



## MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Movember invests \$3.7M into next phase of Social Innovators Challenge, funding innovative projects aimed at increasing social connectedness and mental wellbeing in men

*Australian-based project, WOW Sand 'n' Surf, one of six projects globally to receive additional funding on behalf of Movember*

**Melbourne, Australia | Monday, March 2, 2020** - Movember is excited to announce six projects selected to receive further funding as part of global grant initiative, the Social Innovators Challenge. During the next phase of the challenge, WoW Sand 'n' Surf, along with five additional projects (four based in the UK and one in Canada) will receive additional funding to expand their delivery and broaden their scope.

Through this funding announcement, Movember has committed to investing a further \$3.7M into select men's mental health projects with a specific aim to strengthen social connections for boys and men across Australia, Canada, and the UK over the course of 18-36 months. The funding of these projects is the culmination of four and a half years of idea generation, project development and testing. Each program has shown promise in increasing general understanding on the best ways to help men develop stronger, longer lasting, meaningful relationships. Projects receiving extended funding include the following:

Projects to be expanded	Organization	Country
"Dad HERO Project"	Canadian Families and Corrections Network	Canada
"WOW Sand 'n' Surf"	Waves of Wellness Foundation	Australia
"The Changing Room"	Scottish Association for Mental Health	UK
Extended Pilot Projects	Organization	Country
"Brothers Through Boxing"	Boxing Futures	UK
"Ex-Cell 50+"	Co-operative and Mutual Solutions Limited	UK
"Men's Pie Club"	Food Nation	UK

The Social Innovators Challenge was developed in 2015 following Movember-funded *Beyond Blue* research into men's social connectedness and the impact it has on mental wellbeing. The research showed that as men enter middle age, they experience a decline in social connectedness and in turn, lower levels of social support - risk factors for anxiety, depression and suicide. This transitional period, coupled with social influences like a growing trend in competitive workplace cultures and increasing commitments to work and families, suggests men within this demographic experience increased feelings of isolation and loneliness.

"We know that once we hit our 30s, men generally aren't as attentive to our social relationships as we should be," says Brendan Maher, Global Director, Mental Health & Suicide Prevention. "This can have far-reaching consequences because we know that strong social connections are a key protective factor for men against anxiety, depression and potentially suicide. Movember's Social Innovators Challenge has

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allowed us to uncover, nurture and develop fresh ideas to keep men connected. This exciting next phase will build upon the critical evidence and success of some of our most promising initiatives.”

In response to this research, Movember initiated the \$5.6M Social Innovators Challenge to fund active programming to encourage men to build positive relationships and increase levels of social connections. Spanning across Canada, Australia and the UK, grants would be provided for innovative, outside-the-box ideas that would result in game-changing programs to increase the quantity and quality of men's relationships and mental wellbeing. In 2017, 12 projects (out of 426 submissions globally) were selected to pilot over a two-year period (2017-2019).

Within the next phase, three project teams will begin scaling their programs over three years, including Waves of Wellness Foundation; and three additional project teams will continue to further test, refine and implement the learnings from the testing phase across a variety of settings, including sport, food preparation and social enterprise.

To find out more about the Social Innovators Challenge, visit Movember Program Report cards. For more information or to join the Movember movement, visit movember.com.

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW:**

### **Dad HERO, Canadian Families and Corrections (Canada)**

Dad HERO is a program designed to educate incarcerated fathers on proper and effective parenting and the importance of a positive father-child relationship. Dad HERO includes an 8-week parenting course offered through institutions along with prison-based Dad Groups and regular meetings. The program aims to increase incarcerated men's confidence in their parenting and build resiliency towards a successful family reunification upon release. Learn more about Dad HERO HERE.

### **WOW Surf 'n' Sand, Waves of Wellness Foundation (Australia)**

WOW Surf 'n' Sand is a six week learn-to-surf wellness program designed to encourage men to think and consider their mental wellbeing, all while making new friends and learning to be the best version of themselves. The program creates a safe environment for men to open up, addressing the importance behind speaking out without judgement in a safe and comfortable atmosphere. Learn more about WOW Surf 'n' Sand HERE.

### **The Changing Room, Scottish Association for Mental Health (United Kingdom)**

The Changing Room brings together the Scottish Professional Football League Trust and Hibernian Football club to engage with men in the heart of the community, and to encourage them to take better action for their mental health. Learn more about The Changing Room and The Scottish Association for Mental Health HERE.

### **Brothers Through Boxing, Boxing Futures (United Kingdom)**

Brothers Through Boxing is a non-contact Boxercise and general fitness program designed to help men aged 16-25 years live happier, longer lives. The program, which lasts six months, encourages men to develop new friendships through fitness and includes peer-led discussions designed to break male stereotypes and a “Road to Resurgence” toolset, allowing Brothers to evaluate and manage their progress to developing and maintaining new and existing social connections. Learn more about Brothers Through Boxing and Boxing Futures HERE.



**Ex-Cell 50+, Co-operative and Mutual Solutions Limited (United Kingdom)**

Ex-Cell 50+ is a program aimed toward helping older men (ex-offenders) build relationships to increase their level of social connection using a Self-Reliant and Mutual Aid Group methodology i.e. helping people help each other as they seek solutions to their common problems.

**Men's Pie Club, Food Nation (United Kingdom)**

Men's Pie Club is about men's love of pies – creating them, eating them, cooking them – but most of all it's about getting together, having fun, eating better and improving physical and mental health. The program is delivered through a partnership of the Newcastle-based social enterprise Food Nation and Men's Health Forum. Learn more about Men's Pie Club and Food Nation [HERE](#).

- ENDS -

**Press contact:**

**Movember Australia**

Samantha Mills, PR & Communications Manager

[sam.mills@movember.com](mailto:sam.mills@movember.com)

0411 241 475

**About Movember:**

Movember is the leading global men's health charity working to change the face of men's health. The charity raises funds to deliver innovative, breakthrough research and support programs that enable men to live happier, healthier and longer lives. Committed to disrupting the status quo, millions have joined the movement, helping fund over 1,250 projects focusing on prostate cancer, testicular cancer and suicide prevention. In addition to tackling key health issues faced by men, Movember is working to encourage men to stay healthy in all areas of their life, with a focus on men staying socially connected and becoming more open to discussing their health and significant moments in their lives. The charity's vision is to have an everlasting impact on the face of men's health. To donate or learn more, please visit [Movember.com](http://Movember.com).