Heads Up 4 Kids Grants. What is stopping you?

Lions Clubs New Zealand "Heads Up For Kids" Project provides a helping hand for young people to engage in an experience or activity that will enable them to live their dream, establish life goals and reach their full potential within their chosen field.

Launched in July 2010, Heads Up for Kids is a unique form of fund raiser which asks New Zealanders to dig out and donate old decimal and pre-decimal New Zealand currency, and all foreign money. It is unique in that it does not ask for current spending cash, and thus is not in competition with any other NZ charity. (It also places minimal demands upon Club labour. A Club with only 1 member could run it.)

When processed the coins/notes are sent to/traded with the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, metal merchants, coin dealers and foreign exchange buyers for NZ legal tender.

This is then used to fund education programmes for young New Zealanders who would otherwise not get the opportunity.

To date NZ Lions have collected over 7.6 million coins and 29,000 banknotes weighing over 36 tonnes, bringing the total cash raised to over $802,000. The Reserve Bank of New Zealand estimates that there is still $80 million in old decimal and pre-decimal NZ coins and $20 million in old banknotes unaccounted for.

The HU4K Grant Register is posted on the "Heads Up 4 Kids" page on the 202K Lions website (Grants register Heads up for Kids.xlsx) and has been maintained and regularly updated since the first Grant was awarded in November 2012, thus providing valuable information to feedback to clubs. It makes interesting reading.

Between November 2012 and April 2026 (the latest information available) the sum total of Grants awarded was $259,416, around 30% of funds raised. Across those 14 years, approximately 220 grant applications have been made, and of these only 12 have been declined. Why then, and the question must be asked, have so few applications been lodged with the Charity when the track record of success is so very high?

Of even more interest, to the readers of this District magazine, is the metrics of the Grant Applications made by District 202K Clubs, of which there have been only 30 made by only 16 Clubs. **In 14 years!** At my last count, District 202K had 49 mainland (excluding the Pacific Islands) Lions Clubs, so why have only 33% of those Clubs made application for these Grants? Certainly not because they do not have deserving children and young people amongst their population. Those 30 applications realised over $31,000 in Grants and remarkably only 1 application was declined.

So what is holding you back, 202K Clubs? Can it be you are not aware of the Grant funding available? But twice as many of you are collecting coins for HU4K than have made Grant Applications, so ignorance cannot be the only factor getting in the way. Perhaps you have no suitable or appropriate activities to make Grant Application for?

A quick and dirty count of activities that have received HU4K Grant funding reveals that, perhaps not surprisingly, Outward Bound and Spirit of Adventure rack up over 60 Grants between them. These are followed by Discovery for Teens (17), youth camp (13), and

Scouts/Guides Camps (10). Sporting activities supported include: sailing/rowing, bike racing, squash, swimming, hiking, netball, football, rugby, and hockey. Less athletic, but equally successful activities include cooking, singing, Kapa Haka, hip-hop, diabetes camp, Young Ambassadors and even a Teddy Bears Picnic.

Surely you can find something amongst that wide and varied mix that your young people want to do and require funding for? My own Club, Waiuku, does not escape and must do better. It last made application in 2015. That is going to change.

So 202K Clubs, just what is stopping you?

Chris Stabler

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