



2017/18 Annual Review

Strengthening the foundations for lasting impact

Welcome

The creation of FRRR, at the instigation of the Sidney Myer Fund and the Australian Government eighteen years ago, represented an unprecedented coming together of the Government, business and philanthropic sectors with a shared commitment to assist rural and regional Australian communities. This same commitment remains today.

FRRR has become a well-established, respected charitable foundation that is widely acknowledged as a leader in grant-making, grassroots philanthropy, and community-led natural disaster recovery.

Our approach is based on the principle that local leaders are best placed to know what is going to make the biggest difference in their community. We act as a conduit for philanthropy to grassroots community groups to help them make their solutions a reality. We also believe we have an important role to play in sharing our insights about the challenges and opportunities in rural communities.

This report reflects on what we delivered in FY 2017/18.

\$7.5M
RAISED

via **686** donations
\$2.0M of that via **62**
Fundraising Accounts

Largest grant
\$391,690

>15,000
minutes on the phone
supporting communities

Visited more than
70
communities

\$7.2M
AWARDED
via **673** grants

Includes **83** grants to
Fundraising Accounts

Smallest
donation **\$3**

23%
of all grants supported
disaster recovery or
preparedness

Thank
you

to our donor partners and
local leaders who give time
and money to help make
rural, regional and remote
communities vibrant places
to both live and work.

Median grant
\$5,000

28%
of grants supported
lifelong learning,
education or
training

Largest donation
\$1.5M

701
unsuccessful
applications, requesting
\$6,083,035 in funds

11,522
children supported
with Back to School
vouchers

Smallest grant
\$308

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We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our programs are assessed and delivered. We pay respect to their ancient and continuing culture, their connection to the land and to the Elders, past, present and future.

From the Chairman



Photo:
Mark Graham



The extensive and protracted drought across much of eastern Australia during 2018 has increased awareness of the challenges for communities in regional and remote areas. Adverse seasons demand special attention, but the challenges of distance and smaller population require constant assistance toward comparative opportunities in education, health and employment and even more so for the Indigenous and socially disadvantaged.

Governments are challenged to provide many services accepted as the norm in larger cities and towns. To help address this, in 2000 the Australian Government linked with the Sidney Myer Fund to incorporate the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR) as a company limited by guarantee. All Governments since have maintained this support.

In addition to providing general assistance, particularly by small grants to communities of fewer than 5,000 people, specific programs have been implemented by FRRR to address the medium to long-term impact of fire, drought and other natural disasters. Tackling Tough Times Together, Repair-Restore-Renew and Disaster Resilient: Future Ready have each been strongly supported by valued FRRR partners, donors and some state governments.

To ensure the effectiveness of our programs, a significant research project funded by the **Sidney Myer Fund** enabled FRRR to analyse all 26,000+ grant applications received since incorporation (to December 2016) and to identify where grants have been made and the support communities have requested. The study confirmed the important role of philanthropy and the positive impact of small grants to supporting communities. It has helped inform and shape future focus areas for FRRR. The outcomes of the report have been shared with our stakeholders, donor partners, government, Senators and Members.

This financial year our granting was again widespread and beneficial - **673 projects were supported with nearly \$7.2 million in grants - half a million dollars more than the previous year.** Grant impact studies show that on average every dollar FRRR grants is leveraged by community organisations, local businesses and individuals to achieve an additional three dollars in-kind or through additional fundraising. This makes FRRR's contribution to community wellbeing even more significant.

To our donors and partners who make this granting possible, on behalf of the Board and FRRR team I extend our sincere thanks for your generosity – it is appreciated particularly by the many grant recipients.

FRRR is fortunate to have an outstanding Board. Directors serve voluntarily and have responsibility for the Foundation's strategic direction, the integrity of its processes and the management of its funds. The latter is overseen with valued guidance from the Finance and Audit Committee very ably chaired by Bill Kelty AC. I gratefully acknowledge all Directors' significant contribution throughout the year.

Over the 12 months we welcomed four new Board members - Mr Bruce Scott OAM, Dr Steven Kennedy PSM, Ms Sue Middleton and Mr Andrew McKenzie. Their combined experience and deep understanding of rural and remote communities will be invaluable, and I look forward to working with them. The Australian Government Director, Mike Mrdak AO retired after moving as Secretary to another government department and I thank him for his highly valued support throughout his term.

FRRR is honoured to have as Patron-in-Chief, General Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Ret'd), Australia's Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia. His continued endorsement and personal support are greatly appreciated.

Our Patrons, Mr Baillieu Myer AC, Lady Southey AC and the Hon John Anderson AO maintain their ongoing commitment and enthusiasm for FRRR and its purpose. Having held these

responsibilities since incorporation, their involvement has been material to FRRR's success. I extend my sincere thanks to each of them.

FRRR takes great pride in its effectiveness and integrity in awarding grants, large and small. This requires significant effort and attention to detail from all our staff and particularly from our highly valued CEO, Natalie Egleton. Natalie's dedication and enthusiasm in the exercise of her responsibilities, her helpful oversight of **the review of past granting and the introduction of new systems have significantly strengthened the Foundation's ability to deliver on its charter.** I congratulate her and thank all the hard-working FRRR team for their considerable endeavours.

Beyond FRRR are the thousands of local leaders and community members with whom we work and who do so much to progress their towns and districts across Australia. **Their selfless and tireless commitment to the betterment of their communities is acknowledged.** FRRR is honoured to work with you.

I commend this Annual Review for your consideration.

Rt Hon Ian Sinclair AC
Chairman

About FRRR

Rural, regional and remote communities continue to face major challenges in accessing health and education services, ensuring employment and economic sustainability, and adapting to and managing the effects of the increasing number of extreme weather events. **Every community is different; every solution is different, and we believe local communities are best placed to know what they need.**

Getting new resources and investment to support local needs and ensure continued viability, resilience and access to key services is critical. Our mission is to **champion the economic and social strength of Australia's rural, regional and remote communities**, and we do this by working in partnership with the private sector, philanthropy and government, and, of course, local communities.

We are the only organisation focused solely on rural, regional and remote communities, and with the ability to fund almost any kind of charitable project (other than sport), including economic development. FRRR's listing in the Tax Act enables us to receive funds and distribute them to not-for-profits that don't have deductible gift recipient status. Donors receive the tax deduction, and communities benefit by having access to philanthropy, which they often couldn't do otherwise.

By leveraging our tax status, our knowledge, and working in partnership with philanthropy and directly with grassroots communities, we are working toward our long-term vision of vibrant, sustainable and adaptive communities across rural, regional and remote communities.

Our Strategy

Over the past 18 years, FRRR has supported around 9,500 community projects across rural, regional and remote Australian communities.

To help inform and refine our strategy, our theory of change and the way we do things, we have spent this past financial year evaluating our impact on communities, identifying their needs and grouping them into focus areas. This work has reinforced the multi-faceted long-term value of the role and type of support that FRRR provides, which is designed to strengthen and bind the **people, place and prosperity of our communities**. It clarified that our role has been to help **facilitate** community engagement and planning, **remediate** and **maintain** community assets, **resource** and **scaffold** community action and help communities to **innovate**.

Our **approach** involves investing in infrastructure and equipment, building organisational capability, developing individual and community awareness, knowledge and skills and providing access to services / activities to help meet community aspirations and needs. We do this by providing grants across **seven focus areas**, illustrated



above, which are now being used as part of our new online grant application process.

It is our belief, that philanthropic support of these seven focus areas facilitates the creation of vibrant, adaptive and sustainable rural, regional and remote communities. With the new process and refined segmentation now in operation, we have the ability to continually measure our impact and understand the evolving needs of our communities.

THEORY OF CHANGE

FRRR helps rural, regional and remote communities meet the needs and aspirations of their people, place and prosperity.



WE FOCUS ON ENHANCING:

- ✓ Community Resilience
- ✓ Organisational Resilience & Capacity
- ✓ Community Health & Social Wellbeing
- ✓ Environmental Sustainability
- ✓ Cultural Vibrancy
- ✓ Education & Training
- ✓ Economic Strength

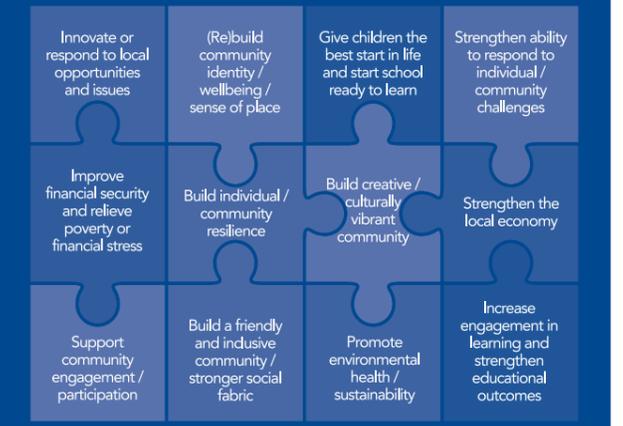
OUR ROLE IS TO:



WE DO THIS BY:



TO HELP COMMUNITIES:



The way we work is grouped into three domains:

1. Grant making

FRRR's grants are primarily funded through donations and grants from other trusts, foundations, businesses, governments and individuals. This funding is directed to not-for-profit groups undertaking charitable activities in their local communities and helps them realise the projects they identify as important to local success. Sometimes it is seed funding, which is leveraged to attract other contributions; other times it supports the ongoing maintenance of a project or enables its completion.

2. Building skills and capability

In addition to making grants, FRRR makes a significant contribution to building capacity within rural, regional and remote communities. This is achieved through visits to communities, running grant-writing workshops, webinars, supporting community foundations as they get off the ground and become sustainable, as well as providing advice to community groups during the application and grant acquittal processes.

3. Enabling communities to fundraise

We partner with communities to help them leverage FRRR's special tax status to fundraise locally. We can work with not-for-profits without DGR-1 status, receiving donations and grants for specified purposes and re-granting those funds to the partnering organisation.

Underpinning these activities are the insights we acquire from engaging with hundreds of communities and assessing thousands of projects each year. We use and share our knowledge with our extensive networks to influence policy outcomes and decisions. Our ability to influence and drive change for the betterment of our communities is an increasing and important part of what we do.

CEO's Report

Strengthening FRRR's capacity to support people, place and prosperity



Broadening our donor base

FRRR continued to grow its donor and supporter base. In total there were **686 donations** with most being from one-off donors; 82 donors gave multiple times during the year (up from 74 in FY17).

Collectively, they **contributed \$7.5 million**. This came mostly from corporate and philanthropic partners, although there were many individual donors as well, who generally supported projects with fundraising accounts. This growth gives us great confidence that FRRR's strategy is aligned with the interests of our donor partners, and that FRRR is building greater awareness of the needs and priorities of rural, regional and remote communities.

The largest single donation was just over \$1.5 million, while the smallest was \$3. The median donation was just over \$100, reflecting the large individual number of donors to fundraising accounts.

Fundraising support

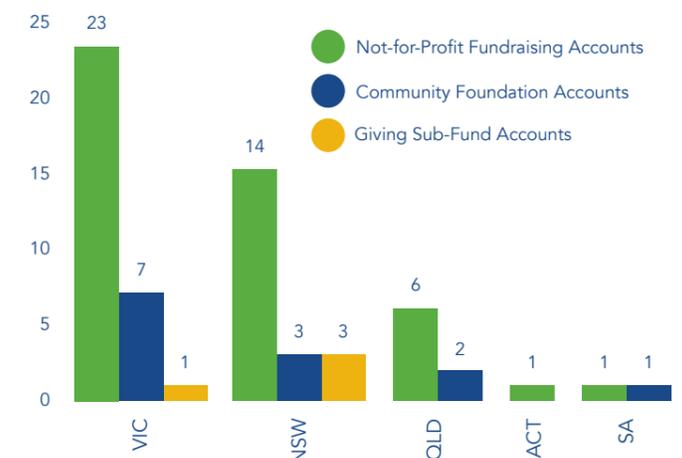
The two sides of the philanthropic equation are often more challenging in rural communities. Smaller population sizes limit the number of potential donors and volunteers, but there are also fewer organisations with the legal and tax status that allows them to provide willing donors with a tax deduction.

FRRR is pleased to play a role in **unlocking philanthropy for many communities**, helping raise much-needed funds for projects at a local and regional scale through Not-for-Profit Fundraising Accounts, Community Foundation Accounts and Giving Sub-Fund Accounts (formerly known as Donation Accounts). These accounts are a way for FRRR to leverage its unique tax status by establishing partnerships with not-for-profit organisations, community foundations or donor partners where we agree to receive donations and commit to direct those funds toward the agreed partnership purposes.

During the reporting period, **FRRR held 62 fundraising accounts**, eight of which were new this financial year. This comprised 45 Not-for-Profit Fundraising Accounts, 13 Community Foundation Accounts and four Giving Sub-Funds.

In total, **Fundraising Accounts raised just over \$2 million for approved community projects**. Some of these include community leadership programs, community infrastructure, such as community buses or local arts centres, and economic development initiatives.

Fundraising Accounts and Sub-Funds



There are many ways in which FRRR delivers on its mission, but grantmaking is at the core. Alongside this, we aim to build capacity in rural, regional and remote communities and influence debate on the issues that matter to them.

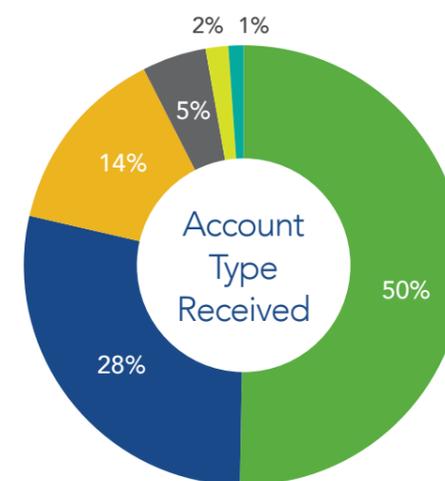
The strategic and business plans for the 2017/18 financial year set ambitious objectives for FRRR, with a significant focus on **strengthening the organisation's foundations for sustained growth and deeper impact**.

We have made positive strides toward these goals, in particular through the introduction of a **donor-management database** enabling us to better track and respond to donors' needs and interest areas, and an **online grants management system**, which is improving efficiency for us and our grantees, and enabling better reporting of activities and outcomes.

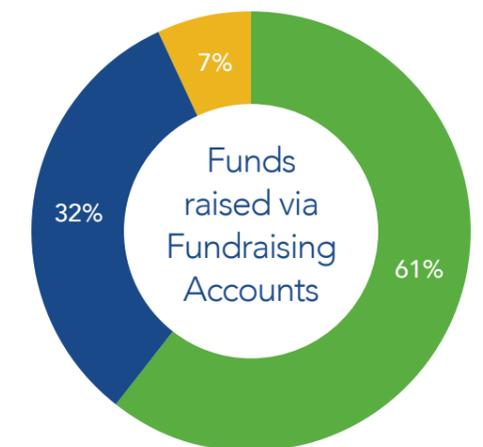


Perhaps the biggest project of the year, however, was the **FRRR Impact Report**. With the support of the **Sidney Myer Fund**, this involved reviewing all 26,000+ grant applications received since FRRR started in 2000. Our aim was to better understand the roles that FRRR grants played in sustaining vibrant and adaptive communities, and to explore their longer-term impacts.

We used this process to help articulate FRRR's **'theory of change'** – a framework that helps us describe the approach FRRR takes to deliver on its mission; where we focus our efforts; and the nature of the outcomes that we seek to influence. This framework now informs and guides our strategic and operational focus, and will help to shape the way we structure the grants we offer and how we evaluate and report on outcomes and impact.



- Trusts and Fdns - \$3,794,785
- Government - \$2,128,485
- Business - \$1,038,976
- Individual - \$357,960
- Community Fdn - \$128,100
- Organisation - \$65,600



- Not-for-Profit Fundraising Accounts - \$1,241,896
- Community Foundation Accounts - \$665,061
- Giving Sub-Fund Accounts - \$142,189

Grants awarded

Funds donated to FRRR were granted out via a mix of collaboratively funded programs, targeted impact programs (which focus on particular issues or places), pilot programs designed to either test new approaches or make step-change in communities; or to projects supported by fundraising accounts.

This financial year we set out to grant \$7-8 million, and I'm pleased to report that we **awarded almost \$7.2 million via 22 programs**, making **673 grants** (compared to \$6.6 million via 743 grants in FY 2016/17).

Grants ranged from as little as \$308, which went toward transport costs to attend a careers expo, to \$391,690 funded by the Community Enterprise Foundation via a Community Foundation Fundraising Account, supporting **the redevelopment of the Marysville Tourism and Arts Centre to create a home and performance space for community arts groups**.

The largest distribution via our regular grant programs was \$210,000, which supported a new service collaboration model focused on improving employment outcomes via a social enterprise. The median grant was \$5,000.

As the chart below shows, this year **most funds went toward supporting lifelong learning and education**. Out of 358 applications for support in this area, we were able to fund 55% of requests (198) totalling just over \$2 million. More than half of all grants supporting lifelong learning and education (51%) were

funded via Not-for-Profit Fundraising Accounts and the Back to School program.

The next most supported area was **building community resilience** (\$1.4 million – 122 grants – 57% via Community Foundation Accounts and NFP Fundraising Accounts), followed by developing organisational resilience.



- Not-for-Profit Fundraising Accounts - \$1,662,980
- Community Foundation Accounts - \$658,531
- Giving Sub-Fund Accounts - \$103,796

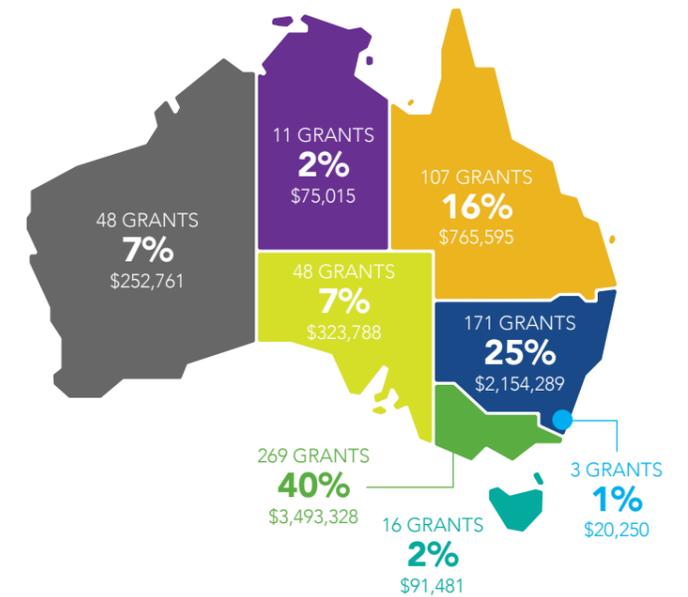
A significant number of the grants awarded this year – 83, or over 12% - went to support projects using FRRR's Fundraising Accounts or Donor Sub-Funds.

Irrespective of the focus area, **just over 23% of the value of all the grants we made this year was either to assist in post-emergency disaster recovery or in disaster preparedness.**

Increasing national reach

Another focus in 2017/18 was to broaden our national reach. While we still have a bias toward the east coast consistent with population density, our **granting into SA, NT and WA is increasing**. As the map below shows, the number of grants awarded more closely reflects the population distribution across the country.

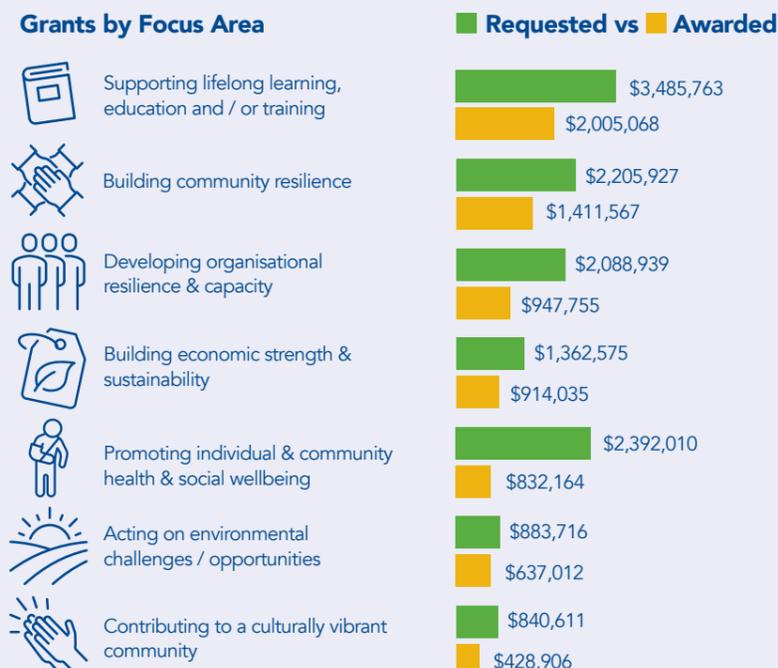
In total this year, we **reached more than 408 unique post codes** via FRRR's regular grant programs – and more via fundraising accounts. The vast majority of organisations supported via FRRR's regular programs were non-DGR organisations (nearly 70%).



FUNDING FOCUS AREAS

The impact and evaluation project led to the identification and articulation of our funding focus areas, into which we categorise every grant application (see below). This enables us to identify areas of greatest need within the communities we support and improve reporting to our donor partners.

\$7.2M
via **673 projects**
Total Grants Distributed



Unmet demand

We received 1,374 grant applications, requesting more than \$13 million in support.

In dollar terms, we were able to award around 54% of all funds requested (although in terms of the number of applications, it was only 49% of those received). Of these, around **7%** would have been funded, had the funds been available. A further **78%** of projects were good projects that needed further development, while the balance (**15%**) were ineligible under the program guidelines.

The two focus areas where we had **least capacity** to support projects (based on both percentage of funds awarded and number of grants awarded vs requested) were **developing organisational resilience and capacity**, and **promoting individual and community health and social wellbeing**.

In terms of **individual programs**, Small Grants for Rural Communities, which makes grants of up to \$5,000, continued to be most in demand thanks to its flexibility and broad applicability. There were 502 applications (37% of all applications this financial year). Despite a significant increase in funds available via this program – \$799,797 – requests totalled \$2,160,250, so we could meet only 37% of funding requests.

An area where there was **significant unmet demand for support is in aged care**. This year, we had requests for \$947,048 via the Caring for Ageing Rural Australians program, but we only had sufficient funds to satisfy 25% of requests through that program, although we do support ageing through other programs, such as Small Grants for Rural Communities.

The program that was most in demand was the ANZ Seeds of Renewal program, which had 128 applications seeking more than \$1.5 million in support. We could meet only 17% of requests, even with additional support from Lenovo via IT equipment. This indicates the strong demand for support for education and employment initiatives.

Some of the projects that were unsuccessful via this program were funded via other programs.



Strengthening capacity of local leaders

We remained focused on building the capacity of leaders within community groups, helping them have the best opportunity to successfully implement their grassroots projects for long-term benefit. The state-based team structure we moved to last year is now embedded. We are seeing benefits in stronger grant applications and more requests from new towns and organisations as a result of our increased outreach and presence in communities.

During the year, the **Program Managers conducted eight regional tours, visiting every state at least once and visiting more than 70 communities**. This allowed them to see first-hand the great work communities are doing on a daily basis and to better understand the issues and opportunities in each area. As part of many of those trips, we also **conducted 19 grant-seeker workshops and assisted with knowledge / issues development**. This included a number of sessions, which were supported by Australia Post, in areas that had been affected by Cyclone Debbie, ahead of the Repair-Restore-Renew grants program opening. In addition, we ran workshops with community groups, including Red Earth Community Foundation, to help strengthen local capacity.

FRRR also **worked with a number of partners**, leveraging our skills and networks to build local capacity. This included partnering with Regional Australia Institute on their Lightbulb Moments project, helping to judge it and to mentor some of the winners. Our Board and some donors were mentors for the ABC Trailblazers program, and we had a number of staff and donors onsite during ABC's Heywire Summit, supporting young leaders from regional communities. For the first time, the FRRR ABC Heywire Youth Innovation grants Assessment Committee was entirely youth-led. This provided an opportunity for young people to build leadership skills. FRRR also supported Our Community in promoting the Governance Diploma to rural, regional and remote communities.

Communities were further supported by webinars and the addition of new resources on our website, as well as the team spending more than **250 hours on the phone**, answering questions and providing guidance and support.



incoming calls: **2,479**
 Minutes on calls: **15,078**
 Equivalent to: **33.5 days**



“*FRRR rang me and requested further information so that it would be a competitive application. I appreciated the phone call as the additional information got us over the line. The application could have gone through as it was, but that human touch of a phone call reassured me that FRRR truly looks after the bushies.*”

Grant Applicant



Influencing

This year we endeavoured to extend and deepen our reach and influence in key areas of need and priority for rural, regional and remote communities. We share what we know about life in rural communities with policy makers and other funders through roundtables and presenting at various events.

The Impact Report was a key document to inform these discussions. The findings were shared with Australian Government representatives, as well as key stakeholders and donor partners. The report directly led to one major new partnership and has influenced several others.



View the Impact Report



We also leveraged these insights, as well as our knowledge of current needs and opportunities from the thousands of grant applications we receive each year, to have input on policy development. **We made submissions to Australian Government reviews of education and tax-deductible gifts, and to a Senate Inquiry on regional economic inequality.** In addition, we presented, facilitated and contributed to several conferences, roundtables, workshops and organisation-specific events across Australia.

On behalf of the **Department of Social Services**, we produced the **Leading Practice in Community & Philanthropy Partnerships report**. Its aim was to share lessons from Community and Philanthropy Partnerships Week from the perspectives of both philanthropy and community groups.

It was a landmark year for the Disaster Resilient: Future Ready program. We commissioned a **Literature Review on Disaster Resilience** and the pilot got underway in NSW in partnership with the NSW Government through its Get Ready program, and several private donors. After wide consultation, an advisory panel chose three communities to work with, and co-design began on the best way to enhance their disaster preparedness. We continued to advocate for increased focus on natural disaster preparedness, engaging strongly with the Queensland and Victorian governments too.

A snapshot of our contribution:

Committees and workshops

- 2017 National Regional Development Conference Steering Committee
- Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience / Red Cross - 2017 National Recovery Workshop
- Queensland Strategy for Disaster Resilience Implementation Plan Forum
- CSIRO / DoIRDC Regional Megatrends Project Reference Group

Conferences / Presentations / Roundtables

- National Community Foundations Forum – presented on FRRR's Community Foundation Fundraising Accounts structure, and ran a workshop on grant-making challenges
- Queensland Rural Regional and Remote Women's Network Conference
- Givemotion: Corporate Social Impact Challenge 2018 Forum, Sydney
- Philanthropy meets Parliament Summit, Canberra
- Think Big Rural Women, Deniliquin - Skype presentation on FRRR's observations of issues and trends in the Riverina
- Victorian Regional Community Leadership Programs Leadership Summit 'Embracing Intergenerational Leadership'
- Education Roundtable with the philanthropic sector, sharing insights on needs and gaps

Financial and operational performance

Overall, FRRR is in a very healthy position, with **operational income covering operational costs**. This is through a combination of tight management of expenses and better focus on cost recovery in strategic programs and outsourced grants administration support. It is also due to the healthy investment returns on the Foundation's corpus, which now sits at around \$13 million.

We continue to seek to improve our operational processes, refining the online grants management system, which we began implementing last year with the support of the **Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities**. While applicants initially found it a little more complex, feedback has been positive. It is significantly improving the efficiency of our assessment processes, as well as facilitating data capture and enabling better analysis of impact, and tracking of need.

As our granting reach and partnership base continues to grow, it has been important to ensure that our staff team is positioned to respond and deliver. To that end, we created a number of new positions in the team this year with a focus on resourcing new strategic programs and supporting our donor engagement and relationships. Our staff is still lean at 12.2 full-time equivalent, and we remain committed to ensuring that the majority of staffing costs are met through investment returns, which enables FRRR to be a high-value, low-cost partner to those wanting to give to rural, regional and remote Australia.

Given the increasing needs in rural communities, **FRRR is actively seeking to broaden its funding base, including attracting more donors and more regular income via workplace giving and bequests**. In addition, without compromising our focus on rural, regional and remote communities, we are also seeking to increase the amount of income received for our strategic advice - sharing our knowledge and experience with those wishing to support rural, regional and remote communities.

Operating income

Interest and investments	\$2,033,222	74%
Administration fees	\$359,996	13%
VBAF administration fees	\$212,848	8%
Strategic projects	\$145,892	5%
	\$2,751,958	

Operating expenses

Employment	\$1,026,524	57%
Operations	\$352,822	20%
Marketing and website	\$220,356	12%
Governance	\$189,834	11%
	\$1,789,536	

Looking ahead

I am proud of all we have achieved this year, but none of it would have been possible without the **support of our donor partners; the hundreds of committed and passionate community leaders** across the country; FRRR's **highly experienced Board**; and our **staff**.

I particularly want to acknowledge the efforts of the team. We frequently receive great feedback about the calibre of support they provide on a daily basis, many times going above and beyond to support local leaders. I also want to formally thank the FRRR Directors and in particular our Chairman, Rt Hon Ian Sinclair AC for his valuable guidance and ongoing support. It is a privilege to work with such highly experienced and passionate people.

Looking ahead, we will use the achievements of this past year to drive some **key initiatives that will strengthen our efficiency and effectiveness** in delivering on the FRRR mission. The most imminent of these is that our overall **grants program structure** will be streamlined to a more contemporary, flexible and accessible grant program offering.

In the short-term, three grant programs will launch, or expand, to address critical needs:

- The **Enhancing Country Health Outcomes (ECHO)** grant program will provide funds to improve health outcomes for people living in rural, regional and remote NSW and Victoria;
- **In a Good Place** will provide support for community-driven initiatives that reduce social isolation, increase social participation and connectedness, and encourage people in small communities to seek help for mental health issues; and
- **Tackling Tough Times Together (TTTT)** will expand nationally, supporting communities across Australia impacted by drought.

It's set to be a very interesting and inspiring phase and I look forward to working with the Board, with our donor partners and supporters, and our staff to build strong and vibrant rural, regional and remote communities.

Natalie Egleton

Natalie Egleton
CEO

Our Donors and Partners



“ We believe education is the great equaliser in society & that every child deserves the right to participate fully in their community through literacy. We have partnered with the dedicated staff of the Daylesford Primary School to support an intensive literacy program to ensure all students are given this opportunity to achieve the required level of literacy skills to become contributing members of their community. ”

William and Elizabeth Corbett

FRRR is a conduit and a collaborator, working with philanthropy, businesses and governments to ensure their generosity has maximum impact within grassroots communities.

This year, more than 530 donor partners provided more than \$7.5 million in funds, enabling FRRR to grant out nearly \$7.2 million to 673 community projects. On average, every dollar FRRR grants is leveraged an additional three times, either in cash, or in-kind, meaning FRRR has helped inject an additional \$21.5 million to help create more vibrant communities in which to work and live.

The breakdown of our donor partners shows that nearly 60% (in excess of 310) of all donations were received from first time donors new to FRRR, with the remaining 40% of donations made from loyal donors who have donated in past years. This includes 418 generous individuals, collectively gifting more than \$350,000. This not only demonstrates the greater awareness of FRRR across Australia but also indicates that we are meeting our donor partners' expectations and requirements.

“ The SGRC program provides a unique opportunity for us to give back to the vibrant Blue Mountains community by supporting the work of incredible grassroots organisations that are committed to making a difference. It has been a pleasure to see our staff and visitors engage with the program and celebrate the positive outcomes of local organisations who are helping to strengthen the community we're proud to be a part of. We look forward to what the future holds. ”

Anthea Hammon, Managing Director, Scenic World

Our Generous Donor Partners

The following list of generous donors either donated \$5,000 or more during 2017/18 FY, or their donations from previous years were allocated to projects this financial year.

People, Place, Prosperity Grants	Targeted Impact Grants	Leading Change Grants
Audi Foundation Aurizon Community Giving Fund Aussie Farmers Foundation Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd (ANZ) Australia Post Australian Year of the Farmer Bertalli Family Foundation Border Trust Community Foundation for the Albury Wodonga Region ^ David Mactaggart Foundation Domino's Pizza Enterprises Ltd Estate Late Harold Gordon Jones Friends of FRRR Gardiner Dairy Foundation Geelong Community Foundation Hannaford Harold Gordon Jones Estate Ian Rollo Currie Estate Foundation J and M Nolan Family Trust John T Reid Charitable Trusts Marysville and Triangle Community Fdn Ltd Monsanto Fund North Central Rural Finance Counselling Service Northern Rivers Community Foundation Perpetual Foundation – Julian Flett Endowment Ronald Geoffrey Arnott Foundation Scenic World Blue Mountains South West Community Foundation Stand Like Stone Foundation ^ The Blackwood Foundation The Corella Fund The Maple-Brown Family Charitable Foundation The Pratt Foundation The R.E. Ross Trust The Sylvia & Charles Viertel Charitable Fdn The William Buckland Foundation #^ The Yulgilbar Foundation ^ Third Link Investment Managers Thornton Foundation Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation	Arbonne Charitable Foundation ^ Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd (ANZ) Australian Communities Foundation ^ Avigrain ^ Balnaves Foundation ^ Border Trust Community Foundation for the Albury Wodonga Region ^ Brian & Virginia McNamee Foundation ^ CCI Giving Chasam Foundation Pty Ltd ^ Community Enterprise Foundation ^ David Mactaggart Foundation Dpt of Family & Community Services NSW Dpt of Health & Human Services VIC Dpt of Social Services Ephpheta Foundation Inc. ^ FCA Community Impact ^ Findex Community Fund Friends of FRRR Geoff and Helen Handbury Foundation ^ JH Fairfax & Son Pastoral Kofi Foundation ^ Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation ^ Marrich Equity Pty Ltd ^ Maurice Blackburn Pty Ltd ^ Minax Uriel Pty Ltd ^ Morris Family Foundation ^ Philanthropy Australia Pixel Steel Fund ^ Portland House Foundation Qantas Foundation Skipper Jacobs Charitable Trust ^ Stand Like Stone Foundation ^ The Angel Fund ^ The Betty Fulton Fund * The Calvert-Jones Foundation ^ The Community Foundation for Bendigo & Central Victoria Ltd ^ The Garry White Foundation ^ The George Lewin Foundation ^ The Isobel & David Jones Family Foundation ^ The June Canavan Foundation ^ The Myer Foundation ^ The Sally Foundation ^ The William Buckland Foundation #^ The Willow Foundation ^ The Yulgilbar Foundation ^ Tim Fairfax Family Foundation ^ Tomorrow Today Foundation ^ Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation	Doc Ross Foundation Dr George Jacobs Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation ^ NSW Dpt of Justice, Office of Emergency Mgt Ronald Geoffrey Arnott Foundation Sidney Myer Fund The Maple-Brown Family Charitable Foundation The William Buckland Foundation #^
		Private Donors > \$5,000 Alexandra Gartmann Andrew Binns ^ Andrew & Eleanor Young ^ Christopher Blaxland ^ Dr George Jacobs Edmund Campion ^ Elizabeth & William Corbett Gina Fairfax Lynn Yager Margaret Jackson AC Mark Evans ^ Michael Gudinski ^ NE & EG Symonds ^ Patrick Burke ^ Patrick Myer Rosemary Varty ^ Tim Fairfax AC Wayne Mountjoy ^ Wendy Olden ^
		Partners ABC Regional Herbert Smith Freehills Regional Australia Institute Schools Plus The Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership The Prince's Trust Australia
		Membership Bodies Australian Community Philanthropy Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network Philanthropy Australia



^ Donor to Not-for-Profit Fundraising Account, Community Foundation Account or Donor Sub-Fund # Managed by Equity Trustees * A Sub-Fund of the Australian Communities Foundation

Governance and our people

We take the governance of FRRR seriously and regularly review the way we operate.

FRRR is a registered Charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission and we take pride in going above and beyond their basic governance standards.

The FRRR Board exercises the powers vested in it by the Corporations Law, Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Company's Constitution. The Board is directly responsible to its members for the long-term health and prosperity of the Company. They meet four times a year and sign off on all grants – ensuring appropriate due diligence has taken place.

FRRR's policies and practices provide the framework for the operations of the Foundation. They enable the Board to ensure all activities are conducted ethically and in accordance with the law, including well-managed and transparent annual financial statements.

This year we reviewed and refreshed a number of these policies, and this will continue into 2018/19.



As pictured front L-R:

Mr Bill Kely AC, Ms Annabel Dulhunty, The Rt Hon Ian Sinclair AC, Chairman, Mrs Annie Grindrod, Mr Ian Allen OAM

Back L-R:

Mr Paddy Handbury, Mrs Natalie Egleton, CEO, Dr Steven Kennedy PSM (from Nov 17), Ms Sue Middleton (from April 18), Mr Patrick Myer, Mr Bruce Scott OAM (from Nov 17), Mr Andrew McKenzie JP (from Apr 18)

Absent:

Mr Fred Grimwade, Mr Tim Fairfax AC (to July 17), Mr Mike Mrdak AO (to Sept 17)

Our Board

FRRR is governed by a highly regarded Board. Two of the founding Board members are still serving, ensuring continuity with the original intentions behind the founding of FRRR. However, FRRR is also conscious of the need to bring in new skills and experience, and this year we welcomed four new Directors, each of whom brings different skills and networks. Mike Mrdak AO moved into a new role, and as a result, stepped down from FRRR's Board. We thank him for his generous support of FRRR.

Their support and commitment is greatly appreciated and makes a significant contribution to FRRR's mission to build vibrant, adaptive and sustainable rural, regional and remote communities across Australia.

FRRR Patrons:

We are also grateful for the ongoing support of our Patrons, each of whom generously supports FRRR in many ways.

- His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia
- Mr Baillieu Myer AC
- Lady Southey AC
- The Hon John Anderson AO



Our Committees

To ensure the assessment of the grant applications is fair, just and responds to the needs of our communities and our donor partners we purposefully invite independent subject matter experts to our assessment committees. Each committee is chaired by an FRRR Board member, following our governance processes.

Every one of the individuals listed below provided voluntary support to our assessment process or gave their expertise on other sub-committees. We thank them for the commitment and ongoing support to our rural, regional and remote communities.

- Alexandra Neill, ABC Heywire Youth Rep
- Amanda Byrne, Scenic World
- Andrea Gordon, Community Rep
- Andrew Coghlan, National Manager Emergency Management, Red Cross
- Anne Long, Greater Charitable Fdn
- Anne Parkinson, Mid North Coast & Northern NSW District

- Bronwyn Hutchings, FACS Central
- Bruce Lloyd, Community Rep
- Caitlin Rudorfer, ANZ
- Candice Van Doosselaere, Australian Philanthropic Services
- Carmen Smith, ABC Heywire Youth Rep
- Cheryl Batagol, Environment Protection Authority / Emergency Management Victoria
- Clay Frost, nib foundation
- Dagmar Parsons, National Seniors
- Dan Hirst, ABC Heywire
- Elizabeth Corbett, Betty Fulton Fund – A sub-fund of the Australian Communities Foundation
- Felicity Lindsay, FACS Central
- Georgie Somerset, Community Rep
- Geraldine Roche, Sally Fdn
- Gina Fairfax, Tim Fairfax Family Fdn
- Harriet McCallum, Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust
- Isaac Rankin, ANZ
- Janine Kirk, The Princes Trust Australia
- Jessica Douglas, Monsanto Fund
- John Harney, Domino's Pizza Enterprises Ltd
- Lisa Jones, Emergency Management Victoria
- Lynn Jenz, Findex Community Fund
- Mandy Moore, NSW Office of Emergency Management
- Margaret Smith AO, Community Rep
- Marie New, FACS
- Nick Stacey, ABC Heywire Youth Rep
- Phil Brown, Executive Officer, Country Education Partnership
- Prue Pateras, Donor Partner
- Rachel Kerry, Cages Foundation
- Sam Jorgensen, Tim Fairfax Family Fdn
- Sam Lonard, Department of Health & Human Services
- Sandy Mackenzie, Community Rep
- Sarah Anderson, NSW Office of Emergency Management
- Simone Stella, ANZ Regional
- Tim Fairfax AO, Tim Fairfax Family Fdn
- Tracy Llewelyn, Domino's Pizza Enterprises Ltd
- Yongyan Xia - ABC Heywire Youth Rep

FRRR Staff

FRRR's staff members all share a strong affinity with rural and regional communities. Many of them live in small towns, so they understand the opportunities and challenges faced by our grantseekers.

They feel privileged and are inspired on a daily basis when they chat with local leaders across the country and support them to build vibrant communities.

This year, the team grew to 16 (12.2 FTE), reflecting the increased breadth of activity and programs.



“ One of the things I enjoy most about working at FRRR is how many ‘good news stories’ we are privileged to hear every day – from applications that vividly describe the change their project wishes to create in their community, to excited updates from our fundraising account partners, to final reports that illustrate the leveraged impact of each grant, and often in hugely challenging circumstances. To me, it is the actions of the unsung volunteers across our communities that speak really loudly about the spirit of Australian rural, regional and remote communities. ”

Sarah Matthee

“ One of the best parts of my job at FRRR is processing final reports. It's great to read about such interesting projects and the impact funding has made to a community. It is also lovely to see fantastic photographs, film clips and publications celebrating project outcomes. ”

Vivienne McCrory

Grants in Action



“ It was a pleasure and a privilege for TFFF to fund two of these very special projects in Queensland through Tackling Tough Times Together. The Winton and Blackall communities connected extremely well, thanks to the music and dance for all ages either in the street, or the local Town Hall. The workshops for local orchestras and talented artists, in these four drought-affected areas had a lasting and positive effect in the communities. The projects funded are far reaching, and with the capable team at FRRR, we are able to deliver, to help make a difference. ”

Tim and Gina Fairfax

The best way to demonstrate the difference that the generous support of our donor partners makes in rural, regional and remote communities is by sharing some of the stories of the grants in action. The following case studies showcase some of the ways in which local leaders have addressed local challenges and opportunities, with local solutions.

The case studies are grouped by the seven key focus areas that align with our new granting and evaluation processes:

1. Building community resilience
2. Supporting lifelong learning, education and / or training
3. Acting on environmental challenges / opportunities
4. Building economic strength and sustainability
5. Developing organisational resilience and capacity
6. Promoting individual and community health and social wellbeing
7. Contributing to a culturally vibrant community

Building community resilience

Rural communities face a wide range of challenges, such as reduced access to services, economic adjustment, natural disasters, persistent drought and fluctuations in global trade.

Building skills and capacity at a community level to respond and adapt to sudden or slow-onset shocks and stressors lessens their impact and enables the community to bounce back faster or respond to opportunities, as they emerge.

FRRR supports communities to increase resilience in a number of ways, some examples of which are showcased below.



“ Participants young and old experienced the increased connectivity, exhilaration and wellbeing felt from dancing... it brought new life and created pride in the communities at a time of major drought. It also helped boost the local economy. ”

Red Ridge Interior

You should be dancing!

For decades in communities across rural, regional and remote Australia, local dances brought people together from all over the district and further afield. Two such towns are Winton and Blackall, small communities about 1,600 kilometres north-west of Brisbane, in Queensland.

With the effects of the ongoing drought felt strongly in these areas – affecting both physical and mental health - Red Ridge Interior saw the opportunity to celebrate the role of dances in these communities.

Through the Tackling Tough Times Together program and the support of the **Tim Fairfax Family Foundation**, FRRR provided an \$11,000 grant to help bring dancing back to these communities.

With this funding and the support of many other groups, Red Ridge Interior engaged a professional team comprising artists, choreographers, actors, producers, dancers and bands to collaborate with the two communities. They researched local history, recorded interviews with locals and trained a large cast of community dancers in old time dance at weekly workshops in the lead up to two main dance events.

It culminated with Winton holding a street party and Blackall having a live dance performance in the Old Memorial Hall.

This project had wide-reaching outcomes. Red Ridge reported their project revived local history and enabled older community members to reflect and capture memories, as well as share cultural knowledge.

Strengthening Denmark’s volunteer base

Established in 1987, the Denmark Environment Centre was the first of its kind in regional Western Australia. Its purpose is to inspire, educate and connect people in the community to protect, care for and preserve the natural environment.

It moved into larger premises in 2015, after the Centre was burnt to the ground in 2009. This created an opportunity to expand its services but they needed to engage volunteers in the restoration and conservation work. A \$4,165 Small Grant for Rural Communities, thanks to the **Ronald Geoffrey Arnott Foundation**, allowed the Centre to invest in volunteer recruitment and support, ultimately improving local environmental health and reducing volunteer fatigue.



Photo: Julie Millowick



Helping little kids with their big feelings

Strathewen in north-west Victoria was one of the many communities impacted by the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires, and is still recovering.

The team at Arthurs Creek Strathewen CFA realised that students at the local primary school were suffering post-traumatic stress after Black Saturday, as parents were reporting their children experiencing high levels of anxiety and panic attacks. This prompted the CFA to develop the Strathewen Primary School Fire Awareness Program, which was the second of three projects delivered via a partnership between the CFA and primary school. The program was designed to support local students and help build their confidence around fire safety and preparedness.

To support this initiative, the CFA received a \$15,730 grant from the Grants for Resilience and Wellness program funded by the **Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund**. The weekly program gave students the opportunity to discuss fire safety plans, evacuation strategies, and fire danger ratings. A picture story book was created, which participants took home to share with their families.

Parents reported that after the program, their children’s confidence levels improved significantly, and anxiety levels decreased.

It’s best to be prepared

The Buloke and Northern Grampians Shires in Victoria are prone to significant disasters. During the 2011 floods, the Charlton Hospital had to be evacuated. To enable effective power supply in emergency situations, East Wimmera Health Services bought a large generator. They received \$4,780 via the Small Grants for Rural Communities program, funded by the **R.E. Ross Trust**, to purchase a custom-built trailer for their generator. This equipment means the region has an immediate solution to power failure in times of emergency.

Clonbinane Community Action Group

In their Neighbourhood Emergency Plan, the Clonbinane Community Action Group identified the priority was to install a generator at the local hall. Using a \$26,675 grant funded by the **Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund** from the Grants for Resilience & Wellness program, they were able to purchase and install a generator ready for any emergency.

“ I reckon we are 90% prepared for any emergency now. ”

L. Soulsby, Clonbinane community member and CFA volunteer

Supporting lifelong learning, education and / or training

FRRR believes that all Australians, regardless of where they live, deserve equal access to education. However, a 2015 Mitchell Institute report on Educational Opportunity in Australia highlighted complex barriers to education in rural and remote areas.

This includes ongoing economic adjustment, the impacts of natural disasters, isolation and poor engagement in some cultural and socio-economic groups. All this means that in many cases, even the basics are lacking - such as uniforms and stationery - let alone extras like music lessons or literacy coaching. There are also unique challenges in recruiting, retaining and developing staff.

FRRR's education grants help to address these challenges, as well as build local capability to deliver quality education opportunities.

Reaching out through innovation

Napranum is an Indigenous community on the west coast of Cape York Peninsula in Queensland. The local school closed down, forcing families and tutors to step in. The Napranum Parents and Learning Group (NPG) received an **ANZ Seeds of Renewal** grant for \$5,800 to develop an app encompassing training modules for Indigenous tutors. The app has made education more accessible to Indigenous families, encouraging them to be part of their child's development and early learning.

Eden Games Development Centre

The Eden Community Access Centre used a \$30,850 Social Innovation Fund grant funded by the **NSW Government – Department of Family & Community Services** to run weekly workshops for disadvantaged and disengaged young people teaching them coding, game development and virtual reality. Participants learnt about physics, geometry and trigonometry without realising it, and had fun doing so. In just hours, they grew in confidence and saw how they could be part of a community.



Photo: William Sharples

Taking professional development on-country

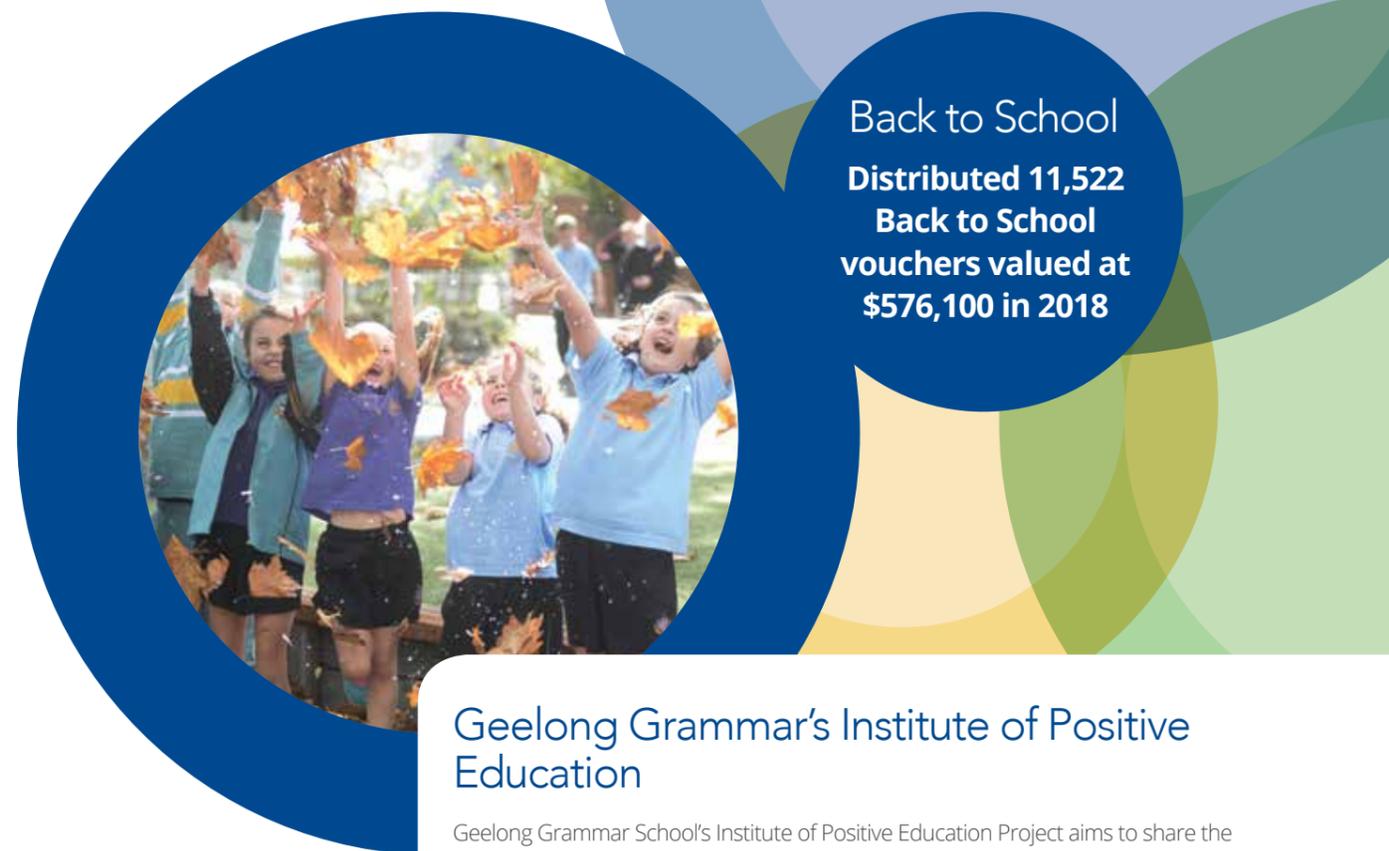
Gondwana Link Ltd understands the importance of building cultural and environmental connections at school. Some of the schools and staff in the Gondwana Link conservation area, south-west Western Australia, had little to no exposure to Aboriginal Australian culture, and therefore teaching lessons with an Aboriginal perspective was very difficult for them.

The FRRR **ANZ** Seeds of Renewal grant program supported the Nowanup 'Bush University' Schools Program with a \$12,500 grant. The funds allowed them to engage Noongar Elder Eugene Eades, and an education consultant to develop and trial the implementation of a professional development opportunity for teachers and support staff from local primary schools.

The intention was to enable educators from the surrounding regions to better appreciate local Noongar cultural and heritage values, and to deepen their understanding of Noongar perspectives on management of the land, or Boodja. In addition, schools were asked to commit to making their policies and procedures more responsive to Noongar cultural frameworks, presenting content in the Australian Curriculum in a manner sensitive to a local Noongar context.

Amanda Keesing from Gondwana Link explains that the funding supported the design, implementation and review of two camps.

"The feedback was extremely positive and will also contribute to planning for the next series of professional development camps. We now have a viable model for future camps."



Back to School
Distributed 11,522
Back to School
vouchers valued at
\$576,100 in 2018

Geelong Grammar's Institute of Positive Education

Geelong Grammar School's Institute of Positive Education Project aims to share the methodology of Positive Education throughout Australia and to encourage adults to embed positive psychology tools fostering improved mental health and wellbeing in their teaching, mentoring and rearing of children.

With an emphasis on improving the wellbeing of those living in rural and regional areas, the Institute offers Positive Education training and collaborates on Positive Education research projects. But this isn't cheap. To raise the funds needed, they are working in partnership with FRRR, through a **Not-for-Profit Fundraising Account**.

"The FRRR scheme has provided the Institute of Positive Education with invaluable assistance towards the development and implementation of several programs and services for regional schools and communities. These include supporting curriculum writing, various wellbeing research measurements, and support for specialised training" said Wes Smith, Business Manager for the Institute of Positive Education.

"We are enormously grateful to be involved and to be a recipient of this vital funding initiative."

The fundraising account will additionally work to support research and evaluation that build scientific evidence for the efficacy of Positive Education.

Barking Books, making a difference

The Barking Books Reading with Confidence project has a simple mission: "To help as many young people having a hard time as possible." BackTrack Youth Works received a \$50,000 Tackling Tough Times Together grant, funded by **The Yulgilbar Foundation**, to expand the program into local schools in the Northern Tablelands of NSW.

Barking Books takes working dogs into the schools to sit with students as they read, which helps with both literacy and wellbeing. Last year, 134 students participated across five schools and teachers saw a positive change in their engagement at school.

"When Gibson [the dog] comes, I like to read to him because he is a good listener!" exclaimed a student.



“Back to School voucher recipients have improved their attendance and demonstrated a stronger connection to the school. Multiple families said they were living pay-cheque to pay-cheque [and] can now get some well-needed school supplies.”

Wellbeing Coordinator,
Katoomba High School

Acting on environmental challenges / opportunities

Australia's social and economic vibrancy is reliant upon a healthy environment and ecosystem. We are pleased to support communities to protect, care for and increase the sustainability of their natural environments through a diverse range of projects.



A needle and thread connects a community

On the south bank of the Murray River in Victoria lies the small border town of Yarrowonga. It is referred to as the 'Inland Aquatic Paradise', as Lake Mulwala is used for an array of water sports. It is here that the 'bag ladies' come together with a common cause... to reduce plastic waste.

The Yarrowonga Neighbourhood House (YNH) used a \$4,887 grant, thanks to the **William Buckland Foundation**, and FRRR's Small Grants for Rural Communities program, to purchase two overlockers, a sewing machine and various cutting tools. YNH joined an initiative called 'Boomerang Bags', designed to reduce the use of plastic bags by engaging local communities in the making of reusable shopping bags. It is a community-driven initiative tackling plastic pollution using recycled materials. One Boomerang Bag can replace 75 single-use plastic bags.

YNH collaborated with the local opportunity shops, businesses and community members to supply the fabric. Debbie Cooper from YNH, explains that the bags are made available free of charge to the community at markets, fairs, stalls and local supermarkets.

"Our sewing bee group consists of people with diverse abilities who have made personal connections with each other. They are affectionately known as the "Bag Ladies". We have people sewing at home, as well as those who come to the centre.

"While it's making a difference to the environment, it's also helping assist isolated and vulnerable people to connect and engage with their community, building confidence and opportunities. Adding a social cause to social connection programs is an effective way of engaging a community. People in our community want to reduce waste!"

“ At time of reporting YNH had produced 493 bags, potentially diverting 36,975 plastic bags from landfill. ”

Debbie Cooper, Yarrowonga Neighbourhood House

Focusing on our environment matters

Using a Small Grants for Rural Communities grant of \$4,030, funded by the **Pratt Foundation**, the Bruny Island Environment Network Inc. was able to purchase portable audio-visual equipment for use in both community halls and outdoors. Feedback from participants at their biennial bird festival confirms that improved presentation technology increases engagement with the message and heightened interest in the subject.



Raleigh Hall upgrades brings benefits

The Raleigh Hall and Recreation Reserve Management Committee in NSW received a \$4,000 grant from the Small Grants for Rural Communities program to improve the safety and comfort of the hall, by rewiring it, and installing energy efficient lighting and ceiling fans.

The upgrade means they are now compliant with standards, and more energy efficient - reducing their impact on the environment - and can raise additional revenue through more bookings.

Committee Member Lynda Saunders said they had already secured permanent weekly bookings, regular public meetings, school performances, large community events and even two weddings.

"We sincerely thank **The Clarke Family Trust** and the private donor for this grant. Raleigh Hall is the only public meeting place for our community, and it was so run down that groups were travelling to other venues," Mrs Saunders said.

"It's real and it's happening now"

Farmers for Climate Action (FCA) is a not-for-profit organisation that works in partnership with farmers, scientists and other experts. FRRR partners with FCA, hosting a fundraising account to enable them to scale up their operations around Australia.

With climate change impacting Australian agriculture, they host educational events, run fellowship programs, and generally spread the word to ensure that Australian farmers can connect with experts and advocate for change to serve Australians well for many years to come.

Happy Valley Hall - Shining the light on sustainability

The Happy Valley Hall committee decided to look to the future and make both economic and environmental sustainability a priority. They used their \$9,848 Community Group Futures grant, funded by the **Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund**, to purchase and install solar panels, which have already started to reduce their electricity bill. The funds saved will be used for other community projects.



Building economic strength and sustainability

FRRR's ability to support economic development is one of the things we are most proud of. It's one of our distinguishing features that furthers our aims of rural, regional and remote renewal.

We support many communities that seek to strengthen or adapt their local economic drivers. After all, a sustainable community attracts resources, services and new residents. We have worked alongside some progressive communities to diversify their traditional local economy, like agriculture or mining, to focus on tourism opportunities, while other drought-impacted communities are embracing new technologies and enterprises to build financial stability.



Firing up to generate income

In 1948 the Presbyterian missionaries established a craft room in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankanytjatarra (APY) Lands at the eastern end of the Musgrave Ranges in far north-west South Australia. The first crafts produced were hand-loomed woven fabrics and hand-pulled and knotted floor rugs with a unique pattern that became known as 'the Ernabella walka' or 'anapalayakuwalka' (Ernabella's design).

From these small beginnings, the Ernabella Arts Centre has grown to become the oldest continuously running – and one of the most successful - Indigenous arts centre in Australia.

Ernabella is perhaps best known for its ceramics, with many artists' works featuring in shops and galleries across Australia, and in collections both here and overseas. Today, the Centre supports more than 100 artists and generates vital income for the community, which has very few local employment opportunities.

The ceramic artists include a core group of 25 young Aboriginal mothers. Unfortunately, they were unable to operate at capacity and did not have room for new members due to a faulty kiln. With the support of the **Bertalli Family Foundation**, FRRR's Small Grants for Rural Communities program provided a grant of \$4,640 that enabled a second kiln to be brought back into use.

Hannah Kothe, on behalf of Tjunkay Tapaya of Ernabella Arts, explains that its repair has been even more successful than they imagined.

“ We had predicted and hoped for an increase of 45-50 percent within the first year, and an additional 50 percent by the second year, but amazingly this was achieved within the first year.

The flow on effect was an increase in art centre sales of 16 percent within the first year. This in turn returned \$78,000 back to the 100+ artists of Ernabella Arts, many of whom are struggling single mothers who live below the poverty line. ”

Hannah Kothe, on behalf of Tjunkay Tapaya of Ernabella Arts



“ As they promoted their own fabric designs and saw their designs on stage in the fashion parade, the sense of the pride and achievement was really strong. ”

Ingrid Johanson, Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation



Take a walk on the alpine side

The Falls Creek community in north eastern Victoria is economically dependent on tourism. Home to roughly 300 permanent residents, the township comes alive during the snow season, providing a huge economic boost for the community. But in the summer, it is a different story. The Falls Creek community understood that to achieve greater economic sustainability they needed to integrate, enhance and promote attractions that will encourage visitors all year round; not just during the winter.

The team at the Falls Creek Historical Society proposed the development of a digital guide exploring Falls Creek to encourage year-round tourism. The Falls Creek Historical Society received a \$3,000 Small Grants for Rural Communities grant, funded by the **William Buckland Foundation**, and used the local talent at Falls Creek Primary School to be the recorded guides.

The outcome of this is an incredible resource for locals and visitors to download online that showcases the region's unique attractions and rich history that can be explored all year round.

Textiles connect Arnhem Land women

The Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation (BAC) established the Bábbarra Women's Centre (Bábbarra) which supports skills development of local Aboriginal people. The group's key enterprise, with the greatest capacity for income generation, is their textiles brand Bábbarra Designs.

A \$5,000 Small Grants for Rural Communities grant, funded by **The Yulgilbar Foundation**, supported women from Maningrida community to travel to and attend the 2017 Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair (DAAF).

Ingrid Johanson from BAC said DAAF provided a great opportunity to network and establish partnerships that will deliver significant economic outcomes to the women.

Local change-makers graduate

An amazing group of up-and-coming entrepreneurs graduated from the Social Change 101 program in December 2017.

With funding from the **Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund**, FRRR engaged Sue Gold & Associates (who managed and delivered the 2017 programs under an auspice agreement with Mansfield Adult and Community Education). They were commissioned to deliver the Social Change 101 program in regions impacted by the 2009 Victorian bushfires.

Over five months, participants from the Mitchell and Murrindindi areas built the skills, knowledge, confidence and networks they needed to create credible business plans to guide the start-up or growth of their social enterprises. We look forward to hearing about the progress of their projects, which range from tool libraries to tiny houses.

Developing organisational resilience and capacity

FRRR welcomes grant applications that support strategic and operational planning, organisational revenue generation and fundraising, investing in local infrastructure and equipment, opportunities to foster networks, capability development and initiatives to build the volunteer base.

Projects that build organisational resilience are particularly important in volunteer-based settings to ensure that members of not-for-profit organisations are better-prepared for crises and better-equipped to withstand setbacks. By upskilling local talent, we are investing in the long-term sustainability of the community. Equally, by investing in more efficient infrastructure and equipment, we can reduce operating costs for organisations, helping to make them more sustainable.



Community garden grows a life of its own

The Bream Creek Farmers' Market Community Garden was first supported by FRRR back in 2012, and for the past few years has grown a variety of fresh produce to sell at the market.

The Committee saw the opportunity to expand operations and grow much larger quantities of Tassie produce, but they knew they needed a more structured approach to planning, infrastructure and management of the Garden.

The **Domino's Give for Good program** enabled the continued development of the garden with a \$5,000 grant in early 2017 to support hiring a paid Coordinator to focus on the management of the operations and volunteers.

To develop the garden infrastructure, the Coordinator worked with an irrigation specialist to deliver water to the garden beds effectively and efficiently as possible. The Coordinator also supported the implementation of the recommendations in the professional Permaculture Report and, most importantly, worked to develop a key group of volunteers.

Committee member Elizabeth Knox explained that having a dedicated Coordinator saw the Garden grow from strength to strength.

"Volunteers were offered clear direction as to the tasks required to be undertaken at each working bee and were encouraged to adopt the Garden as their own project. This saw an increase in the number of volunteers," said Elizabeth.

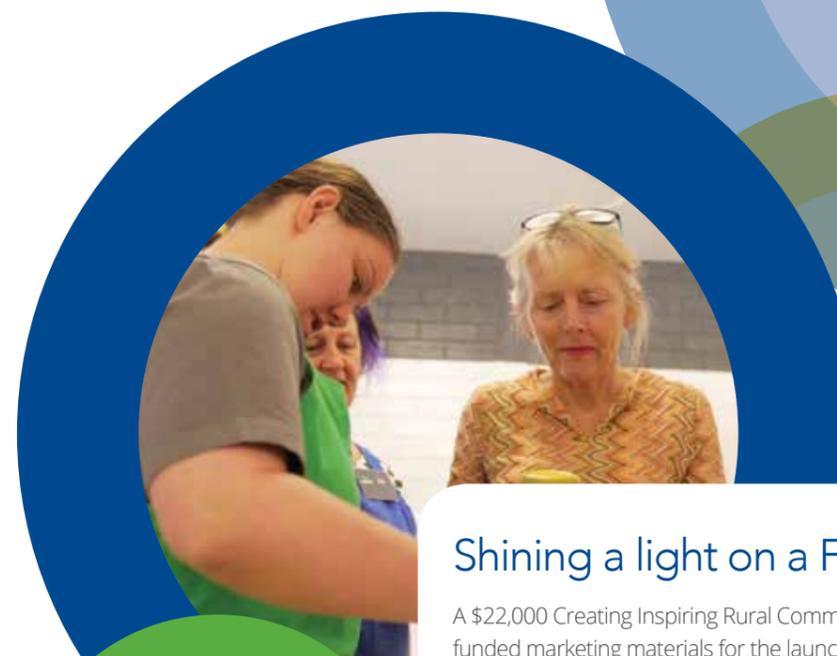
"The Coordinator was then able to focus on developing a retail arm, enabling them to sell produce daily and not be solely reliant on the monthly farmers' market. As a result, turnover quadrupled."

Riding on this success, the Bream Creek Farmers' Market decided that it would be best if the Garden became its own incorporated association. The profits from the Garden for this past financial year were allocated to that new not-for-profit organisation, now known as the Bream Creek Community Market Garden, to provide seed money for its future growth.

With its clear vision, there will undoubtedly be more branches of success in the future.

Tools for Tinkerers

The value of small grants, like the \$1,979 that the Eudunda Community Business & Tourism Association in SA received from a **private donor** to purchase hand tools for their newly established men's shed, cannot be overstated. The grant helped to increase community capacity, skills and engagement, particularly with older men.



Shining a light on a Fund

A \$22,000 Creating Inspiring Rural Community Leadership & Engagement (CIRCLE) grant funded marketing materials for the launch and implementation of the Border Trust's Community Fund Program.

Using the grant, which was funded by the **Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development**, they updated their brand and developed new marketing materials, including a video, and produced a radio commercial to showcase the great work they do in the community.

Glenys Atkins, Executive Officer of the Border Trust, explains that since using the new marketing materials the Border Trust has experienced an increase in the number of enquiries.

"The marketing re-brand and refresh have given us a new lease of life - the simplicity of the stories told by the recipients in the videos have helped us cut through some of the complexities of a community foundation. They tell our story for us in a way we can't!"



From little things...



Community Living & Respite Services Inc. received a \$3,250 grant through the Community and Philanthropy Partnerships Week program, funded by the **Department of Social Services**, to produce a video. The video showcased the Murray Tea Rooms in Moama NSW, which supports their clients who have a disability to develop skills and confidence in customer service, retail and hospitality.

Following the launch of the video, other suppliers and volunteers offered their support, including Unilever, who now donate iced tea and other products. The video had more than 6,000 views via Facebook, and 150 shares in the eight months after it was first posted.

Legal advice sets Association up for success

A \$7,032 Caring for Ageing Rural Australians (CARA) grant enabled the Thallon Progress Association to engage a local law firm and obtain specialist advice. They needed to know the most suitable legal structure for their proposed independent living units, which will eventually allow local citizens to age in place.

The result was the establishment of Thallon Community Services Ltd, a registered company and registered charity that will oversee the project. This grant was funded by the **Sylvia & Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation**.

“ [This grant] enabled us to establish a structure suitable to grow our strong community forward. ”

Brett Fulwood, Thallon Progress Association



Promoting individual and community health and social wellbeing

Living in rural, regional and remote areas provides a way of life conducive to healthy living. But living in these areas does have its challenges, adding to health inequities and poor health outcomes.

The recruitment and retention of health professionals is challenging for many communities outside of metropolitan centres and so accessing specialist services often means significant travel, which comes at a cost both economically and physically.

FRRR is pleased to support projects that promote physical and mental health, access to infrastructure and support needed to live well locally, assist community cohesion and engagement and to improve community safety.

Youth for youth

Providing opportunities for youth on the Central Coast of NSW to meet life's challenges is at the heart of the work of Regional Youth Support Services (RYSS).

The Central Coast has 51,000 young people, and a higher than average number of suicides compared to the national average. Sadly, this is consistent with increased advice and referrals to and from RYSS and other community organisations.

Sharon Aldrick, from RYSS says that supporting LGBTQIA+ youth is particularly important.

"The issues young LGBTQIA+ people face, not only in the wider community but in their inner circles and even within themselves, are not widely known or spoken about.

"While there are mainstream services to support the LGBTQIA+ community, we knew that the gender diverse youth on the Central Coast would benefit immensely from having the ability to voice their concerns, ideas and what they are facing on a public platform.

"We received a little over \$9,000 through the **FRRR ABC Heywire Youth Innovation Grants program** to create a resource network and 'hub' for young people."

It was a youth-led project, kicking off with the employment of two LGBTQIA+ youth leaders who built a team of young people to implement it.

This team produced a series of 15 podcasts focused on LGBTQIA+ youth-related topics, which were shared on a website, Facebook and Instagram pages that they managed. They ran information stalls at various markets and produced promotional and marketing materials.

There was a documentary produced for YouTube and they are now creating a short film.

Through social media, this project has reached more than 5,000 young people.

"This initiative enables these young people to have a platform to express their issues, inform the wider community, and to normalise sexuality and gender diversity.

"The community is now better informed about the LGBTQIA+ community and young people feel supported, feel non-judged and can access support and services they need," reported Sharon.

Deadly Thinking improves mental health

To promote better mental health among Indigenous people in Armidale, NSW, Rural and Remote Mental Health received a \$5,000 grant from the **Domino's Give for Good program**. Mental health training, known as the 'Deadly Thinking' program, was delivered to Indigenous people, by Indigenous people. It is helping to reduce mental health stigma by providing targeted and comprehensive information on mental ill-health in a culturally appropriate way.

Grants in Action

"Aside from learning to sail, I learnt a lot about the different people onboard. There was so much variety in culture, religion, values, personalities and physical appearances. All of these things are what define and unite us, so it was really interesting to learn everything. I also learned a lot about myself while on voyage."

Participant on the Windeward Bound tall ship



Ahoy! Tasmanian youth take to the high seas

Many young Tasmanians suffer financial disadvantage and don't experience opportunities that a lot of us take for granted.

The Windeward Bound Financial Hardship Voyage Bursary Fund seeks to increase access to marine-based personal development programs for Tasmanian youth. It received a \$10,000 Tailored Grant funded by the **David Boykett Tall Ships Voyaging Fund – a sub-fund of the Australian Communities Foundation**, which provided bursaries that enabled 36 young people to experience a life-changing voyage organised by Sail Training International.

This year, there were two trips on Windeward Bound's square-rigged tall ship. The first paired nine young Tasmanians with nine young former refugees who now live in Tasmania. The grant meant that each former refugee only paid \$100.

The second expedition – the Tasmanian Student voyage - allowed a further 18 young Australians to experience life on the open seas. The feedback from participants, mentors and their parents was overwhelmingly positive.

"Increasing their knowledge and capacity improves their self-esteem and confidence."

Veronica Rodenburg, CEO of Anglicare Northern Inland

Hope for Life – Teen pregnancy program

Anglicare Northern Inland (ANI) Diocese of Armidale received \$5,000 through the Aussie Cotton Farmers Grow Communities program, thanks to the **Monsanto Fund**, to help young pregnant teenagers who are stuck in cycles of generational disadvantage.

Through the Hope for Life program, they worked with local specialist health and support agencies to enable these women to find a safe home, leave abusive relationships, finish their education, attend birth and parenting classes, and build a network of other new mums in their area.

Virtual Happiness

People who are bed-bound have limited opportunities for sensory experiences. However, 3D virtual reality technology can be highly effective in alleviating depression, pain and loneliness, especially for the elderly. Aged Care Monto used a \$2,033 Small Grants for Rural Communities grant, funded by **The Sylvia & Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation**, to purchase an interactive goggle headset. It's now being put to very good use by the residents, and staff at the centre have observed notable improvements among residents.



Contributing to a culturally vibrant community

Culture is essential to the vitality of our rural and regional communities. Fostering elements of life, civilisation, lifestyle and society help to build social capital, solidifying the sense of community.

FRRR proudly supports the shared leisure, entertainment and learning experiences that relieve isolation and promote identity formation and intercultural understanding. It also supports tourism and can lead to additional revenue streams.

That's why many of FRRR's grant programs have the flexibility to promote cultural, arts, heritage and local identity-building projects.



Photo: Julie Millowick

Making a dream a reality through a Dreamtime story

On the banks of Broken Creek in northern Victoria lies the small town of Nathalia. It's only minutes from Barmah National Park, the world's largest Redgum forest.

The Nathalia & District Development Corporation (NADDCO) recognises the importance of the Yorta Yorta people and therefore provided auspice to the Bardi Gras Group, who wanted to increase community awareness of the local Indigenous culture and language, as well as some important environmental issues.

Story-telling is an integral part of Indigenous culture, and so the Bardi Gras Group, under the guidance of Yorta Yorta Elder Auntie Sharon Atkinson, used \$2,899 from FRRR's Small Grants for Rural Communities program, funded by the **William Buckland Foundation**, to develop an illustrated book and an audio DVD of an Aboriginal Dreamtime children's story, Tiddalik the Frog. The local book was titled: **Po-bonk-I Bunyma Bapalwa** (Po-bonk Creates a Flood), and presented in both Yorta Yorta and English.

The book was launched at the Bardi Gras Festival, which focused on protecting local flora and fauna and strengthening relations between the local Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. As part of the launch they used the grant to create a giant frog,

along with other artwork. This was produced and painted by community artists working with students from the local colleges.

The story was narrated and enacted with the giant frog and hand puppets by Nathalia Primary School students.

Lyn Loger, of NADDCO, explains that it was truly a whole of community collaboration and celebration.

"Since the launch, the book and DVD have been highly sought after. The book is a great learning tool and has become part of one local Catholic primary school's curriculum. It has also been supplied as a resource for courses at the three Latrobe University campuses, and read at several local organisations, such as libraries, primary schools, a kindergarten, a special school and a nursing home."

The giant frog is now a showpiece at Nathalia Primary School and a great talking point for visitors passing through.

RAGE-ing in Yeppoon

In Queensland, the Young Leaders of Livingstone (YLL) used a \$3,000 collaboratively-funded **FRRR ABC Heywire Youth Innovation Grant** to raise awareness of gender inequality and create a safer community. They held a music and dance event and created an interactive art project designed to encourage attendees to creatively express their ideas of gender. While achieving their aim the youth also developed skills through the planning of this project.



"These communities have not come together in this way before and the community connection that they create is really inspiring."

Sara Storer, 2017 'Legend'



Legend and the Locals Tour



The Keppel Coast Arts Council's annual Legend and the Locals Tour brings communities together, with lasting effects.

The tour involves a music 'legend', support acts and a conductor / composer visiting regional towns. They host workshops that culminate in a performance that includes local artists. In 2017, the tour visited four drought-affected communities in northern Queensland, thanks to a \$50,000 grant from the Tackling Tough Times Together program, funded by the **Tim Fairfax Family Foundation**.

The workshops provided a fantastic opportunity for local orchestras and talented artists to develop their skills, with coaching from an industry professional. The free final show gave the local artists a moment in the spotlight alongside the 'legend'. Importantly, it brought community members together to forget about the hardships of the drought for a night.

Kitchen for our kids

The Elizabeth Telfer Building Management Committee in the Wongan Hills area of WA wanted to upgrade their kitchen to create a safe, usable space for children and volunteers from three early childhood groups, enabling a greater range of activities. To support the initiative, they received a \$10,000 REAPing Rewards grant co-funded by **The Yulgilbar Foundation** and **Third Link Investment Managers**. As a result of the upgrade, children are now able to participate in basic cooking activities, increasing their kitchen skills and food nutrition knowledge.

New piano brings more fun

Community facilities play an important role in supporting cultural events in rural communities, even the piano at the local hall. Thanks to a \$5,000 Small Grants for Rural Communities grant that purchased a new piano, the Pemberton Mill Hall, in south-west WA, is once again ringing out with the sounds of tinkling ivory.

To celebrate its arrival, the town held a talent show, which saw 18 acts perform for 200 community members from all generations. It was a night to remember.



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