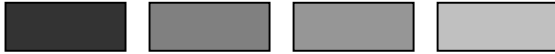




## ASSESSMENT MEETING REPORT



# LITERATURE BOARD

APPLICATION CLOSING DATE  
15 May 2004

AUSTRALIA COUNCIL  
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THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT IS EMBARGOED FROM PUBLIC  
DISCUSSION UNTIL 22 OCTOBER 2004

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

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### September 2004

This report provides a context to the assessment of applications submitted to the Literature Board on 15 May 2004. It provides some statistical analysis of the results of the grant round and more general comments made by the Board during the assessment of applications.

The Literature Board's Assessment meeting was held on **6 - 10 September 2004**. Applications were assessed in the New Work and Fellowships categories.

## ATTENDANCE

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There are currently six Board members and one vacancy. Five of the current six Board members attended the September meeting, namely:

**(Dr) Peter Goldsworthy** (Chair) (SA) is a novelist/poet/librettist whose works have been translated into most major European and Asian languages. Among his many literary awards are the 1982 Commonwealth Poetry Prize and the Australian Bicentennial Literary Prize for Poetry (1988). Other major works include the novel *Maestro*, the novella, *Jesus wants me for a sunbeam* and libretti for the Richard Mills operas, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* and *Batavia* which recently won the Helpmann Award for Best New Australian Work (2002). His most recent novel, *Three Dog Night*, won the 2004 FAW Christina Stead Award and was shortlisted for the Miles Franklin Award (2004).

**Andrew Bovell** (SA) writes for the stage and screen. His plays have been produced throughout Australia and in England, Ireland, New Zealand and Bulgaria. His numerous stage credits include *Who's Afraid of the Working Class*, *Confidentially Yours*, *Distant Lights from Distant Places* and *Holy Day*. He also wrote the screenplay for the highly acclaimed film, *Lantana*, based on his award-winning play, *Speaking in Tongues*.

**(Dr) Ann Galbally** (Vic) is an art historian and writer and is a Professorial Associate at the University of Melbourne. She has published monographs on Arthur Streeton, John Peter Russell and Frederick McCubbin, co-edited *Letters from Smike, The Letters of Arthur Streeton* (1989) and written two biographies, *Redmond Barry, An Anglo-Irish Australian* (1995) and *Charles Conder, The last bohemian* (2002) which won The Age Prize for non-fiction in 2003. Interested in public patronage, Ann published *The Collections of the National Gallery of Victoria* in 1987 and co-wrote and co-curated *The First Collections, The Public Library and the National Gallery of Victoria in the 1850s and 1860s* (1992). She has served on the Board of the State Library of Victoria and is now a member of its Readers and Writers Committee.

**Alan Gould** (ACT) is a poet, novelist and essayist. He has published ten volumes of poetry, the latest of which is *A Fold in the Light* (Indigo), six novels, the latest of which is *The Schoonermaster's Dance* (HarperCollins) and one collection of essays, *The Totem Ship* (Duffy & Snellgrove). He has won a number of awards including the NSW Premier's Literary Award for Poetry in 1981, the National Book Council Award for Fiction in 1992, the Royal Blind Society Talking Book of the Year in 1998, the Philip Hodgins Medal and Prize for services to Australian Literature in 1999 and *The Courier Mail* Book of the Year Award in 2001 for his novel *The Schoonermaster's Dance*. His fiction has been published in Britain, USA, France and the Netherlands. He has also been poetry editor for *The Canberra Times* and the National Library's *Voices* literary magazine.

**Glynn Parry** (WA) was born where *Billy Elliott* was filmed. When he was twelve, his family escaped to sunshine and surf. While best known as a writer of fiction for children and young adults, his short fiction for adults has also been widely published. His ten novels for children and teenagers include *LA Postcards* which won the 1995 WA Premier's Prize and was commended in both the Australian Vogel and Children's Book Council Awards, *Monster Man*, *Radical Take-Offs*, *Spooking the Cows*, *Stoked* and *Scooterboy* which won the 1999 WA

Premier's Prize for Young Adult Books. Glyn serves on the State Library Board of WA and the National Advisory Council of the ABC. He is currently writing the memoir of his youth. His dream is to own a cottage by the sea.

**Note:** Sophie Masson was appointed to the Literature Board on 24 August 2004. She was unable to attend the September Board meeting due to prior commitments.

For this meeting the Board was assisted by **8 Participating Advisers** –

Adrian Caesar (ACT), non-fiction writer, poet  
Ben Ellis (Vic), writer for performance  
Johanna Featherstone (NSW), poetry broadcaster, poet  
David Foster (NSW), novelist  
Bronwyn Lea (Qld), poet  
Jeff Raglus (Vic), children's book illustrator  
Louise Thurtell (NSW), freelance editor  
Markus Zusak (NSW), young adult fiction writer

The following Literature staff attended this meeting:

Gail Cork	Manager
Jill Jones	Senior Program Officer
Nicola Evans	Program Officer
Virginia Fay	Program Officer
Priscilla Gundelach	Program Officer
Jane Gillespie	A/Assistant Program Officer
Robyn Tooth	LOTE Coordinator
Maggie Joel	Administrator
Peter Volich	Administrative Officer

The following Australia Council staff attended parts of this meeting –

Jennifer Bott, CEO  
Ben Strout, Executive Director, Arts Development  
Margaret Burke, Books Alive Co-ordinator

## CHAIR'S COMMENTS

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As a result of an increase in the Australia Council's funds from government and an internal reorganisation of the Council's allocation to its boards, the Literature Board's budget has increased. Funds available for 2004/05 are \$4.244 million, including partial indexation and a new allocation of \$219,000, which was most welcome.

The Board decided to allocate the new money to two areas of greatest need: New Work and Presentation. Accordingly it is delighted to be able to offer a second closing date this year, 15 October, for applications from Australian book publishers seeking assistance to publish new works by living Australian writers for the period 1 January 2005 to 31 March 2006. An amount of \$119,000 will be directed to this. The Board also identified the needs of mid-career and established writers as a priority for extra funding and in this New Work round, decided to direct much-needed additional funds of \$100,000 to applications in the Developing and Established divisions.

The meeting was held over five days and its agenda and pre-meeting reading totalled more than 4,500 pages, to which can be added the support material, mainly in book and manuscript form, submitted by applicants. While the workload at this annual meeting is always daunting for Board members and advisers, it is also a privilege and delight to witness the extraordinary range of literary endeavour taking place in

Australia. The vitality and variety of Australian writing is indeed a cause for celebration.

It was a pleasure to welcome eight participating advisers who assisted the Board's decision-making on this occasion. This assistance was especially welcome at a time when there is still a vacancy on the Board and the appointment of our newest Board member, Sophie Masson, was confirmed too late to enable her to attend this meeting. Participating advisers are invited to Board meetings on the basis of their specialist knowledge of particular genres. Their contribution to this meeting was invaluable and resulted in some robust and far-reaching discussions. I thank them all for their hard work, wisdom, insight, and their willingness to temper a necessary combativeness with an equally necessary spirit of compromise. All who attended showed a tremendous commitment to Australia literature.

This year 475 eligible applications for New Work grants and Fellowships were received, compared to last year's total of 452.

The number of Fellowship applications, at 9, was slightly less than last year's 11, but the quality again was high and a fourth Fellowship would have been readily awarded had funds permitted. The Board was pleased to award three Fellowships after much concentrated and considered discussion. Fellowships are for writers who have gained substantial recognition and made a significant contribution to Australian literature. Considering the calibre of applicants, more than three of whom were proposing particularly ambitious and impressive projects, the final decisions were hard won.

Reflecting the diversity of Australian society, the Board encourages applications for projects in languages other than English (LOTE). In this grant round the 24 LOTE applications covered 12 languages, the dominant one this year continuing to be Chinese, in which there were 8 applications. The Board funded six LOTE applications involving projects in Bosnian, Macedonian, Greek, Vietnamese, Kurdish, and one involving both Serbian and Croatian. This is a 100% increase in the number of LOTE applications funded last year. They were spread across the genres of fiction, writing for performance and poetry. A number of other LOTE applications were highly regarded. The Board noted that this year's LOTE applications were of a high quality and showed a willingness to examine some hard issues within particular communities.

In assessing LOTE applications, the Board draws on the expertise of at least two highly-qualified external assessors for each application. There are currently 62 languages represented on the Board's database of LOTE assessors which is updated annually.

Limited funds always mean tough decisions. Although the Board was able to allocate extra money this year to the Developing and Established divisions, there were still many excellent projects that the Board would have liked to support but was unable to do so. It is always difficult to deliver disappointing news to so many applicants. I would urge those who missed out this year to keep writing and apply again – several writers who missed out last year were successful this year. To those whose applications succeeded in this hotly contested grant round, on behalf of the Board I congratulate you and wish you every success with your project.

Peter Goldsworthy

## OUTCOMES

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PROGRAM TITLE	APPLICATIONS (Number)		SUCCESS %	APPLICATIONS (Amounts - \$)	
	RECEIVED	APPROVED		REQUESTED	APPROVED
New Work (Emerging)	134	25	18.7%	\$1,710,000	\$280,000
New Work (Developing)	194	37	19%	\$4,155,000	\$690,000
New Work (Established)	138	25	18.1%	\$4,545,000	\$720,000
Fellowships	9	3	33.3%	\$720,000	\$240,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>\$11,130,000</b>	<b>\$1,930,000</b>

*A full list of approved grants is attached.*

## FEEDBACK

- **General.** As ever, the challenge at the meeting was to decide among many worthwhile applications over a number of literary genres. Unfortunately, a number of applications that scored highly against the selection criteria were unable to be supported due to budget constraints, despite an increase in funding available in the Developing and Established categories.
- In some cases, smaller than requested grants were awarded. In reaching their decisions about awarding lesser amounts, the Board took into account the applicant's scores against the selection criteria and the relative scale of proposed projects. The Board was particularly reluctant to award lesser amounts to established writers, as it regards them as senior artists offering well-articulated visions which deserve full funding wherever possible.
- This year the Board was pleased to note the high quality of a number of the applications in languages other than English (LOTE). As a result, it was able to fund six projects, twice as many as were funded last year.
- **Non-fiction (general).** Support material and project descriptions for non-fiction projects need to demonstrate how the writer intends to approach the project and to address areas such as research methods and the intended scope of the project.
- **Project descriptions (general).** Applicants need to take into consideration that the project description enables the Board to assess whether the writer has the capacity and, where applicable, the resources to complete the project.
- The Board noted that a number of writers were couching their project descriptions in bureaucratic or intellectual jargon rather than using the project description as an opportunity to demonstrate their conceptual skills and creative flair. In assessing project descriptions, Board members look for engaging, well-developed ideas and a sense of the applicant's passion for the project.
- A number of applications were deemed ineligible this year due to the applicant's failure to provide a project description.
- **Project descriptions (poetry).** Although poets have the option to provide details of their poetic directions rather than submit a specific poetry project, some poets did not address this requirement to a sufficient degree for the Board to assess the applicant's proposed activities during the grant period. The Board requires more than a list of accomplishments to be able to assess a poet's request for funding. Poets need to demonstrate an understanding of their own writing processes, where they place themselves within their genre and how their proposed writing activities will contribute to their poetic development.
- **Support material.** Once again this year, the Board noted discrepancies of quality between projects and support material to the extent that the support material sometimes undermined confidence in an otherwise excellent project. Writers will present their case for funding more strongly if their support material relates in some way to their project. They will also be better served if they choose support material which is relatively recent, if this is at all possible, as it is more persuasive in demonstrating how their current writing style suits and relates to their project.
- Applicants should note that applications will be deemed ineligible if there is no support material in the genre for which funding is requested.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES

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### **NEW LITERATURE BOARD PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES**

The Board is actively pursuing its initiatives for young and emerging writers.

#### **Young and Emerging Writers 2004-5**

After much discussion about the effectiveness of its current young and emerging writers' programs, the Board decided once again to offer two separate initiatives in 2004-5.

The **Young and Emerging Writers Initiative** will be offered by invitation to organisations providing mentorships for young and emerging writers. The Board decided to restrict this program to mentorships alone this time. It felt that the lack of quality development programs or presentation and promotion proposals submitted in recent years did not warrant their ongoing inclusion within the scope of the initiative.

Submissions will be invited in October.

The **Write in Your Face** initiative is for young writers 30 years and younger who are working either individually or collaboratively. It is aimed at one-off projects which do not currently fit within the Board's eligibility guidelines for grant applications. The Board is interested in fostering young writers' engagement with the creative process in innovative ways. Write in Your Face will be advertised widely throughout youth networks.

Further information and application details will be made available on the Australia Council's website in October.

#### **India Publishing Project**

The Board's publishing initiative with an Indian publisher, Penguin India, will see the publication of three titles by Australian writers in India in November 2004. The three writers are Kate Grenville, Tim Winton and Peter Goldsworthy. They will be taking part in a reading and promotional tour in India to coincide with the publication of their works.

This project was developed by Asialink as part of the Literature Touring Program which is jointly funded by the Literature Board and Audience & Market Development Division of Council.

#### **Future initiatives to assist the publishing sector**

The development of international readerships for Australian literature remains a priority for the Board in 2004-2005. The Board is currently developing three major inter-related programs to address this priority. They cover the three key areas of international promotional and publishing initiatives, training in export and marketing skills for smaller publishers and research to inform a longterm strategy for expanding the market for Australian literature.

These programs are in the early stages of development and will be further elaborated in months to come.

# STEPS IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

## BEFORE THE MEETING

Staff check eligibility and register applications on Council's computer database. You will receive a letter acknowledging your application with an application number and staff contact for your reference. Staff analyse the statistical information provided by applicants to help Council measure the effectiveness of its grant programs. Staff prepare applications and support material for the Board assessment meeting. Applications are made into booklets and sent to Board members. Peers are invited to participate as advisers to the Board at the meeting bringing additional expertise and perspectives to the assessment process. Staff also check and manage any conflicts of interest that Board members and peers have with applications and study the applications in order to provide information to the Board as required (see below \*).

## AT THE MEETING

### ASSESSMENT

Board members assess your application against the published selection criteria. Board members may examine support material at the meeting or by prior arrangement.

Board members may also take into account information from other sources such as:

- their attendance at performances and other events;
- reports from members of the Register of Peers who may be asked to provide formal assessments of designated works;
- reviews, videos and recordings, referee reports and other material;
- any previous Australia Council grant acquittal reports and performance agreements you may have had; and
- communication with State and Territory agencies.

Boards may decide not to fund the application at the level requested. While your application may meet the stated selection criteria, this does not guarantee you a grant. The Australia Council receives many more applications than it can support. The success of your application must rest ultimately on the merits of your proposal against published criteria and in competition with all the other applications considered for funding.

## NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

A letter notifying you of the decision will be posted to you during the month indicated in the Handbook and the application forms. Information about grant decisions will not be released over the phone.

## IF YOUR APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL

If your application is successful, you will receive a letter offering you a grant. This letter of agreement outlines the terms and conditions of the offer. Payment of a grant will not be made until you have accepted the conditions by signing and returning the letter of agreement.

## ACQUITTAL OF GRANTS

Acquittals are the artistic and financial reports that you must provide after completing your project. Acquittal reports enable the Council to fulfil its obligations of accountability as well as allowing us to learn about the success or otherwise of your project. These reports are a valuable way for you to contribute to the policy development work at the Australia Council.

*\*Staff do not make funding decisions. Staff provide information and advice to Council, Boards and advisory bodies to assist their determination of policy and assessment of grant applications. Staff also provide information to potential grant applicants and administer the Australia Council's grant programs to enable a simple, fair and efficient assessment of applications.*

**APPROVED GRANT LIST**  
**Literature Board**  
**NEW WORK - EMERGING WRITERS**  
**Grant Round Id : 13914 Closing Date : 15-MAY-2004**

<b>Client Name</b>	<b>Application Title</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Browne, Adam	Fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Cole-Adams, Catherine	Non-fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Duffy, Brendan	Fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Eldridge, Catherine	Non-fiction	VIC	\$10,000.00
Gorton, Lisa	Poetry	VIC	\$15,000.00
Hart, Elizabeth	Fiction	VIC	\$10,000.00
Hennessy, Rachel	Writing for performance	SA	\$5,000.00
Holloway, Barbara	Fiction, non-fiction	NSW	\$5,000.00
Ingelbrecht, Suzanne	Writing for performance	WA	\$5,000.00
Jackson, Andy	Poetry	VIC	\$10,000.00
Jorgensen, Norman	Children's literature	WA	\$15,000.00
Landragin, Alexandre	Fiction	VIC	\$10,000.00
Maconachie, Andrew	Fiction	NSW	\$10,000.00
McCredie, Elise	Writing for performance	VIC	\$10,000.00
Neal, Robbi	Fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Norrington, Leonie	Young adult literature/children's literature (in Kriol & English)	NT	\$15,000.00
Plunkett, Felicity	Poetry	NSW	\$5,000.00
Prater, David	Poetry	VIC	\$10,000.00

**APPROVED GRANT LIST**

**Literature Board**

<b>Client Name</b>	<b>Application Title</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Sommer, Lisbeth	Fiction	NSW	\$10,000.00
Sorensen, Tracy	Fiction	NSW	\$5,000.00
Thibodeaux, Sandra	Poetry	NT	\$10,000.00
Vaccari, Andres	Fiction	NSW	\$15,000.00
Verma, Surendra	Young adult literature	VIC	\$15,000.00
Walker, Nicola	Non-fiction	NSW	\$15,000.00
Wang, Gabrielle	Children's literature	VIC	\$15,000.00
		<b>Total No. of Grants: 25</b>	<b>Total Amount Approved: \$280,000.00</b>

**APPROVED GRANT LIST**  
**Literature Board**  
**NEW WORK - DEVELOPING WRITERS**  
**Grant Round Id : 13913 Closing Date : 15-MAY-2004**

<b>Client Name</b>	<b>Application Title</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Abela, Deborah	Children's literature	NSW	\$15,000.00
Arianrhod, Robyn	Non-fiction	VIC	\$25,000.00
Ashton, Wayne	Fiction	WA	\$15,000.00
Biscevic, Hasan	Poetry (in Bosnian)	NSW	\$15,000.00
Brennan, Michael	Poetry		\$15,000.00
Brown, Mary	Writing for performance	ACT	\$15,000.00
Concon, Ranulfo	Young adult literature	NSW	\$25,000.00
Cribb, Reginald	Writing for performance	WA	\$15,000.00
Edge, Arabella	Fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Fagan, Katherine	Poetry	NSW	\$15,000.00
Feddersen, Jutta	Non-fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Hammond, Victoria	Non-fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Hay, Ashley	Fiction	NSW	\$15,000.00
Hyland, Maria	Fiction	VIC	\$25,000.00
Kofman, Lee	Non-fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Liddelow, Eden	Non-fiction	VIC	\$25,000.00
Lindsay, Andrew	Fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Luke, Stephanie	Fiction	SA	\$15,000.00

**APPROVED GRANT LIST****Literature Board**

<b>Client Name</b>	<b>Application Title</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Massy, Charles	Non-fiction	NSW	\$15,000.00
McGirr, Michael	Literary non-fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Murray, Neil	Fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Mutard, Bruce	Fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Newton, Nerida	Fiction	QLD	\$15,000.00
O'Neill, Theresa (Tee)	Writing for performance	VIC	\$15,000.00
Orr, Stephen	Fiction	SA	\$15,000.00
Pham-Davis, Hoa	Fiction	VIC	\$15,000.00
Ristevski, Dushan	Writing for performance (in Macedonian)	NSW	\$15,000.00
Ryan, Brendan	Poetry	VIC	\$25,000.00
Sell, Penelope	Fiction	VIC	\$25,000.00
Tanner, Lian	Children's literature	TAS	\$15,000.00
Taylor, Michelle	Children's literature, poetry		\$10,000.00
Tzoumacas, Dimitris	Fiction (in Greek)	NSW	\$25,000.00
White, Trudy	Fiction, young adult literature, children's literature	VIC	\$15,000.00
Whitehead, Anne	Fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Williams, Gabrielle	Fiction	VIC	\$25,000.00
Williams, Lucy	Poetry	VIC	\$15,000.00

**APPROVED GRANT LIST**

**Literature Board**

<b>Client Name</b>	<b>Application Title</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Wood, Danielle	Fiction	TAS	\$25,000.00
		<b>Total No. of Grants: 37</b>	<b>Total Amount Approved: \$690,000.00</b>

**APPROVED GRANT LIST**  
**Literature Board**  
**NEW WORK - ESTABLISHED WRITERS**  
**Grant Round Id : 13915 Closing Date : 15-MAY-2004**

<b>Client Name</b>	<b>Application Title</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Baker, Jeannie	Children's literature	NSW	\$25,000.00
Beach, Eric	Poetry	VIC	\$25,000.00
Bird, Carmel	Fiction	VIC	\$50,000.00
Capp, Fiona	Fiction	VIC	\$25,000.00
Carey, Gabrielle	Non-fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
Cornelius, Patricia	Fiction, writing for performance	VIC	\$50,000.00
Cowell, Brendan	Writing for performance	NSW	\$25,000.00
Cranney, Patrick	Writing for performance	NSW	\$25,000.00
Davies, Luke	Fiction, poetry	NSW	\$50,000.00
Disher, Garry	Young adult literature	VIC	\$20,000.00
Fusillo, Archimede	Young adult literature	VIC	\$15,000.00
Hammial, Philip	Poetry	NSW	\$20,000.00
Kent, Alice	Poetry	NSW	\$20,000.00
Le Quy, Duong	Writing for performance (in Vietnamese)	NSW	\$20,000.00
McGregor, Fiona	Fiction	NSW	\$25,000.00
McMillan, Andrew	Fiction, non-fiction	NT	\$25,000.00
Metzenthien, David	Young adult literature	VIC	\$25,000.00
Ozmanian, Tosn	Fiction (in Kurdish)	VIC	\$25,000.00

**APPROVED GRANT LIST**

**Literature Board**

<b>Client Name</b>	<b>Application Title</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Redzepagich, Bajram (Byron Red)	Fiction (in Serbian & Croatian)	NSW	\$50,000.00
Sant, Andrew	Poetry	TAS	\$20,000.00
Tan, Shaun	Young adult literature	WA	\$50,000.00
Taylor, Alfred	Non-fiction	WA	\$15,000.00
Wallace-Crabbe, Christopher	Poetry	VIC	\$50,000.00
Woolfe, Sue	Fiction	NSW	\$20,000.00
Yu, Ouyang	Poetry	VIC	\$20,000.00
		<b>Total No. of Grants: 25</b>	<b>Total Amount Approved: \$720,000.00</b>

**APPROVED GRANT LIST**  
**Literature Board**  
**FELLOWSHIPS**  
**Grant Round Id : 13912 Closing Date : 15-MAY-2004**

<b>Client Name</b>	<b>Application Title</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Adamson, Robert	Non-fiction, poetry	NSW	\$80,000.00
Miller, Alexander	Fiction	VIC	\$80,000.00
Reynolds, Henry	Non-fiction	TAS	\$80,000.00
		<b>Total No. of Grants: 3</b>	<b>Total Amount Approved: \$240,000.00</b>