



# THE FUNDING NETWORK

AUSTRALIA

## Application Form

**Date and location of the TFN event you are applying for**  
Sydney, Wednesday 1 March 2017

**Your organisation name**  
BackTrack Youth Works

**Organisation website**  
[www.backtrack.org.au](http://www.backtrack.org.au)

**ABN number**  
66612831919

BackTrack



**What year was your organisation established?**  
2,006

**Email address**  
bernie@backtrack.org.au

**Geographic focus of your organisation**  
Domestic programs only

**Facebook Page**  
<https://www.facebook.com/BackTrack-Youth-Works-128062303877443/>

**Any other social media accounts you use**  
Backtrack Boys selects - (6 min)  
<https://youtu.be/1l6WytK9l6U>  
Features interview grabs and some scene excerpts to show funders and broadcasters potential characters.

Bernie & Rusty SEQ - (4 min) Rough cut -  
<https://youtu.be/DZwXo9kHUJo>  
Observational scene of you working with Rusty.



**Presenter name**

Bernie Shakeshaft

**Presenter's short biography**

Bernie Shakeshaft has over 25 years experience working with some of the most disadvantaged young people in rural Australia. In 2006 he founded BackTrack and has re-defined what is possible for young people using an innovative process of engagement and community connection. In 2015 he was awarded a Churchill Fellowship looking at international models of alternative funded youth programs.

**Advocate Name**

Greg Paramor

**Advocate's statement of support**

Back Track is a proven program offering real outcomes for young people to break the cycle of abuse, family dislocation, drug or alcohol abuse and learn to participate in a meaningful way in our community for the rest of their lives.

It is one of the few programs to be fully audited from an outcomes perspective. It is simple in structure and exceeds in its outcomes.

**Describe your organisation and what you do**

BackTrack is an innovative youth program providing tangible outcomes for disadvantaged and marginalised young people at risk from substance abuse, suicidal ideation, criminal behaviour and educational disengagement. BackTrack offers an alternative intervention model of engagement through programs including "The Paddock" (school), Ag Lads (agricultural contracting), Iron Man Welders (welding workshop), Warrah (residential) and Paws Up (dogs).

**Outline the social issues that you are primarily working to address.**

BackTrack fulfills critical service gaps that currently exist in rural communities and does not rely on any one funding source enabling flexible program delivery and stability. BackTrack works to address a range of social problems including alternatives to lockup, providing education for kids disengaged from the education system, safe accommodation for homeless young people and pathways to reengage with community and achieve real life skills and pathways to employment.

**Core team members of your organisation**

Bernie Shakeshaft - Founder and General Manager; Ms Melinda Phillips - Operations Manager; Ms Jemma Tombs - Administration; Paul Dawson - AgLads Co-ord; Sarah Mills - Teacher; Nathan Bliss - youth worker; Matt Pilkington - Artist in residence; Craig Watton - Residential staff.

Host of Volunteers providing education and teaching life skills.

Board: Greg Paramor (chair), Kevin Dupe, Mark O'Brien, Nigel Barlow, Rosemary Mort, Karen Stafford, Bernie Shakeshaft

**Describe the activity you want to use \$15k for, either as part of your operations or a specific program.**

Recently a residential program was established to meet a gap in the system. Recent ABC 4 Corners documentary highlights deficiencies in the out of home care system. BackTrack offers an alternative approach to out of home care providing a home like environment . University research on a 10 week trial program showed overwhelming success of this model of care. Support from The Funding Network would offer these young people the opportunity to access the residential program on a fulltime basis (7 days/week) thus providing a safe and nurturing environment at all times. Additional funding would allow the program to be extended from 5 to 7 days per week and will have a significant impact at times of highest risk of anti social behaviour and most importantly the safety of young people.

**How much will this activity cost in total, and therefore how much would \$15k from TFN contribute?**

Annual staff costs for the residential program on weekends amounts to \$60K per year. The weekend residential program currently operates with the support of volunteers, operational only when this support is available. Funding from TFN of \$10K would allow the program to increase it's operations on a more frequent and regular basis.

**Who are the beneficiaries of your organisation's work?**

Directly the program meets the needs of young people aged 10-17, who are either at risk or have disengaged from education, often have substantial contact with the legal system and are either homeless or live in highly unsuitable circumstances. 75% of these young people identify as Indigenous. The program also has secondary outcomes benefiting the family members of these young people through generational change.

**How many people would \$15k impact and what difference would it make to their lives?**

Since the start of the year BackTrack has provided fulltime midweek accommodation (4 nights p/wk) for 8 young people with 96 adolescents having need for our emergency accomodation beds. Having a safe and secure place to sleep on a regular basis provides young people with the opportunity to concentrate on building their self-esteem and sense of belonging.

If we can provide alternative activities and a safe place to reside with adequate trained supervision by BackTrack staff then the impact will have a dramatic and immediate effect. The target group are at high risk of substantial use of drug and alcohol, anti social behaviour and contact with the legal system. It is well documented that Friday and Saturday nights are the times of highest risk.

**What are the expected outcomes and how will you measure them?**

Outcomes include improvements in physical and mental health from having access to a safe and secure environment over a consistent period of time. Outcomes will be monitored through the use of self-reporting questionnaires to evaluate changes in physical and mental baseline measurements. These will be taken at incremental periods of time (1st week, 3 months, 6 months and 12 months). This will allow us to track changes in participant health behaviour and to ascertain whether having greater access to the residential program leads to improvements in physical and mental health of young people. We will also monitor and report on school attendance, involvement at BackTrack and a reduction in D&A use and contact with the legal system.

The number of young people that engage on w/e activities can be clearly recorded and reported on. BackTrack has a strong history of effective evaluation and this will be incorporated into the program.

**What in-kind services or goods do you need (not including funding or fundraising)?**

We have tremendous local volunteer support teaching boys to cook, and assisting in supervision. There are a range of local businesses that help out with food, activities and work experience. We feel at this stage our in kind component is well resourced.