

Nicola Andrews Adventure Fund Proposal



The RMIT Outdoors Club (ROC) wish to establish an adventure fund in memory of Nicola Andrews, an ROC member who lost her life during a mountaineering trip in New Zealand late in 2015. The goal of the fund is to encourage and support outdoor adventure amongst club members by providing funding to assist trips, expeditions and training. The fund will accept applications each year and award successful applicants with a fund subsidy towards their trip.

The funding will be allocated based on winning member applications, chosen by the Nicola Andrews Adventure Fund committee by utilising a criteria matrix. In return for funding towards their trip, winning applicants (club members) will be required to submit a written trip report with photos/video after the trip is completed plus ongoing assistance and promotion of the fund in the future.

Reason for the fund

In her short time with the ROC, Nicola Andrews was one of the most active members we have ever had. She first joined in August 2014 and between then and her untimely death on December 23rd, 2015, she went on over 40 club trips and many more private trips with fellow club members. These included rock-climbing, hiking, mountaineering and snowboarding. Nicola quickly moved up the ranks in the club – learning to set anchors, running trips and quickly becoming a lead climber. She was as enthusiastic as anyone we've ever had at the club – going from absolute beginner to experienced in a very short time, and always pushing to learn more and to squeeze more trips in. This is quite a feat considering she was concurrently studying to be a biomedical engineer, had regular work at a laboratory, continued work in her previous profession as lighting designer and was also studying on the side for medical entrance examinations. Nicola would rock climb at the gym in the morning before uni and then again in the evenings, yet she still found enough time in for her friends and fellow club members.

Nicola was conscious of the good things around her and expressed gratitude to the club for the support, adventures and friendships she had made. Nicola thanked us (when we should have been thanking her!) with an epic dinner party and regularly came out for meals and beers after climbs and committee meetings. On top of the standard club trips, Nicola also pioneered running some more advanced trips involving other club members including ridge hikes in Tasmania and ultimately her climbing/hiking/mountain trip to New Zealand. In October 2015, Nicola was voted in as mountaineering convenor – people trusted her clear head, her ability to get things done and to build excitement for the adventures ahead!

Nicola was the perfect example of what can be achieved when you don't let small things in life get in the way. Her death was a tragic accident that we could have never imagined happening, particularly with her close attention to risk minimisation, but life is fragile and even in her absence Nicola helps remind us to live life to the fullest.

Her passion and determination are to be admired and we want her to remain an inspiration for every member of our club for years to come. Nicola was aware of her limits, but also was fearless and threw herself to any task she saw before her – she didn't let experience or gender determine things that she could/could not do - she stepped up, inspired others to join her and went on to complete some amazing adventures!

We don't want Nicola's memory to ever be forgotten at ROC so we think this fund (with its annual fundraiser) a great way to honour her memory and her spirit for adventure.

In addition to the cause – Nicola had plans to create a fund exactly like this. She spoke to many of us about her vision of a fund that club members could apply for that could remove financial barriers, enabling people to go on adventures as she had been fortunate enough to have herself. Nicola, as we do now, saw this is a great means to enhance the clubs profile but also to reward hard working members and to bring everyone together

with excitement and a common goal.

It was not only fitting for us to follow through with her plans, but necessary to not let her dream die. Nicola had an ability to follow through with her plans (no matter what else she had on her plate), so it would be a discredit to her if we were to put this fund in the 'too hard basket'.

Promoting the fund will give us a chance to share Nicola's story with all of our members and friends for years to come, and will give them a grounding sense of what can be achieved when you dream. We plan for thoughts of Nicola to go on every adventure – to every peak and river – so that her spirit continues in us, even those who were not lucky enough to meet her.

To further aid this – we will ask of the winning participants to say some words, take some mementos or have silent contemplation at the peak accomplishment of their trip, as homage to Nicola. We believe this not only respects her, but also will give a deeper understanding of the beauty of life and the perils you can face – in a way that should help round them as even better humans.

Case for support

To take note from the New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC) fund, Sir Edmund Hillary stated; "To retain its vitality the Club must actively encourage the spirit of adventure amongst its members - persuade them according to their capabilities to seek out new routes, new peaks, new places to explore; support them wholeheartedly in overseas expeditions; devote time and effort to improving their skills and their techniques."

Benefits to the club

- Useful marketing tool
- Providing content for website and newsletters
- Increase opportunities for club members
- Increase skills surrounding the club and committed members
- Connections with other clubs and organisations both interstate and international

Many other clubs utilise funds, grants or scholarships to give their members the opportunity to expand their outdoor experiences and skills. Some of these include

- NZAC (New Zealand Alpine Club)
- American Alpine club
- Sidetracked Magazine <http://www.theadventurefund.com/>
- Alpine Club of Canada

The Proposed Project

Objectives / Goals of The Nicola Andrews Adventure Fund

- Provide financial assistance
- Provide gear assistance
- Provide a knowledge base

Methodology

How the Nicola Andrews Adventure Fund will be run?

- Applicants make an application submission detailing their proposed trip and intended use of the funds if they are to win
- The Adventure Fund committee decide on successful applicants. This will be aided by use of a matrix that assess factors including likelihood of trip success and the inclusion of adventure (see assessment tool and application form).
- The Adventure Fund committee will have ability to approve grant to applicants

How are funds raised?

- Annual fundraising night
- Donations
- Funding from existing club budget

Who is in the Nicola Andrews Adventure Fund committee?

- In 2018 the members are:
 - Julie Hjorth
 - James Beilharz
 - Conan Burch
 - Scott Gore
 - Chen Wei
- If a committee member chooses to apply for the fund, their place is forfeit for the year in question and they will be replaced by one of the ROC executive committee

How people will apply?

- Application form outlining criteria guidelines and information about trip including, budget, locations, number of participants, experience. Application form accessible through ROC website.
- Each year, the time to submit applications will be open from the date of the annual fundraiser, with a three month window to submit.

How often will the fund be awarded?

- Every one to two years, unless lack of suitable applications in which case the funding remains until the next round of applications

How many successful applicants per year?

- At the discretion of the committee and based on the financial health of the fund, minimum of 1, maximum of 5.

Criteria for applying

- Current paid active ROC member, having been on at least one trip in the current calendar year
- Not previously awarded this fund
- Not a commercial trip

Conditions of the winner/s

- Successful applicants of the funding will be required to provide a written account of the trip with a multimedia component of either video or photos. This will be required whether or not the trip is successful.
- Provide a lecture or video screening if considered suitable
- Ongoing updates (where able) during the trip via social media or other means
- Provide a record of accounting for expenditures
- Provide media to ROC, RMIT Sport and Nicola's family for personal/promotional use