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# Content provider package

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**We are the QUO, a young, Sydney-based social enterprise. We are an incubator for daring ideas. We encourage community members to effect change by gestating ideas into action.**

## **Our Story**

This tale begins with individual resistance. Two quirky queers, Sasha and Ally, liked to critique the social, political and economic system that governed their nine to five. From trans rights to feminism to the dreaded lockout laws and back again, they were energised by ideas but depleted by the prospect of how to effectively express them.

Feeling silenced by the structures that privilege social and academic capital over personal experience, they wished to uproot the deep-seated apathy affecting many young people and from which they themselves were not immune.

Women on a mission, they became co-conspirators. Connecting with others in and out of their venn-like circles, the two noticed feelings of frustration and impotence were widespread. However, in a marketplace where radical thought is considered divisive, volunteering has become a competitive sport and where small, purpose-driven organisations are overshadowed by intimidatingly large businesses, being meaningfully heard is not quite as easy or simple as it seems.

The QUO was born with the recognition that we need an alternate online platform trading in bold ideas that can propel direct action initiatives; an aggregator that values collaboration, creativity and critical dialogue. We wanted to create a digital safe space built on mutual respect where non-conforming organisations and individuals connect, where sidelined stories are heard and where any respectful idea is given the opportunity to gestate into an action.

## **The QUO's aims are threefold:**

**To connect people with geographically-proximate, socially-aware organisations and the issues they promote.**

**1** By encouraging users to connect with Not-For-Profit organisations, grassroots movements and social enterprises whose missions and goals align with their own, we empower all parties to become personally and collectively accountable for changemaking initiatives. Currently, many smaller organisations are left silenced in a not-for-profit-sphere dominated by the largest and loudest organisations. In a manner far superior to traditional forms of fundraising, the QUO allows them to break this silence and connect with possible volunteer-bases and donors.

**To encourage learning by honouring the lived experiences of contributors and publishing their personal accounts.**

**2** A direct rebut to apathy and disengagement, we empower community members to engage creatively or analytically with contemporary issues that resonate with them. We are open to any idea from anyone, as long as it is not hateful or discriminatory.

**To empower our community to change things for themselves through critical dialogue built upon a foundation of empathy and mutual respect.**

## **Our Governance**

### **Independence**

The QUO is autonomous. We will never subject our community or their ideas to the implicit hierarchies imprinted into the fabric of our society. We value lived experience and imagination as much as professional experience and tertiary qualifications.

### **Involvement**

The QUO actively reaches out to individuals at the intersection(s) of racism, sexism, sexual identity-related discrimination, geographical isolation, classism and ableism. We believe these voices must become the loudest.

### **Integrity**

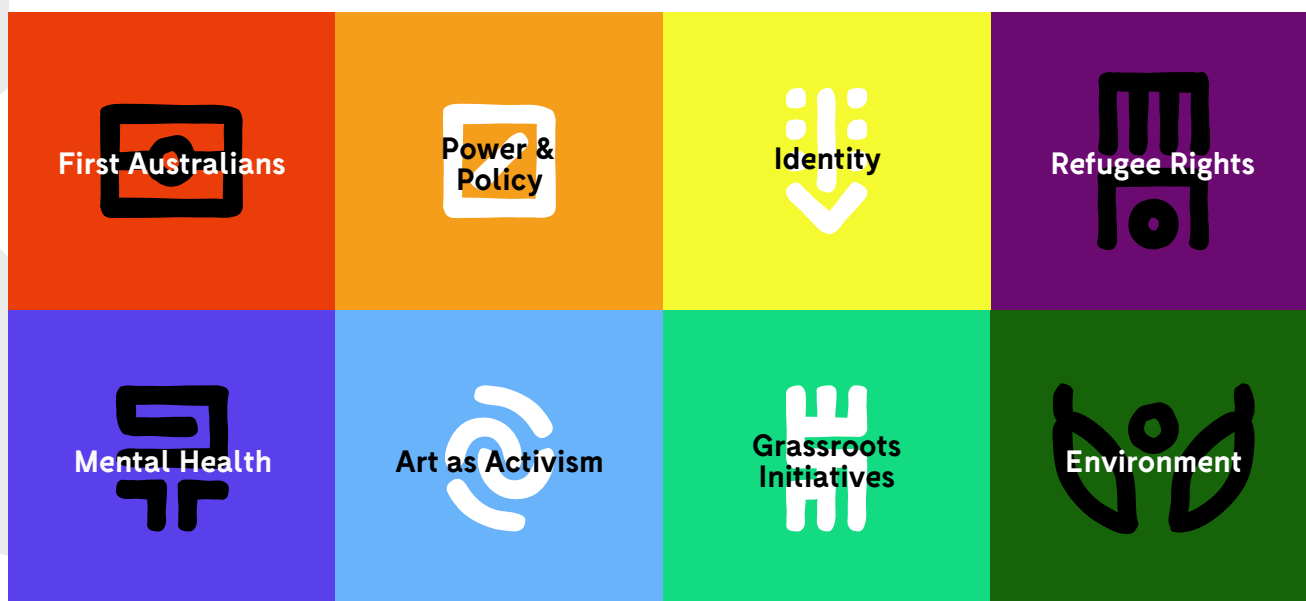
The QUO recognises that meaningful change requires an acknowledgement of our collective responsibility. We encourage the organisation and active engagement of community groups, individual changemakers and the broader public so they may become pioneers of change.

## **Our Organisation**

Above all, the QUO is a social enterprise. However, we are also a private company. We chose this type of organisational structure not to funnel large amounts of money into offshore accounts, but to ensure that we have as greater chance as possible to become self-sustaining. The QUO will inject revenue directly back into our QUOmmunity to recognise the labour of our contributors and employees, and to curate stellar content onto our website. In the process, we hope to subvert the notion that only not-for-profit organisations can effect meaningful change.

## What We Want

Our contributors are the driving force of The QUO, so thank you for lending us your time and creative energy. Your submission should fall into one (or more) of the following spheres:



The QUO recognises this is by no means an an exhaustive list of spheres, so if you are committed to writing something that does not fall into any of these, let us know and we will work with you.

We ask that you engage with a cause that resonates with your personal, professional, internal, external or imaginative experiences of contemporary society. We want your dynamism and passion for reform to be expressed in your work, so do not be afraid of bold, unconventional or iconoclastic ideas. Ask yourself, how does my submission challenge or contest current norms? While we recognise that no opinion or experience is apolitical, please do not use this opportunity to exclusively criticise or pedestalize a specific public figure; it is systemic as opposed perfunctory change and debate that we aim to kindle.

Above all, we ask that your work engages in or opens up the possibility of critical or creative dialogue with other community members. If possible, try to link your work with the initiative of a relevant community organisation, grassroots movement, activist or public figure. Alternatively, do not hesitate to suggest starting a new initiative. We want our community to feel empowered as change-makers after reading your submission.

**Here are some further guidelines for your submission:**

- Written pieces should be no longer than 1000 words. You may choose to create a traditional opinion piece or explore uncharted linguistic territory.
- Visual submissions (photography, graphic art, comics) should be daring and directly engage with the idea of art as activism.
- Multimedia submissions (film, documentary, interviews) should be no longer than 10 minutes. No question or subject is out of bounds, but respect is paramount.
- Performance poetry/spoken word pieces should be no longer than 5 minutes. Personal experience is a powerful starting point, but clearly relate this to your chosen cause.

**Lateral thinking and quirky styles encouraged. We are looking for concise submissions that engage in critical or creative dialogues, and will collaborate with you during the editing process.**

**To submit your contribution, please send to:**

[submissions@thequo.com.au](mailto:submissions@thequo.com.au)

**For further assistance, please contact:**

[ally@thequo.com.au](mailto:ally@thequo.com.au)

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