

IONA COLLEGE - BREAKING NEW GROUND PARTNERSHIP

Club: Morningside Australian Football Club

Venue: Iona College

Facility Hierarchy: Training Facility

Funding Partners	Contribution
Iona College	\$350,000
AFL Grand Final Facilities Fund & QLD Government	\$250,000
AFL - Breaking New Ground	\$25,000
TOTAL	\$625,000

OVERVIEW

The partnership between Iona College and AFL Queensland to deliver floodlighting to the school's playing fields creates a unique opportunity to grow Australian Football in Queensland. This project was first identified through the AFL's Breaking New Ground Program to help maintain the fast growth of Australian football participation throughout Brisbane.

The Breaking New Ground Program has been set up to identify unique and innovative ways to improve existing, or access new, greenspaces for football utilisation. The school submitted an AFL Breaking New Ground application which was approved for the preparation of a Partnership Opportunity Plan, outlining project design and costs, along with partnership terms and access arrangements between school, AFL QLD and community clubs over a 10-year period. This plan outlined the opportunity to install new sports lighting at the Iona College AFL playing fields to support the continued growth of Australian football in the region, by creating more available hours to schedule training and competition needs, where greenspace is scarce and participation is growing at an exponential rate across all ages and genders.

Following on from the planning process, Iona College was successful in attracting infrastructure funding through the AFL Queensland Grand Final Facilities Fund in partnership with the Queensland Government. The project scope included the installation of 120 lux lighting on the school's playing fields giving greater capacity to schedule Australian football training at the site. The lighting services an MCG size playing field and adjacent training space providing an enhanced experience and increased access for the continued growth of school sport and AFL within the community for the next 10 years.

Morningside Panthers AFC are the primary user of the Iona College playing fields. They are the largest club in Queensland and one of the largest clubs in Australia, with more than 1,350 registered players and 60 teams. The club continues to experience significant growth in female and junior team numbers and was unable to suitably cater for all teams due to a lack of available training space.

The access to additional training space, through this project, has helped the club address their team training and competition needs by providing more than 33,000sqm of greenspace which can accommodate 6-7 teams training simultaneously. This assisted in addressing current capacity challenges at their home venue.

Previous hours of use	0	Current hours of use per week	20
Male Participation	960	Female Participation	380

In addition to community football outcomes, the project has enhanced the school infrastructure for its students in particular those participating in the school's Australian Football program. It has also successfully created a high-quality additional match venue for the Associated Independent Colleges (AIC) school competition in which Iona College participates. The school is now the first in the competition that can host night matches. As a result, travel requirements and costs have been reduced, and the school can now provide a quality match day experience for their teams and other competing schools.

This project has enabled the activation of a long term, mutually beneficial partnership between the school, club and AFL in which more than 1,000 hours of community access will be available to Australian football community users annually. Iona College will manage ongoing maintenance and booking of the site and provide subsidised AFL access for use highlighting the school's commitment and support to the partnership.

The partnership with Iona College aligns to the key strategic priority outlined in the AFL Towards 2030 Infrastructure Plan which is to 'Drive the supply of new facilities in areas most in need.'

“Community is at the heart of everything we do at Iona College, and our wonderful relationship with AFL Queensland has now grown into a true partnership through the Breaking New Ground program. This partnership is the result of a lot of hard work from both sides. The end result is not only a first for schools in Queensland but supports the growth of the game and greater opportunities for our students and the local community. Iona is delighted to be at the forefront of this initiative, and very proud of our strong relationship with the AFL to deliver this project for our community.”

Trevor Goodwin
Principal, Iona College



“This is a real game changer for Morningside, this infrastructure investment. It is so exciting, but we couldn't be growing at the level we are without the support of the school as well as the AFL.”

Richard Wittig
Board Member, Morningside AFC

“Iona College has been fantastic to work with in establishing a partnership for this project and we are grateful for the funding provided through the AFL Queensland Grand Final Facilities Fund.”

Trisha Squires
Head of AFL Queensland & International

[The Panthers](#)



[Let There be Lights](#)

