extended periods. We attempted to adjust dates for events to try to increase maximum participation. We continued to provide regular communication with up to date details of events and the program as it changed.

Program Outcomes (Both Options)

Program achievements

7. From your perspective, what were the key achievements for your program to date?

1. The first iteration of the Workshop Manual, an online knowledge base for DIY motorcycle community leaders. The knowledge base has a broad set of topics that were curated from surveys of other leaders. The current content provides a great foundation to further develop other formats, such as video, courses/quizzes or one-on-one consulting.
2. Completion of the LivingWorks training for volunteers, which taught them to recognise when someone is having suicidal thoughts and how to respond. The training was an effective way to prepare our volunteers to support community members. The training was relatively easy to administer (online) and only required minimal time to complete.
3. Delivering a variety of events that allowed participants with varying interests to be involved with the Konnections program.