



## ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Create play, anywhere.



**Image Credit:**  
Global Play Alliance Member  
Lân Bánh Ước Mơ 2023

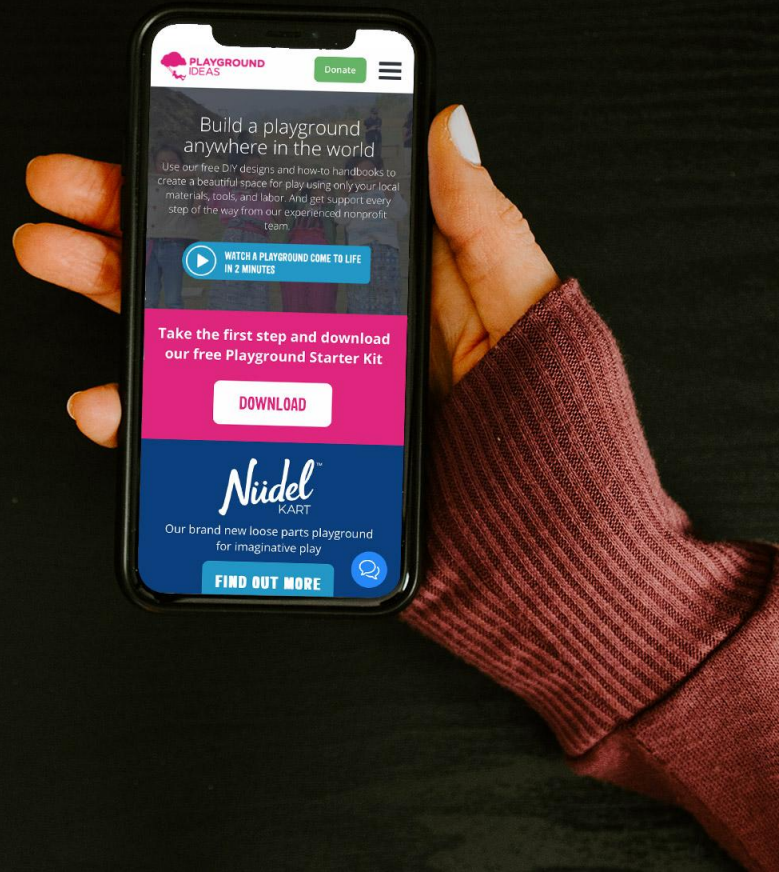
## WHO WE ARE

Playground Ideas is a Melbourne based non-profit organisation that supports anyone, anywhere to build a stimulating space for play using only local materials, tools and skills.



## OUR MISSION

To give anyone, anywhere the skills and resources to create time and space for children to play.





## OUR VISION

A world where children's play is valued and encouraged as their primary tool for learning, wellbeing and development.





## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Marcus Veerman,  
*Founder and CEO*

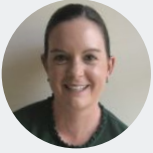


Welcome to the 2020-2023 annual report. Years ago, I heard a story about a bear that was raised in a cage. This sad bear would stay sane by pacing the length and depth of the barren cage all day long. Finally, the bear was saved by a zoo and released into a beautiful natural habitat. The bear sadly continued to pace the length and width of its original enclosure, unable to see and take advantage of the change that had occurred. For schools, 2022 felt much like the bear in this story. Schools were released to operate normally after the pandemic, yet they had entrenched patterns that subconsciously seemed difficult to break out of and delayed them from acting.

With this as a backdrop, I'm proud to say both Playground Ideas and Nüdel Kart have fared amazingly well against these headwinds. Considering the lack of ability to travel, Playground Ideas has only seen a slight drop in the number of projects completed in the last three years. During this time, Nüdel Kart has now cemented itself as a solid offering in the Australian education market, has completed two research projects with more to come, raised significant capital through corporate training programs, and is now ready to launch an entirely new product for children at home in late 2023. Internally, we now have a strong, creative, and operations team back (Matt Green has returned after an 18-months hiatus), and by the end of this reporting period in June 2023, we have the strongest sales ever since the launch of Nüdel Kart.

The big dream of the Nüdel Kart social enterprise, completely supporting the organisation, is inching ever closer. After three years of taking calculated risks and relying on our deep knowledge of play and education, we are now seeing the payoff of the significant investment the organisation has made in not only supporting the foundational mission of Playground Ideas but also in having an entirely new resource to support teachers globally to deeply impact children's development.

Kind Regards, 



## **MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON**

Lauren Schotting,  
*Chairperson*

The last 12 months have seen life slowly return to a more normal rhythm. We have seen this occur in businesses, schools and our lives at home and it has meant that Playground Ideas and Nüdel Kart have been able to continue the growth that had been planned before the changes we saw under the Covid-19 period.

This has meant renewed and increasing interest primarily from educators keen to introduce our Nüdel Kart products into schools. The expansion of the incursions program has compounded this and seen sales grow and importantly more children experiencing the joy of creating and learning from the karts.

Our product and development team, both internal and with external expert assistance means that next year a new Nüdel Kart product will be introduced - broadening the market of the kart and getting them straight into the hands of children, furthering the mission of Playground Ideas and the Nüdel Kart products. Marcus and his team's innovation and passion to continue driving impact and finding more ways for children to play is inspiring and they continue to push how children can and will play in varied spaces.

Thank you to Daniella, Scott and Matt for your continued efforts this year ensuring that the growing requirements of Playground Ideas and Nüdel Kart have been met and exceeded and that the growth continues because of your input.

As my role as Chair continues, I am pleased to see new members join our board, bringing with them a depth of experience and knowledge from various industries and regions. I look forward to a wider team celebrating and supporting the continual growth of Playground Ideas and the new and continuing Nüdel Kart products. I thank our continuing and outgoing board members for their service, commitment and dedication over the last 12 months and look forward to what the next year will bring.

Finally a big thank you to Marcus. His passion, energy and dedication to his vision is unwavering and are the reason for the ever-increasing interest in the ongoing and new projects and products being created. Marcus' drive and focus on childhood learning and development are key to the success of Playground Ideas and the continued growth and momentum that we are seeing year after year.

Kind Regards,

  
Lauren Schotting



## OUR PEOPLE - STAFF



**MARCUS VEERMAN**  
*Founder & CEO*



**DANIELLA CAMPLONE**  
*Operations Manager*



**MATT GREEN**  
*Designer & Implementer*



**SCOTT THOMPSON**  
*Sales & Business  
Development Manager*

## OUR PEOPLE - THE BOARD

We continue to have a thriving board covering legal, financial, strategy and social enterprise. This diversity gives us deep insight and strong governance as we head into the future.

This year we say goodbye to Leanne & We-Ki. Leanne & We-ki have been such valued members of our board through a very challenging and fast moving period.



**LAUREN SCHOTTING**  
*Intrepid - Finance*



**RICHIE FEDER**  
*Spark Strategy - Strategy*



**LAURETTE HARGREAVES**  
*PR and Marketing*

## PAST 12 MONTHS ACHIEVEMENTS



**PLAY ACTION INTERNATIONAL (PAI)**  
Evaluating the effect of Nüdel Kart loose parts play on social and emotional learning (SEL).



## Social, emotional learning study with Sudanese refugees in Uganda

Working with Play Action International (PAI) students used the Nüdel Kart and were assessed on their social and emotional skills, before and after interacting with the Nüdel Kart. Over all the children's social emotional score increased from an average of 1.5 to 3.5 out of 5.

Social & Emotional skills

# BEFORE & AFTER

using the Nüdel Kart over 9 months  
in Ugandan schools

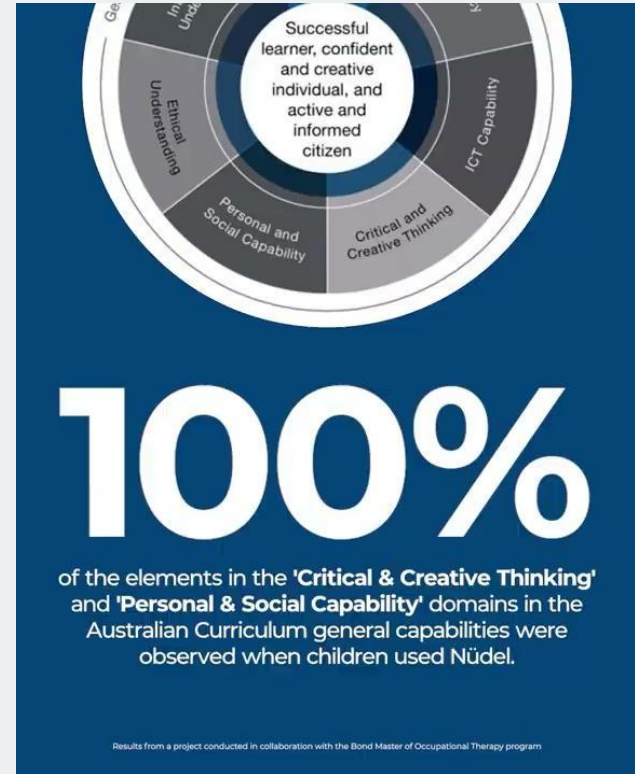


Results from Play Action International Nov 2022 Report



## Assessing improvements in personal and social skills as well as critical and creative thinking capabilities in the Australian curriculum.

Working with Bond University, over 80 separate independent observations. Bond University found that 100% of the personal and social; and critical and creative, thinking capabilities were practised and demonstrated using Nüdel Kart with no teacher intervention. Not only this, but the students were found to be practising these two capabilities over 90% of the time.



# Critical & Creative Thinking capabilities

Inquiring | Generating ideas | Analysing & evaluating | Reflecting on ideas

94%

Imagine possibilities & connect ideas

94%

Think about thinking (metacognition)

89%

Apply logic and reasoning

88%

Organise & process information

65%

Draw conclusions and design a course of action

57%

Seek solutions and put ideas into action

Results from a project conducted in collaboration with the Bond Master of Occupational Therapy program

# Personal and Social capabilities

Self-awareness | Self-management | Social awareness | Social management

94%

Understand themselves as learners

90%

Become confident resilient & adaptable

84%

Recognising emotions

84%

Develop self-discipline and set goals

79%

Recognise personal qualities & achievements

74%

Work independently and show initiative

Results from a project conducted in collaboration with the Bond Master of Occupational Therapy program

## **JUNIOR ADVENTURERS GROUP (OHSC)**

We are currently being considered as a provider for a \$680,000 grant to put Nüdel Kart and Nüdel Rovers across their programs in Queensland.

We have currently invoiced for around \$20,000 of products samples for trial in selected locations.



## SECTION 1: PLAYGROUND IDEAS



**Image Credit:**  
Global Play Alliance Member  
Como Jugando

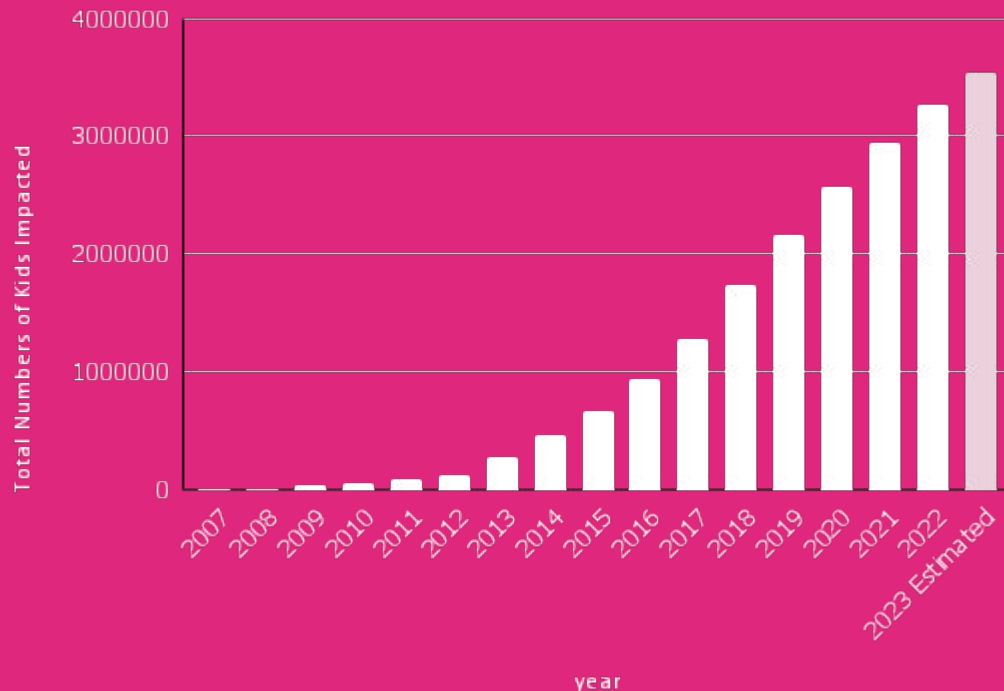


## GROWTH

Playground Ideas continued growth  
(Estimated after June 30th 2023).

Playground Ideas anticipate to support  
650 to 700 playgrounds increasing the  
number of children impacted over 3.5M.

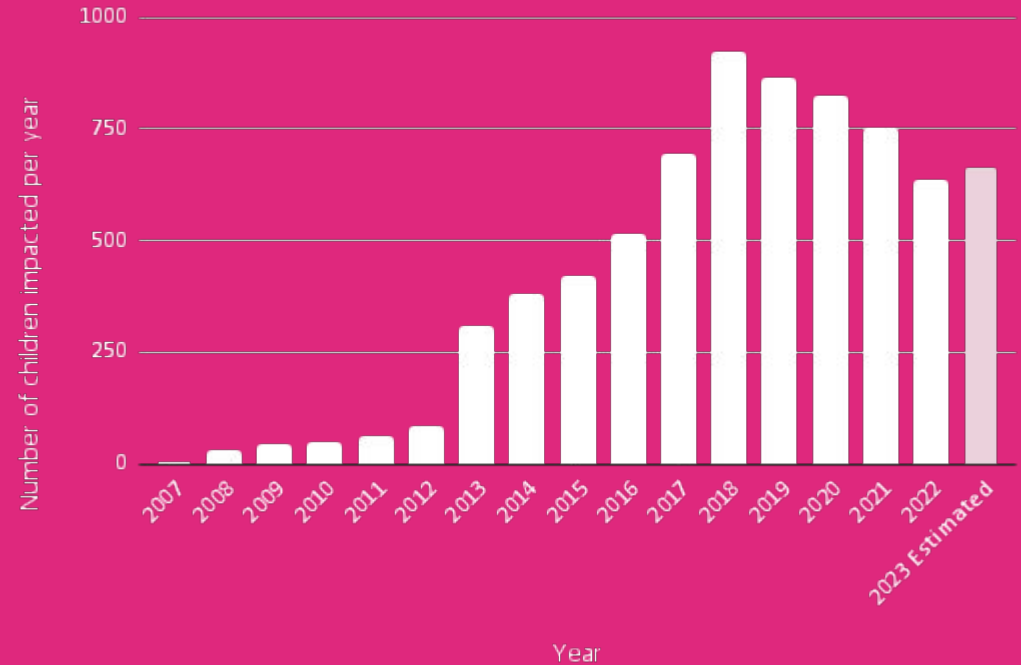
Total Numbers of Children Impacted (CUMULATIVE)



## GROWTH (2023 YTD)

Playground Ideas was heavily affected by travel restrictions, followed by significant increases to the cost of global travel. Many of our playground builds are supported by westerners who travel to countries and help manage funding and the playground build. In 2018 we supported over 900 projects. When COVID-19 hit we saw these numbers decline consistently from 2019-2022. Excitingly, since early 2023 we are starting to see numbers grow and expect to surpass pre-covid numbers again into 2024-25.

Total Number of children impacted by year





7,212<sup>est.</sup>

Playgrounds Built



143

Countries



3,538,437

Children Impacted



## SECTION 2: NÜDEL KART

Furthering our mission to create play, anywhere through a non-profit social enterprise model whilst building a future to sustain our work.





# NÜDEL AROUND THE GLOBE

This year we delivered 91 Karts & 65 Rovers. We now have over **200** Karts and **65** Rovers in all corners of the world.

Meaning more than 64,875 approx children have been impacted by Nüdel.



**...When creating Nüdel Kart we set out to do something that many have claimed but extremely few have actually achieved.....**

**To create a sustainable organisation supported by its own social enterprise that did so while still supporting the organisation's core mission. We are now  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way to succeeding in this mission.**

**LIFETIME REVENUE PER PRODUCT (as of Nov 1 23)**

**Nüdel Kart (V1/V2) \$4999-\$6650 :     \$1,386,844.25**

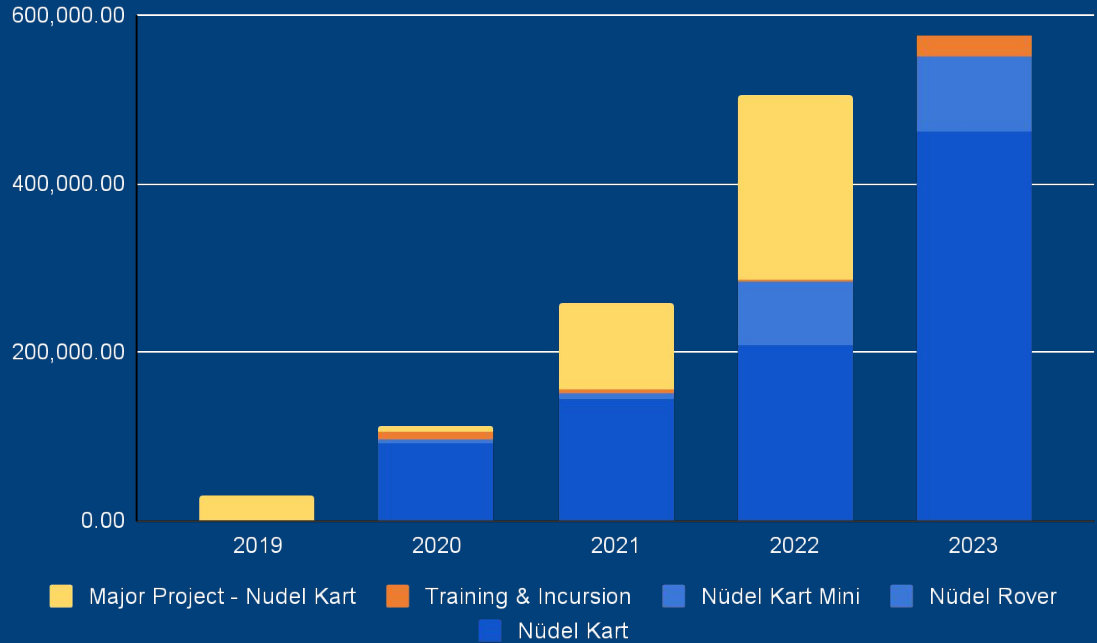
**Nüdel Rover ( V1) \$1499-\$1799 :         \$ 114,298.48**

**Total :                             \$1,501,142.73**

# NÜDEL KART GROWTH SINCE INCEPTION

Nüdel Kart Revenue Mix since inception has shifted from Major Project to Individual School Sales.

Nüdel Kart has grown rapidly since its launch just before covid. Initially through Major Philanthropic donations in 2018-22 but has now continued grown without any large philanthropic funding in the last year years.



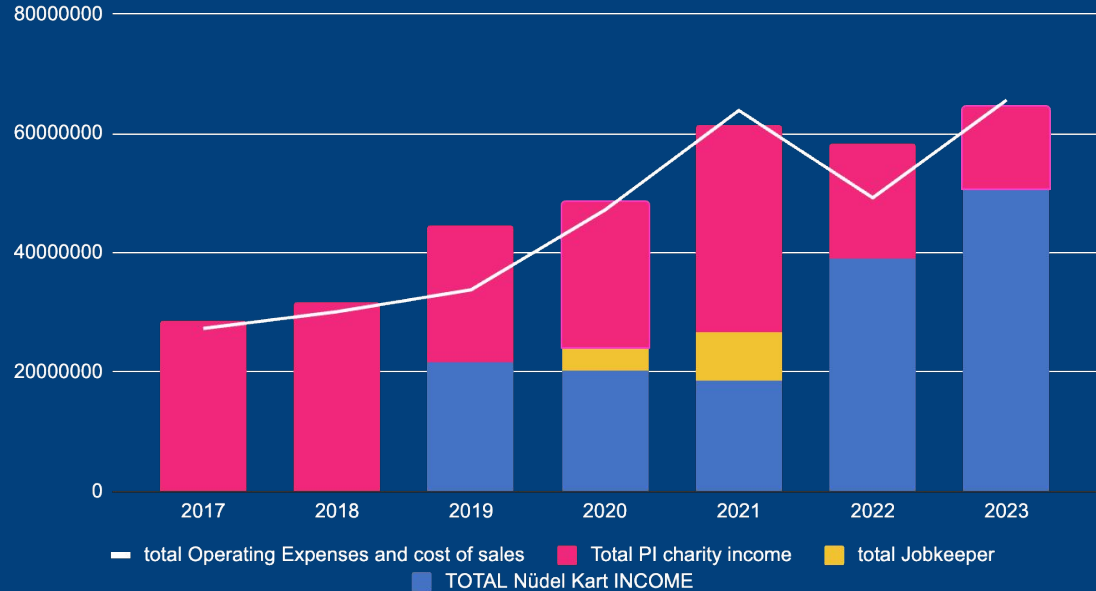


# NÜDEL KART INCOME and DONATIONS VS TOTAL ORGANISATION EXPENSES.

In the last 5 years (2019-2023) the Charity has shifted from a 100% Philanthropic revenue to over 3/4 of revenue coming from Nüdel Kart.

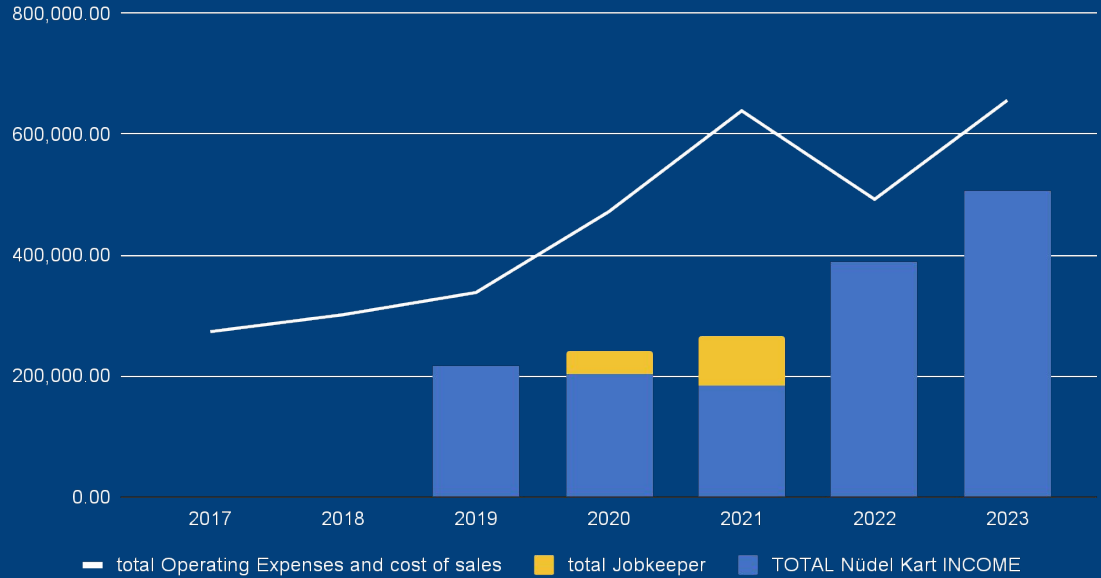
\*Note: This includes \$102k+ Donation made in the final week of FY 2021 - 22. This donation came early but was used in FY 2022-23.

TOTAL Income, Job Keeper Vs Total Expense and Cost of Sales



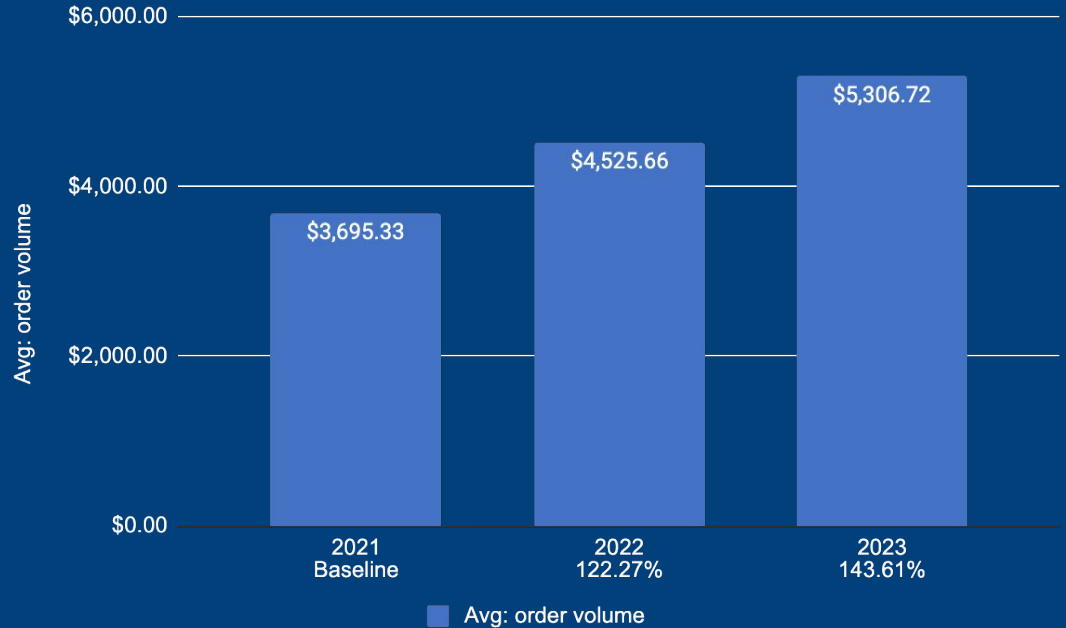
# NÜDEL KART REVENUE ONLY (no donations) VS TOTAL ORGANISATION EXPENSES

TOTAL Income, Job Keeper Vs Total Expense and Cost of Sales



## AVERAGE ORDER AMOUNT (AOV) PER CUSTOMER INCREASED BY OVER 40% IN 2 YEARS.

AOV has significantly increased each year as we have added The Rover, School Incursions and Teacher trainings to most sales.

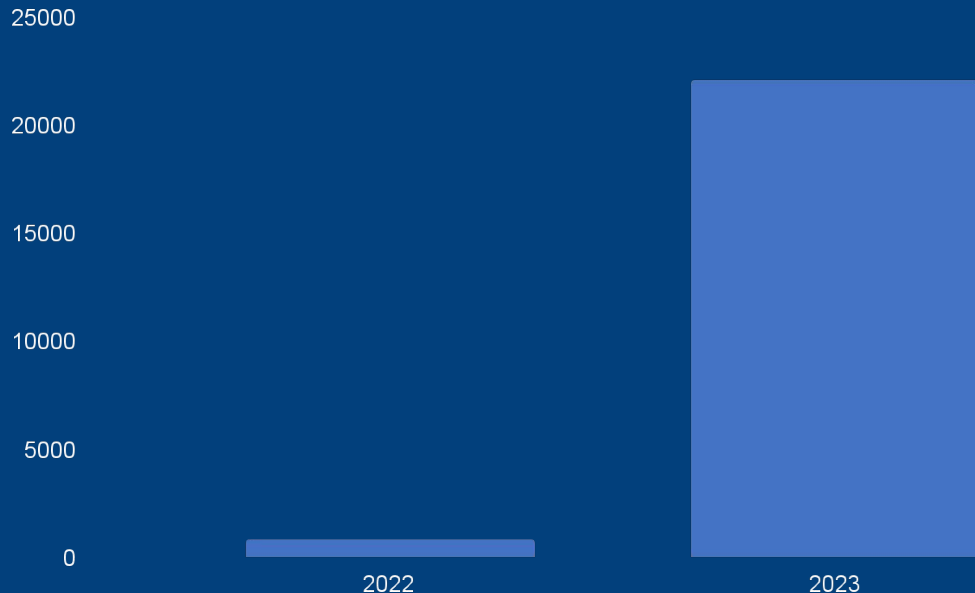


**Our focus on Incursions in the final QTR of the year has tripled Incursion bookings.**

2024 already has good future bookings for Qtr 1 and 2.

Incursions are low cost to run, offer regular return sales and have no product costs.

## Incursion Growth

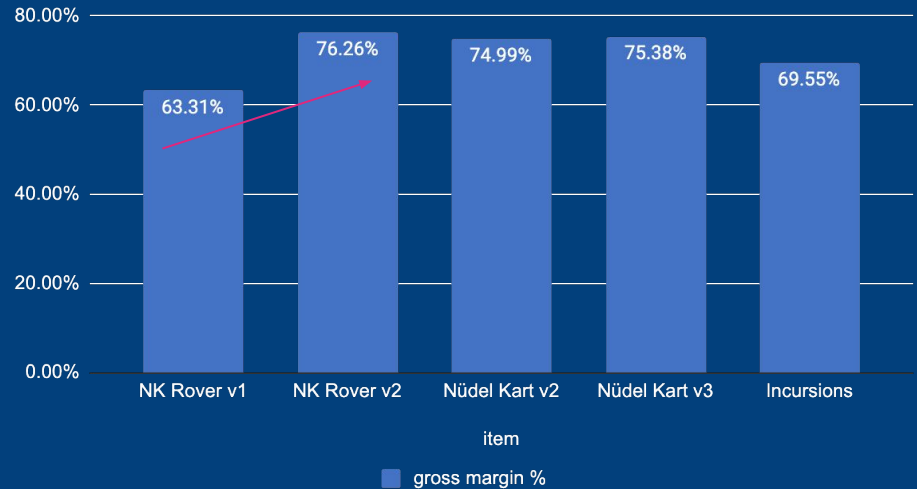


**Gross margins have fluctuated over time to meet market demands but recent manufacturing efficiencies have lifted gross margins of all products to 70%+**

Note:

Incursions average 69% but often exceed 80%. They also regularly lead to sales and additional incursions making them very valuable for repeatable sales.

Gross Margin Percentage



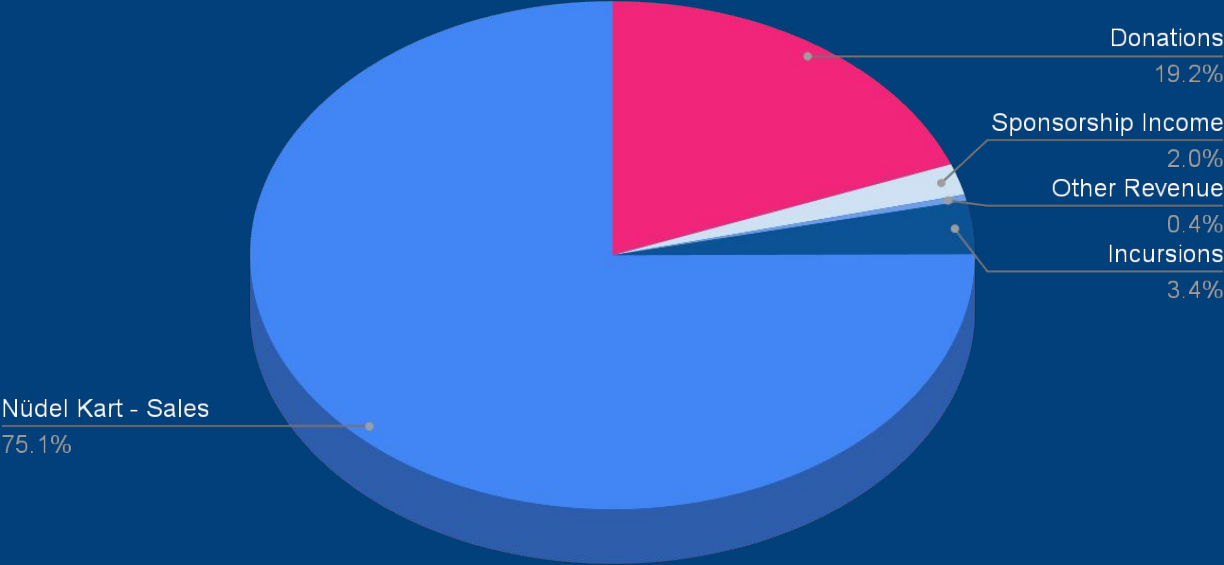


## Teachers Love Nüdel kart.

Around 60% of Free Demos leads to a sale or booking.



# 2023 Revenue Mix\*



\*Note: This includes \$102k+ Donation made in the final week of FY 2021 - 22. This donation came early but was used in FY 2022-23.

## REVENUE RAISED

Nüdel has earned \$520,000 in revenue this year. For every \$1 spent on Nüdel Kart development and product since its inception we have now brought in \$1.40 in revenue. This ratio is improving since most of the initial investment and R&D has now been made and so the profit margins have improved.

Nüdel  
KART



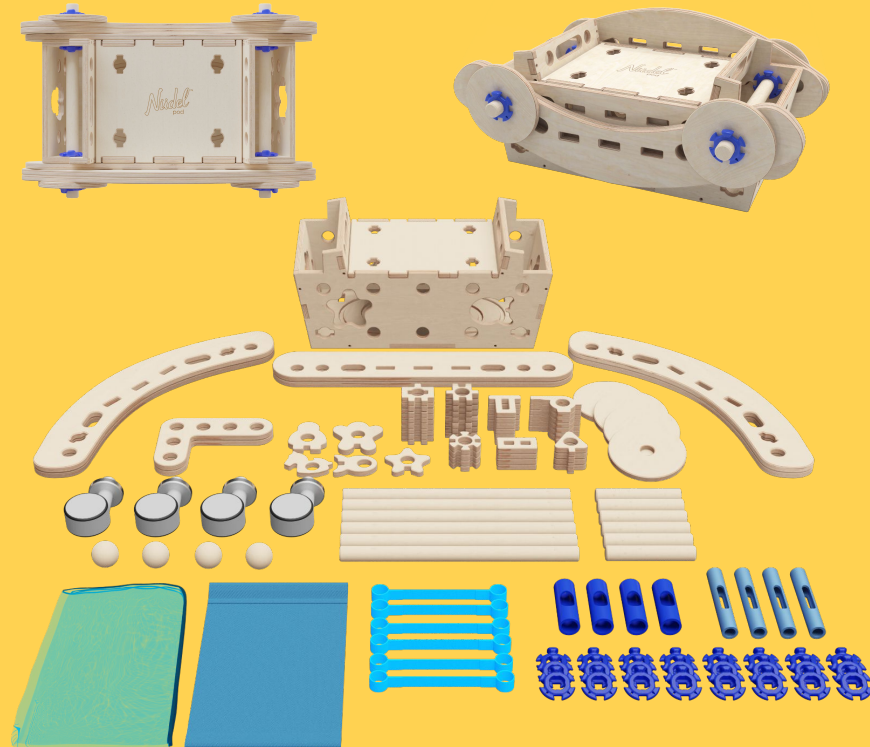
PLAYGROUND  
IDEAS

# NÜDEL POD DEVELOPMENT

This year the Nüdel Pod design has been developed, refined and prototyped by our designer Matt Green and Hannah DeBuhr with enormous support from our RMIT internship team, and of course, Marcus.

The pod has been fully prototyped and tested with children. The Pod has been independently safety tested. Ready for pre-launch in late 2023.

The Pod is for up to 3 children aged 1-8 years for use in the home. The feedback we have had so far has been extremely positive.



# NÜDEL POD KICKSTARTER CAMPAIGN

We are excited for the Kickstarter launch of the Nüdel Pod. Here is a sneak peek at our draft Kickstarter campaign we are currently working on.







# CAMPAIGN LANDING PAGE

## A Game-Changer That Replaces All Your Child's Toys

The Nüdel Pod turns your child from the toy user to the toy maker. Creating a rich environment full of possibility to express their unique, quirky selves. For children 1 year and up.



## Get 40% Off Our One-Of-A-Kind Nüdel Pod

Reserve your Nüdel Pod now for this never-to-be-repeated discount!

[Get Discount](#)

## You've Never Seen Anything Like This



<https://get.nudelpod.com/>

As Featured In:



hundrED



TEDx



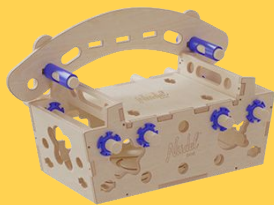
# NÜDEL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

We've had around 20 students from RMIT participate in our Internship Program this year.

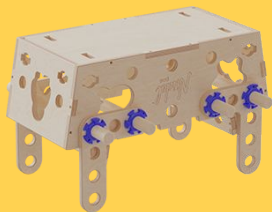
They worked on projects such as;

- Product design on the development of the Nüdel Pod design and configurations
- Animation design of Pod parts
- Illustration work of configuration imagery
- Many new configurations





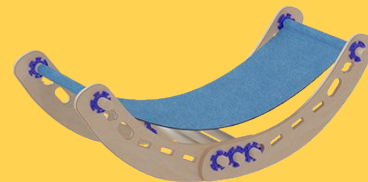
**Chairs**



**Tables**



**Prams**



**Hammocks**



**Tents**



**Rockers**



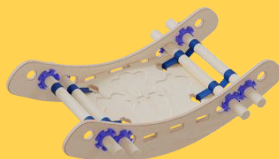
**Floor Rollers**



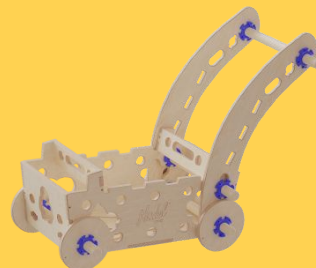
**Boats**



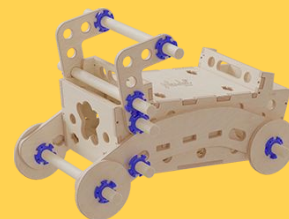
**Side Rockers**



**Platforms**



**Push Cars**



**Ride ons**

## RMIT NÜDEL INTERNS



Guanfeng Huang

Kevin Liang

Kinesha Kayla Yolivia

Massimo Fecht O'brien

Pei Hao Chen

Priya Sri Kantharaja

Rachel Schaffer

Riley McComb

Runjhun Agarwal

Xiya Liang

Yan Yang

Yunqiu Liu



## WHAT'S NEXT?

Simplify our focus to:

- Maintaining and accelerating the work of Playground Ideas
- Selling Nüdel Karts and Rovers to create a self-sustaining charity allowing philanthropic donations to do more good work. Target growth areas are Sydney and Brisbane, NZ, California and London
- Launch Nüdel Pod as a kickstarter in late 2023
- Focus on Nüdel Kart incursions in late 23/24
- Focus on selling Pods after kickstarter early 2024
- Better manage production of Nüdel to reduce organisational loads and focus team on sales.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Playground Ideas would not exist without the many individuals and organisations who provide their time, energy and passion pro-bono or greatly discounted to help us do what we do. We are extremely grateful to all those listed below:



### OUR GENEROUS FUNDERS:

- Sam and Tania Brougham
- Tim Kentley-Klay
- Antipodean Family Foundation
- Solomon Family Foundation

### OUR PLAY SPONSORS:

- A Space
- GoPlay
- Moduplay
- Imagination Play

### PRO-BONO LEGAL:

- Justice Connect
- FAL Lawyers
- Allens
- Freehills, New York
- Clifford Chance

### GLOBAL PLAY ALLIANCE:

- Carla Gill, East African Playgrounds
- Ancris Garcia Carbezaz
- Kim Duc, Think Playgrounds
- The City of Play
- Anthill Creations
- Gudgudee
- SER Ciudad
- Catalytic Action
- Kelechek + HP
- Pop Up Adventure Play
- Playgroundology
- CESESMA
- Kilikili
- Empower Playgrounds
- Play Africa
- Rise Now
- Play Pilipinas
- Inventagame (Magic Square)
- Como Jugando, Peru
- Green Buddies India
- Headstreams, India
- Kukuk Kultur, Global
- Mega Mergers, The Bahamas/Caribbean
- The Power of Play, Worldwide

### SUPPORT NETWORK:

- Save the Children
- Cat Sewell, *Play worker and Nüdel Specialist*
- Anita Bundy, *Professor at Colorado State University*
- Bianca Craig, *OT, child development advisor, writer*
- Emma Ribbens, *STEM toy designer, Nüdel Co-designer*
- Claudia Yofa, *Product designer*
- RMIT Internship team
- Shane Slater, *Prototyping support, Go Play*
- Dr Tim Patston, *Creativity manual contributor*



## THANKS FOR READING

### Contact Us:

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Email: [info@playgroundideas.org](mailto:info@playgroundideas.org)

Phone: +61 432 738 719



**Image Credit:**

Global Play Alliance Member

Lân Bánh Ước Mơ 2023