

## Social Enterprise Finance Australia

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# Social Enterprise Snapshot

## Sandbag creates new nursery and café

Sandbag is a community organisation with diverse support programs. Now a new nursery and café will provide a sustainable source of funding for the future.



‘Our reliance on government grants has been reduced. Thanks to SEFA, we can now respond to actual local community needs rather than the government’s perception of what those needs are.’

Chris Fisher, Sandbag

The existence of Sandbag Community Services and Centres stems from the Sandgate and Bracken Ridge Action Group that successfully campaigned to protect its local Boondall Wetlands in Brisbane’s north in the 1980s. In subsequent decades it has evolved into a physical community centre in Sandgate.

Using a loan with SEFA, Sandbag created the Garden Gate Nursery and Café, which opened in February 2015. The venture targets the diverse markets in the Sandgate area by stocking plants sought out by those who own luxury or investment properties in the area. The plants are organic, high quality, and good value. They appeal to the local community and food gardening groups. The loan will also fund overheads such as managers and building costs, which aren’t covered by grants.

It was important to Sandbag that there was a good balance between the nursery as a quality retail environment and the social outcome. It wants to build the community and at the same time grow the organisation.

The nursery will help support Sandbag’s programs including award-winning SEED Parks and Properties Maintenance enterprise,

crisis services, domestic violence family support programs, disability community connections program, and other community programs and spaces.



## What SEFA says

As a result of its long-term financial sustainability, Sandbag can continue to create a platform that engages its supporters and beneficiaries. We look forward to supporting it to strengthen its networks with other local community groups.