



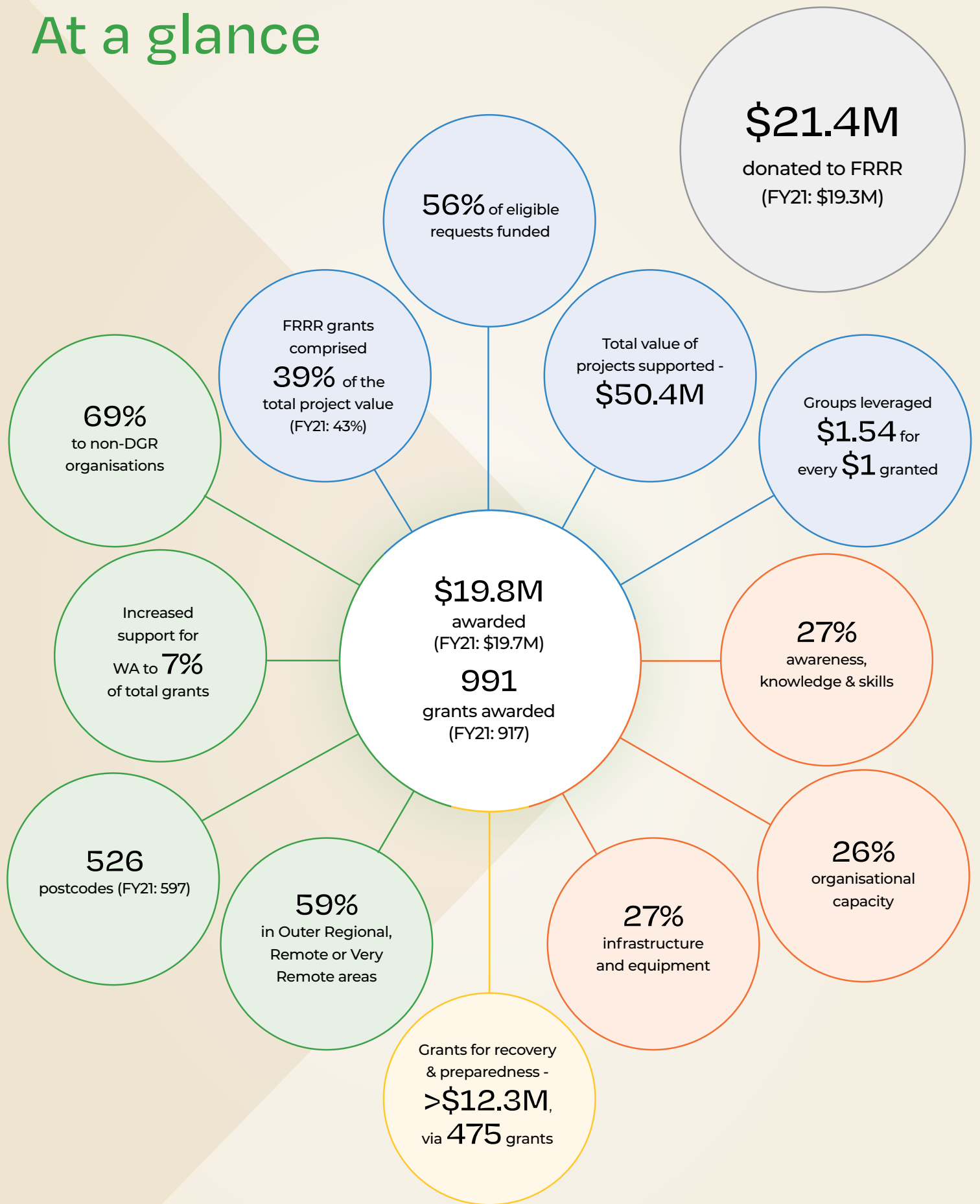
Annual Review 2021/22

Sustain and Strengthen



FRRR
Foundation for Rural
Regional Renewal

At a glance



More than
money

3,201 calls;
19,440 minutes on
the phones

1,276 registered for
24 workshops

Website visits
314,256
(FY21: 170,880)

Sustain and Strengthen

FRRR is the only national foundation specifically focused on ensuring the **social and economic strength and resilience** of remote, rural and regional communities.

The ongoing impacts of COVID, coupled with the legacy of bushfires and drought, and several incidents of significant flooding, made FY 2021/22 another difficult year.

Despite this, communities once again **pulled together**, harnessing the strengths of local people and their connection and commitment to their places to forge ahead.

FRRR was privileged to support many of them, thanks to the continued **trust and commitment of our partners**. This document is a snapshot of our activities for this reporting year, and of the **resilience and tenacity of the local leaders** who helped sustain and strengthen their communities.



We acknowledge the Dja Dja Wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of Jaara Country (Bendigo), where we are headquartered, and extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations where we fund organisations and activities.

We acknowledge their connections to land, sea and community and pay our respect to Elders past and present and to the continuation of the custodial, cultural and educational practices of Australia's First People.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this report may contain images or names of people who have passed away.

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Chairman's Welcome

I am delighted to introduce FRRR's 22nd annual review, an achievement that is only possible thanks to the **generous support of our donor partners and supporters, the hard work of our staff and the tenacity and commitment of the local leaders** in remote, rural and regional communities across the country.

This reporting period was one of the most challenging yet, with the country feeling the impacts of bushfires, ongoing drought, some of the worst flooding on record and the evolving, unpredictable COVID pandemic. Yet through it all, the characteristic resilience and spirit of rural Australians stood strong. People once again rallied around each other to support those in need, ensuring communities were sustained and strengthened.

As different parts of the country faced different challenges, the need for grant support remained and our team stepped up, despite many **experiencing the effects of pandemic lockdowns**. Our predominantly Victorian-based team assessed those applications and made recommendations to the Board on which projects to support, despite enduring the toughest COVID restrictions of anywhere in Australia. I thank them most sincerely for their efforts, especially when many were home-schooling or caring for others alongside their day jobs. I particularly acknowledge the strength and skills of our CEO, Natalie Egleton, and her leadership team, who have once again superbly shepherded the organisation through a challenging period.

I also **thank FRRR's donor partners and supporters** for continuing to put your trust and faith in our organisation to ensure your funds reach communities that need it most. Your ongoing support, including the way in which you collectively stepped up to help

us achieve co-funding goals around drought resilience funding, in addition to contributing to FRRR's flood appeal, are particularly appreciated. I also thank the private donor who generously contributed to the operational costs of the organisation. This kind of investment means that we can focus our core funding, and efforts, on supporting more communities.

Thank you too, to **my fellow directors**, especially Anne Grindrod, Deputy Chair, and Directors who also chair our various Program Assessment Committees. I also acknowledge **Fred Grimwade**, the chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, and **Ian Allen AM**, another long-standing director, both of whom retired from the Board this reporting year. They each made an enormous contribution during their combined 31 years of service, and their active support of FRRR has been greatly appreciated. I welcome **James Flintoft** and **Georgie Somerset** to the Board and know that you will both make an excellent contribution.

In closing, I note the [passing of our esteemed Patron, Sidney Baillieu Myer AC](#), in February 2022. Bails was the key instigator in the formation of FRRR, broaching the idea with our fellow Patron, Hon John Anderson AC, and being instrumental in Hon John Howard OM AC announcing FRRR's formation during the 1999 Regional Australia Summit. He **leaves an extraordinary legacy** in the many organisations he supported, including ours, and personally, I feel privileged to have known him.

I trust that you will enjoy reading this review, including exploring some of the wonderful projects we supported this year thanks to our collaborative efforts.

Tim Fairfax AC

Chairman

on Turrbal and Jagara Country

Governance

In every action, FRRR seeks to further our vision – in our grant-making to not-for-profit organisations, conduit funding partnerships, insights, choice of investments, and choice of donor partners. We acknowledge the tensions that exist in the social, economic, cultural and environmental opportunities and threats to remote, rural and regional communities. We act with ethical exclusions and positive screens – and take steps to consider and articulate how each of our choices contributes to positive social, environmental, cultural and economic change across remote, rural and regional Australia.

[FRRR's Directors](#) are ultimately accountable for FRRR's activities and play a critical role in guiding and providing oversight. At each quarterly meeting, they review the performance of the organisation, approve grants and provide strategic oversight.

We are fortunate that our Directors share a passionate belief in the critical role that remote, rural and regional Australia plays in the prosperity of Australia, and each brings different skills and expertise to the table in this critical voluntary role.

Our Board and Patrons



Hon Simon Crean, Andrew McKenzie JP, Anne Grindrod, Sue Middleton, Tim Fairfax AC, John Sharp AM, Georgie Somerset AM, Annabel White, Natalie Egleton
Absent: Patrick Myer, Dr Rachel Bacon, Paddy Handbury, Bruce Scott OAM, James Flintoft

- | | | |
|--|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ➤ Tim Fairfax AC – Chairman | ➤ Paddy Handbury | ➤ James Flintoft (from Nov 21) |
| ➤ Anne Grindrod – Deputy Chairman; Chair, Nominations & Appointments Committee | ➤ Annabel White | ➤ Georgie Somerset AM (from June 22) |
| ➤ Patrick Myer – Myer Family representative | ➤ Bruce Scott OAM | ➤ Ian Allen AM (until Feb 22) |
| ➤ Dr Rachel Bacon – Australian Government representative | ➤ Sue Middleton | ➤ Fred Grimwade (until Feb 22) |
| | ➤ Andrew McKenzie JP | |
| | ➤ Hon Simon Crean | |
| | ➤ John Sharp AM | |

The Foundation acknowledges His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC as our Patron in Chief. We also record our appreciation of the ongoing support of Rt Hon Ian Sinclair AC, Bill Kelty AC and Hon John Anderson AC as Patrons.

We express our gratitude and thanks to the many community members, subject matter experts and donor partners who serve on our Program Advisory Committees. They are too numerous to list here, but you can find them listed in our online Review at frrr.org.au/ar22.



CEO's Message

I am delighted to [present FRRR's 2021/22 Annual Review](#) – a **year that was once again challenging**. Like the communities we partner with and support, FRRR is geared to adapt and evolve through disruption, and the 2021/22 financial year certainly delivered more disruption, and much hardship for many. We **witnessed immense generosity, agility and strength** in remote, rural and regional communities as they continued to grapple with the effects of bushfires, floods, cyclones and the pandemic. I extend my deep **appreciation and admiration to the community leaders** who work so hard to sustain their communities.

Philanthropy has stepped up in force to back them too and I thank the [incredible network of partners and supporters who share our vision](#) for a vibrant, revitalised and resilient remote, rural and regional Australia, and who continue to put their trust in FRRR. This year, we **welcomed several new partners and renewed some long-standing relationships**. We value each one of them but I especially want to call out the Gardiner Dairy Foundation and ANZ Banking Group, as this year we celebrated 20 years of partnership with each organisation.

With the support of our partners, we **awarded 991 grants**, valued at **\$19.8 million**, to groups in **526 unique locations**. Thank you again for choosing to partner with FRRR. Many of the funded initiatives work at the intersections **of people, place and disaster resilience and climate solutions**. This has reinforced that our strategic focus areas are aligned to the ways communities work to address some of the most pressing and promising ideas for them and the nation.

Deepening our partnerships with First Nations communities has been one of the highlights of the year. I greatly appreciated the invitation to participate in the International Funders for Indigenous Peoples Convenings and the many challenging yet generous conversations about how we can do more and better to support self-determination, as well as the invitations to our team to spend time on Country with partner organisations, which have built understanding, trust and friendship.

The reprieve from the most extreme COVID restrictions meant that communities have been able to connect again. It's been great to see **communities celebrating their culture and spirit** and for our team, including myself, to spend time back in community, in person. It's this vibrancy - despite the ongoing hits and knocks - that bolsters **our commitment to delivering effective programs that have real lasting impacts**.

I'm fortunate to work with an **outstanding Board, Chaired by Tim Fairfax AC**. I thank Tim for his support and championing of FRRR and remote and rural communities. I also thank **Anne Grindrod**, our Deputy Chair, for her wisdom and guidance during the year, and both **Fred Grimwade and Andrew McKenzie JP** as successive Chairs of the Finance & Audit Committee, which has stewarded FRRR's investments and financial and risk performance so well. I particularly want to acknowledge **Ian Allen OAM** and Fred Grimwade who retired this year. They provided **invaluable, generous advice** for many years, and I appreciated their support. The Board appointed James Flintoft and Georgie Somerset, both of whom bring great skills and expertise which will add to the strength of the FRRR Board.

Looking ahead, **our strategic goals** include partnerships to scale and accelerate community-led disaster, drought, and climate resilience solutions; expanding our NFP and youth capacity building support; launching a WA Advisory Board; developing a refreshed impact framework; innovating our grant-making processes; and growing the corpus to sure-up future funding needs and maximise the leverage factor that our corpus fund provides. A new office is also in the works which will provide a more contemporary space for FRRR's now-hybrid workforce. Bendigo will of course remain our head office.

Natalie Egleton
CEO

on Dja Dja Wurrung Country

Our Wonderful Team



The leadership team comprises Karen Fazzani, Deb Samuels, Jill Karena, James Depasquale, Natalie Egleton, Nina O'Brien and Sarah Matthee (absent).

Each grant involves not only diligent assessment by our team, but often also time on the phone, helping applicants craft their proposals, answering questions and generally guiding them in how to put forward a solid application. This year, [our team](#) - most of whom are based in Victoria and NSW - did much of this while working from home, managing patchy internet connections, home-learning and the day-to-day challenges of COVID. **It is in this context that the quality of engagement, relationships, granting opportunities and partnerships led by the team is most impressive.**

Throughout lockdowns, we focused on team morale and wellbeing and took advantage of every opportunity we could for informal 'get to know you' catch-ups online.

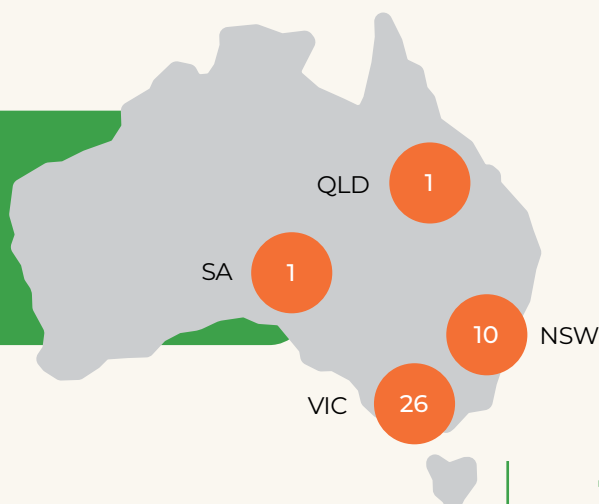
Our one face-to-face gathering was invaluable for reenergising and reconnecting. While we have returned to the office in a hybrid working model, I want to formally **record my gratitude and appreciation to them, and to their families**, for their amazing efforts not only in doing their work so well, but in supporting one another through what was an extremely challenging 12 months.

I am personally grateful for the **support of my leadership team**. They have really stepped up in difficult circumstances and collaborated well together, sharing their knowledge and learning to problem-solve, while maintaining cultural awareness and thinking strategically. I thank them for supporting each other and their teams.

"I had wonderful help from the staff at FRRR. They always answered my questions promptly and were very encouraging of our group seeking out further funding when we had missed out on other grants."

Upper Gundowring Recreation Reserve committee

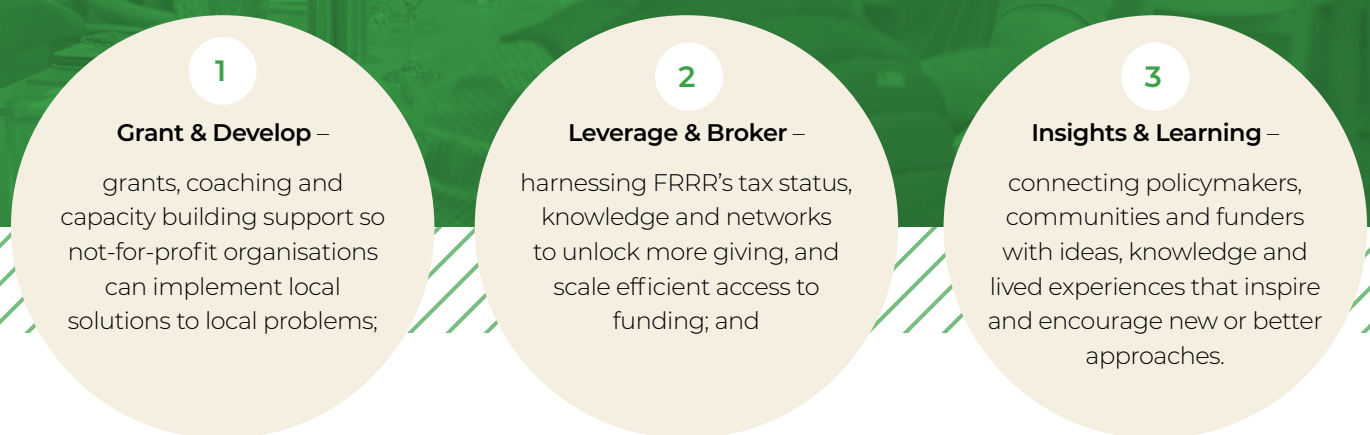
Our team grew to 30.5 FTE, made up of 15 full-time staff and 23 part-time staff. More than a third are now located outside Bendigo.



Our Strategy

FRRR's vision is for vibrant, sustainable remote, rural and regional communities. We seek to support change in holistic and systemic ways. Our belief is that by investing in place-based systems and services that are relevant and accessible, we contribute to shifting levels of inequity and improving quality of life in areas including transport, health and wellbeing, ageing, education, community infrastructure and business services, and energy security. With the proper resources and support, communities can be on the frontline of solutions to issues like climate change and other challenges that arise, now and in the future.

FRRR works in three ways:



Our approach is to:

- 1. Seed and strengthen –**
supporting and resourcing social, cultural, economic, environmental and physical infrastructure, services and support;
- 2. Adapt and evolve –**
investing in adaptive capacity and ability to cope and grow through disruption; and
- 3. Innovate and renew –**
supporting communities to test, scale and embed game-changing initiatives.



Strategy in Action

The following stories highlight some of the game-changing work being led by remote, rural and regional communities and reflect our strategy in action.



Building capacity to benefit community

Mujaay Ganma Foundation is an Indigenous-led NFP based in Bowraville, NSW on Gumbaynggirr Country. As a young yet already trusted and effective organisation, they recognised a need to build their own capacity before embarking on an ambitious project that would benefit the whole Nambucca Valley community.

With a \$38,443 FRRR Investing in Rural Community Futures grant, funded by VFFF, plus support from local Facilitators and access to a local not-for-profit network, they hired and trained two Gumbaynggirr people as trainees. On-the-job learning, coupled with mentoring from experienced project managers and support in their culture from the custodial Elders, meant they developed skills needed to take on overseeing development of a complex community garden project.

This initiative is helping to connect young Gumbaynggirr people to Country, strengthen a sense of community and build the skills of local community members, leading to meaningful employment and freedom from welfare dependence, which contributes to community wellbeing. Importantly, it will contribute to a healthy lifestyle - culturally, physically and collectively - and a stronger community. [Read more.](#)



Social enterprise creates jobs, addresses inequity

In remote communities, lack of access to washing machines and detergent can affect the health and wellbeing of local people, as well as create barriers to education and employment opportunities.

To address this issue, The North Australian Aboriginal Charitable Trust, Aboriginal Investment Group's charitable arm, developed the Remote Laundries Project, a social enterprise driven by Aboriginal people.

A \$10,000 Strengthening Rural Communities grant, funded by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, allowed them to put down the deposit on a washing machine for the Remote Laundry in Yarralin, an NT community of 380 people.

This facility will do much more than simply clean clothes. Each site generates five jobs, is 100% locally staffed and operates 38 hours per week across six days. The many benefits of a simple idea led by community will continue to be realised as this project becomes established. [Read more.](#)



Vocal Locals speak up on mental health

An insight that rural people are willing to talk about mental health issues, if given the chance, coupled with research indicating social networks can drive behaviour change, prompted the University of South Australia to work with locals to initiate the Vocal Locals campaign in Loxton, SA.

With a \$148,250 grant via the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund's Networks to Build Drought Resilience program, they set out to empower community members to talk about mental health and support each other through their social networks.

"Vocal Locals" were trained in person and using ifarmwell modules, and supported by a wellbeing coach, to build their awareness of mental health and free support tools. They then shared their experiences via social media and a multi-faceted communications campaign. The outcome was more conversations and direct engagement in mental health and wellbeing activities, and a more drought resilient community. [Read more.](#)



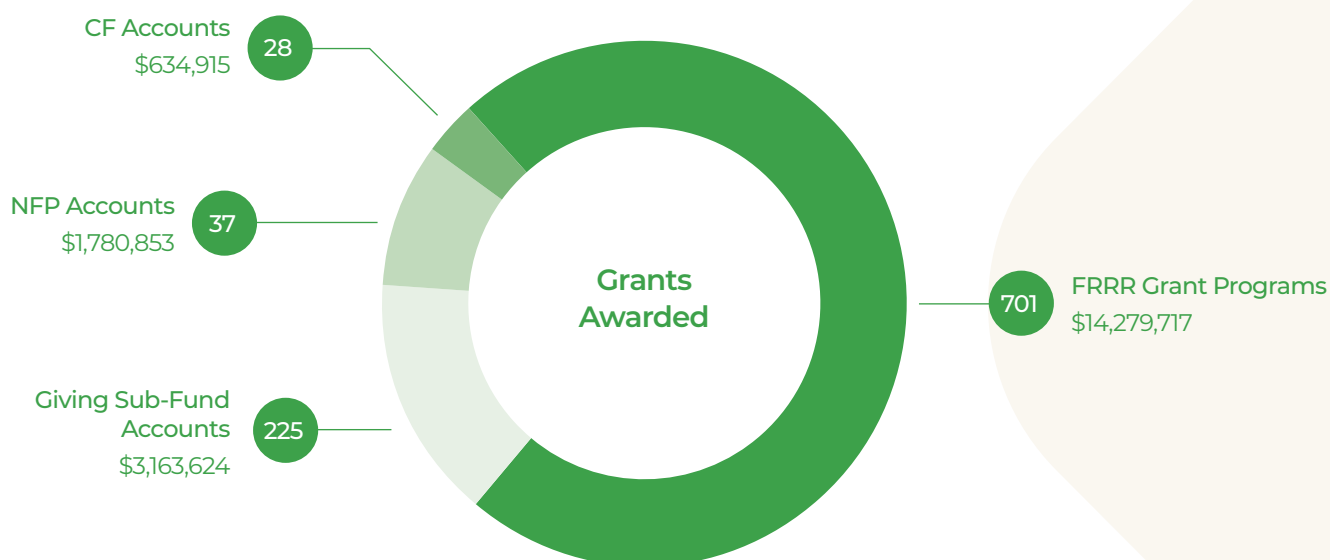
The Numbers

Despite disruptions this year, our **aspirations to grow investment in the know-how of people and vitality of places, to increase geographic equity in access to philanthropy and to accelerate community-led resilience** in the face of climate change, continued to gain momentum. While initiatives such as establishing a WA Advisory Board and moving to a new office were delayed by COVID, we saw continued investment in our corpus and made significant strides in our Insights and Learning program of work. The Board also committed to **investment in our internal capacity** to ensure our plans are delivered effectively and to support and sustain growth and continuous improvement.

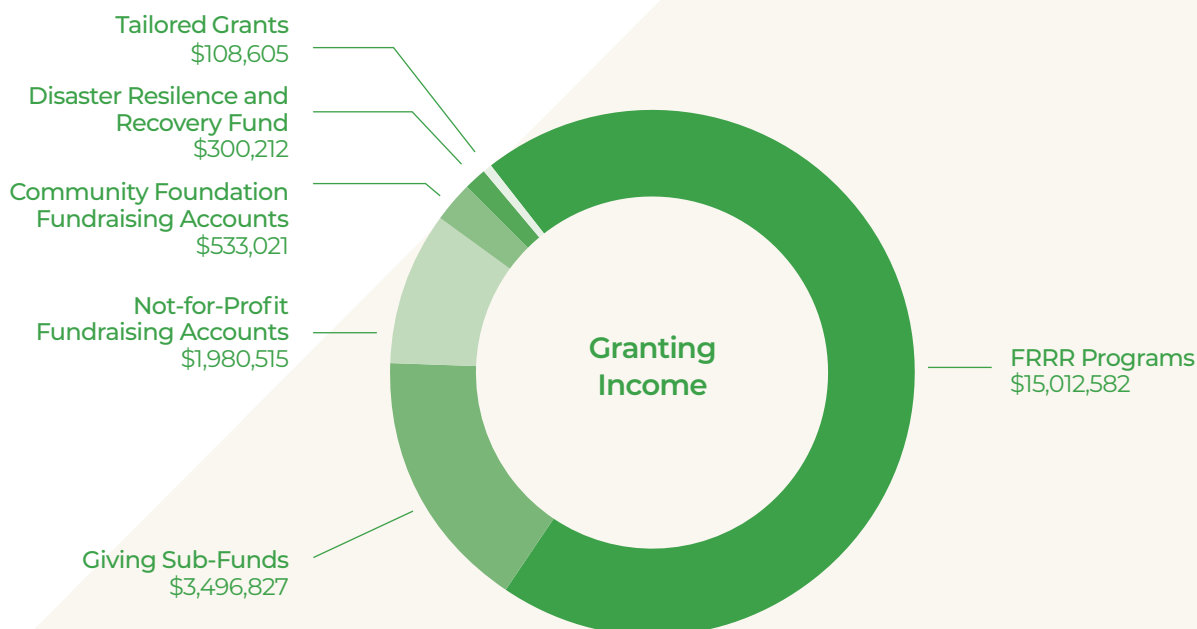
We also continued to **scale our resilience and field-building programs**, with the Disaster Resilient: Future Ready rollout in Victoria and confirmation of funding to implement it in Queensland's Burnett region next financial year. Thanks to the Australian Government, through the Future Drought Fund, we also secured \$19.6 million to enhance resilience in agricultural communities prone to drought. Planning was completed this year and implementation will get underway next financial year.

Our **place-based capacity building work** continued too, with eight communities in regional NSW participating in the Investing in Rural Community Futures program. This model continues to evolve and we were pleased to secure funding to tailor it to support the Bega Valley, which was affected by the 2019/20 Black Summer bushfires.

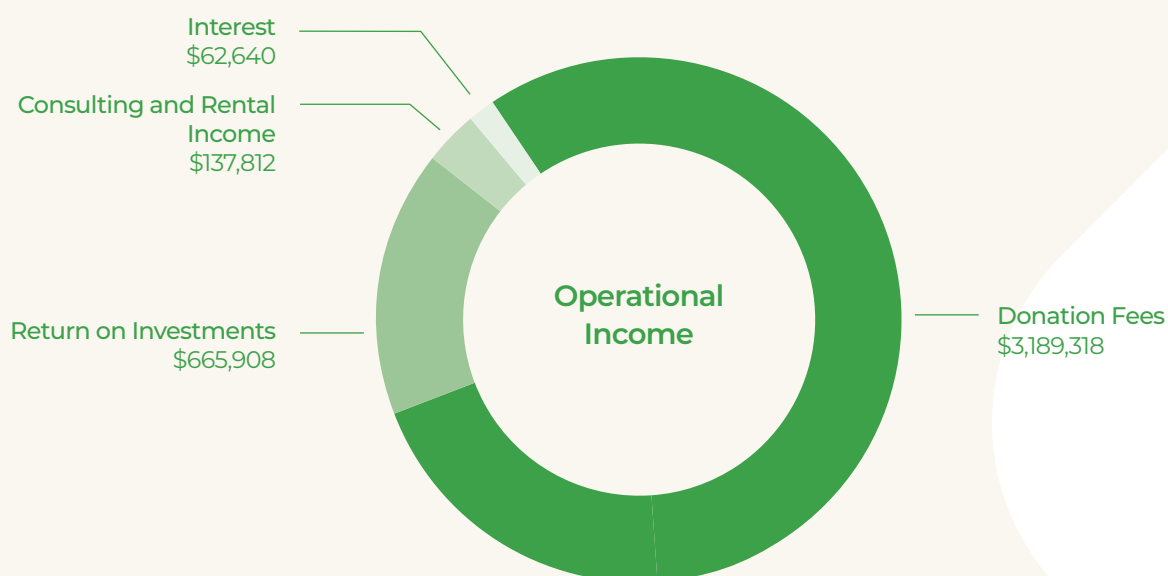
Thanks to our established partners, coupled with support for our flood recovery appeal and new granting partnerships, including the Australian Government, Nutrien Ag Solutions, Suncorp and the NSW Government, we **exceeded our granting target** of \$17.5 million, awarding more than **\$19.8 million via 991 grants, benefitting 526 unique postcodes**.



The granting and capacity building activities we undertake are only possible thanks to the generous support of our donor partners. We **received \$21.4 million in donations**, via more than **2,300 donations**, the largest of which was \$3.3 million from the Australian Government. The median donation was \$50, reinforcing the collective impact that even small donations can have. The bulk of these funds went toward either core or donor-advised programs. Thank you to every one of our supporters. They are too many to name here, but you can see a list on our website, at frrr.org.au/giving/donors.



FRRR's **operations** are funded through **investment returns, contributions from donations and grants, and occasional consulting** projects. Most operating income (\$3.2M) was received from donations and grants, which enables us to **support and engage with grantees** and applicants and undertake the **due diligence** necessary to ensure that our donors' generous contributions get to where they are of most value. This component varies from program to program.



As at 30 June 2022 we had **net assets** of \$30.6M. This includes the main **corpus**, which was valued at **\$13.6M** – down 6.61% on the prior year, due to the tumultuous market conditions. Despite this, under the watchful eye of our investment advisors, Koda Capital, it still returned \$665,908, contributing 23% toward our core operating costs.

FRRR's Investment Policy reflects the ethical and impact requirements to not knowingly invest in an organisation that operates at the expense of the environment, human rights, the public safety, and the communities in which the organisation conducts its operations or the dignity of its employees. We prefer investments that benefit regional and rural Australia and align with FRRR's strategic aims, which includes impact investments.

The [Disaster Resilience and Recovery Fund](#), which we launched in 2019, stood at \$4.5M, a decline of 3.59% on the prior year, reflecting volatility in financial markets. Pleasingly, the Fund attracted further donations of \$300,212 during the year.

We made our first distributions from this fund this reporting year, with three grants totalling \$50,000 supporting drought resilience, building future capacity and an online community forum and information hub. We plan to make a further \$200,000 in distributions this coming year, for long-term recovery and future preparedness.

Grant & Develop

Thanks to the generous support of our donor partners, **we awarded \$19.8 million** (FY21: \$19.7M) via **991 grants** (FY21: 917), from **1,971 requests** (FY21: 2,041). For every dollar we granted, an **additional \$1.54 was generated in-kind and in cash** contributions, meaning the **total value of projects supported was more than \$50 million**. Our grants represented 39% of the total project value (FY21: 43%), but we funded 97% of the funds requested by successful applicants.

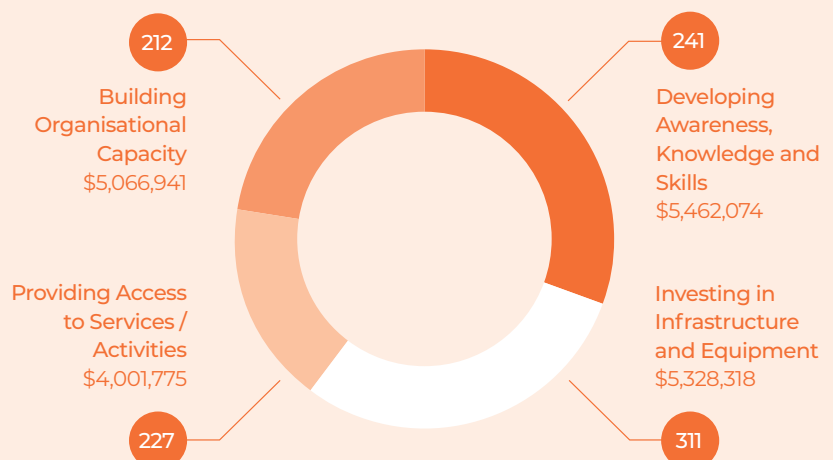
Total requests were down slightly, compared to FY21. This decline is most likely due to a combination of **volunteer fatigue**, **COVID restricting community activities and bushfire recovery** slowing. However, we funded a higher percentage of eligible applications (56%), up from 50% compared to last year.

Most grants were via FRRR's core grant programs but around a quarter were via **Giving Sub-Funds**, where we work in partnership with specific donors to support either a particular region or address a particular issue. FRRR's flagship program – **Strengthening Rural Communities** – had the largest number of distributions, supporting 361 projects with nearly \$4.2 million in grants.

Change Mechanism

In terms of what the grants funded, it was relatively evenly spread across all four change mechanisms.

The most funding went toward developing awareness, knowledge and skills, but the most grants went toward infrastructure and equipment.



Grants to Prepare or Recover

Two thirds of funding – more than \$12.3 million – was for disaster preparedness and recovery projects. Nearly half of that was for planning or active mitigation activities, with a large focus on drought preparedness, particularly through the Future Drought Fund's Networks to Build Drought Resilience program. This alone accounted for nearly \$4.5 million in grants.

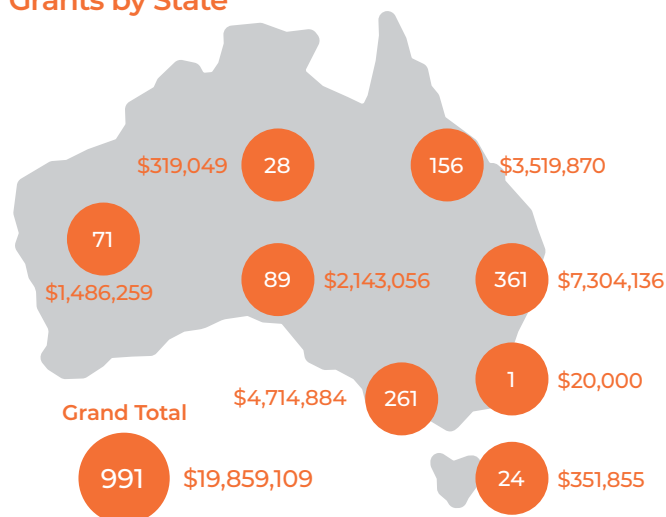


Back to School for Barossa Valley kids

When drought and then the COVID pandemic hit the Barossa Valley in SA, many families found themselves under immense financial pressure. With a lack of tourism and wine exports, many people lost their jobs.

To help some vulnerable families, Foundation Barossa partnered with FRRR to distribute Back to School vouchers. Each \$50 voucher can be used for school supplies. The Foundation distributed 550 vouchers across 13 schools, funded by the Fire Fight Australia Fund and a private donor. This extra support meant that children have a better chance at finishing school and breaking the cycle of disadvantage. Many schools reported an increase in attendance and retention once a child had received a voucher. [Read more.](#)

Grants by State



Our grants were widespread, benefitting 526 unique postcodes across all states and territories. In line with our strategy to increase our funding into WA, SA, NT and TAS, we saw Western Australia receive a substantially greater percentage of the national funding (7% of total grants, and nearly double the prior year). Head to frrr.org.au/ar22 to see a map and details of all projects funded.



Grants by Remoteness

	Grants	Awarded	% of Total
Outer Regional	378	\$8,387,261	42.23%
Inner Regional	425	\$6,668,556	33.58%
Very Remote	77	\$1,911,630	9.63%
Remote	82	\$1,485,790	7.48%
Major Cities	29	\$1,405,872	7.08%
Grand Total	991	\$19,859,109	100.00%

Connecting and Supporting Communities

FRRR offers more than money to community groups, spending time building capacity in communities. While COVID affected our ability to engage face-to-face in communities for much of this year, we stayed connected through online grantseeker workshops and regular phone calls and emails. When restrictions lifted in between lockdowns, the team took every opportunity we could to get back to community, in person. We managed to visit every state at least once, although we didn't make it to the NT.



Unique website views
314,256 (FY21: 170,880)



NSW received the most funding of any state (37% of total funds) with more than half supporting disaster response or preparedness. Investing in Rural Community Futures made up 21% of the distributions (\$1.5M) going toward NFP capacity building in six communities. Fundraising Account distributions totalled \$1.1M, while a further \$837,152 was awarded through Investing in Not-for-Profit Capacity; COVID Regional Community Support; and the Yulgilbar Foundation Fund.

361 Grants

\$7,304,136



Creativity rises from the ashes



Mooral Creek was devastated by the 2019/20 Black Summer bushfires but the Hall & Progress Association Committee was determined to find a way for people to come together to support one another, to heal and develop new skills.

Using a \$25,000 Strengthening Rural Communities grant, funded by the Fire Fight Australia Fund, they organised Creative Spark – an arts project. Despite local flooding and COVID restrictions, they ran 55 sessions, from dance and painting to photography and music. The project culminated in an uplifting Showcase event that celebrated the community's collective achievements, and several activities continued during 2022. The workshops helped locals work through the trauma and experiences of living through the bushfires, re-sparking a vibrant energy in the community.



Offering support & reducing stigma

TenterLIFE Suicide Prevention Network operates in the drought, fire and COVID-affected community of Tenterfield in northern NSW. They used a \$25,000 SRC grant, funded by a private donor, to connect the community and reduce stigma. A series of community events, including walks, shared meals and sing-alongs, and mental health first-aid training, encouraged people to speak up and reach out.

"Giving voice to their thoughts and expressing their feelings aloud, knowing someone is there to listen, can be truly lifesaving."

Lexie Sherren, Chairperson



Ngulla connects community

After drought and bushfires impacted Bombala, the local Preschool initiated a community-based urban and Indigenous agriculture project and recovery program, known as Ngulla (plant-based food in the language of the Ngarigo region).

Taking a highly collaborative approach, they made amazing progress on the community space, despite COVID restrictions, building resilience and strengthening intergenerational connections along the way. They received a \$15,000 Strengthening Rural Communities grant, funded by Jeunesse Kids Foundation.

"The project has been viewed a considerable success with construction activities, social / cultural events, seasonal planting and systems-integration unfolding ahead of schedule and beyond the standard expected in the drafting of the project."

Daniel Bakker, Project Manager, Bombala Preschool

VIC groups were awarded just over a quarter of all grants, with most helping build community resilience or develop organisational resilience and capacity (41% and 21% respectively). The Grants for Resilience & Wellness (GR&W) program closed and the final round of GR&W Kinglake will be awarded in FY23, marking the end of more than 13 years supporting recovery following the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires.

261 Grants

\$4,714,884

Cycling without age

On the Southwest coast, the residents of Portland and beyond are enjoying the 'wind in their hair' thanks to Cycling Without Age (CWA) Portland and their specialised bikes called trishaws.

In partnership with the local Rotary Club, CWA successfully applied for a \$9,000 Strengthening Rural Communities (SRC) grant,

funded by the Ian Rollo Currie Estate Foundation, to purchase a custom-built trailer so they could service other parts of the Glenelg Shire. CWA has created a safe and enjoyable way for elderly people and people living with disabilities to reconnect to their community and fight loneliness and social isolation.



Brass connections

A \$5,000 grant through the Gardiner Dairy Foundation Community Grants program has left a legacy in more ways than one. The Wonthaggi Citizens Band used the funds to introduce 10 young people to the benefits of music, providing subsidised music education on brass instruments and giving them an opportunity that they might otherwise not experience.

Of the participants, eight have continued playing, building strong connections that helped them through COVID. Students are also more engaged in learning, there are connections across three generations and the community is more resilient.



Bruarong remembers & connects

The Bruarong Community Centre in Victoria's north east is a central meeting space for the region, which was severely affected by the 2009 Victorian bushfires.

The local volunteer committee saw an opportunity arising from bushfire renewal to strengthen and enhance community engagement and understanding of the area's history, at the same time as improving the acoustics and appeal of the Centre.

The hard work and enthusiasm of the community and volunteer committee was supported by a \$9,750 Grant for Resilience & Wellness, funded by the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund. They undertook research, collated images and curated objects, documents and stories, then designed interpretative panels explaining the multi-faceted history of the community, strengthening community spirit, creating strong connections and reducing social isolation along the way through several community events.



There was an 11% increase in the funds awarded in QLD. Two thirds supported disaster recovery or preparedness projects (\$2.3 million). Nearly 44% of these grants (56% of funds awarded) went toward infrastructure and equipment, while 27% (22 projects, \$435,157) improved access to services or activities.

156 Grants

\$3,519,870

Supporting female-owned businesses in Goondiwindi



Macintyre Ag Alliance in Goondiwindi works collaboratively with the community to create healthy and stable land that can be passed onto future generations.

With the help of a \$10,365 FRRR grant through the ANZ Seeds of Renewal program, they were able to facilitate a series of workshops

focused on upskilling regional businesswomen.

As a result, a group of likeminded women were able to come together and support one another. Everyone who attended commented that they walked away feeling empowered and motivated.

Outback Festival returns to Winton

After a year that would be remembered for masks, lockdowns and vaccine rollouts, the biennial Winton Outback Festival returned with a bang in 2021. With the help of a \$45,000 FRRR grant funded by the Australian Government through the Tackling Tough Times Together program, Outback Festival Inc was able to reinvigorate the Queensland outback with a sense of connectedness, not to mention a much-needed influx of revenue, with more than \$1.2 million being spent by attendees during the five days of quintessential Aussie fun.

Creative bushfire recovery in the Scenic Rim

The Little Pocket Association is in Beechmont, in the Scenic Rim. In the wake of the 2019/20 Black Summer bushfires, they undertook a 24-month community-led creative recovery project with the help of a \$25,000 grant from the News Corp Bushfire Fund program.

Community workshops, events and collaborations brought together local artists, Indigenous Elders, Scenic Rim counsellors and fire-affected residents. Still a work in progress, it will culminate in a series of murals and a memorial adorning the community, representing the community's shared experience of the bushfires.

The project has led to many moments full of reflection, self-care, deep connection, healing and learning, with new connections and friendships creating strong foundations. As a result, a sense of belonging and connectedness has been restored.



Applications and grants awarded increased in SA, up 5.72% on FY21. This was c. 11% of funding awarded overall. Nearly 70% supported projects related to drought through either the Future Drought Fund's Networks to Build Drought Resilience (averaging \$71,000 per grant) or the Tackling Tough Times Together program. Around 56% of these grants targeted building community resilience.

89 Grants

\$2,143,056



Bute's beautiful silo



In Bute, SA (population 250), below average rainfall and ongoing drought had left the community feeling under pressure. To stimulate

the economy and increase morale, Barunga West Council and Bute Onwards 2000 Progress Committee secured a \$49,915 Tackling Tough Times Together grant for the Bute "Beaut" Silo Art project.

The community was involved heavily right from the start, with meetings and surveys undertaken to decide what to paint. The project was delayed until early 2022 due to COVID but since its completion, there have been significant benefits for the town, with increased visitors generating much-needed income. Residents also have a renewed sense of pride and enthusiasm for their beautiful home.



Responders learn Auslan

With more disasters affecting communities, clear communication is key to being prepared. But for people living with a disability, it can be tricky if information isn't accessible.

To ensure those living with deafness can also be forewarned and supported if needed, Deaf Can:Do developed the Talking Hands for Frontline Responders project.

Using a \$25,000 grant from the News Corp Bushfire Fund online training was developed, teaching basic Auslan skills and other ways to communicate effectively with the deaf community.



New wheels deliver more than meals

The not-for-profit Morgan Volunteer Support Group delivers Meals on Wheels in and around Morgan, in the Riverland region. The service is invaluable for older people, providing both food and social contact for many people.

The Support Group needed to purchase a new vehicle or the service would likely fold. With significant local fundraising support and a \$10,000 SRC grant, funded by Kellogg Australia Charitable Foundation, they bought a second-hand car. It has plenty of room for hot boxes, baskets and eskies, and customers are now assured of an ongoing service. There are also plans to offer transport solutions to the community, raising additional funds for the Support Group, when it's not delivering meals.



Our efforts to invest more in WA paid off, with a 95% year-on-year increase in funding awarded (7.5% of national funding). Most grants were via our Strengthening Rural Communities program (25; \$210,393), although the Future Drought Fund's Networks to Build Drought Resilience program accounted for 54% of funds awarded, via just 16 grants.

71 Grants

\$1,486,259

NEO Learning Project

Over the years, Big hART has proven its ability to engage and work across the Roebourne community in the Pilbara, using the arts as a catalyst for change. In 2020, they used a \$10,000 Westpac Foundation Community Grant to train and create paid employment for four young adults to deliver a digital education resource, live into classrooms nationally. They were mentored by professional producers and creative industry practitioners and the outcomes exceeded expectations, with incredible results for some of the trainees.



"Being employed as a trainee with Big hART was a great experience for me as I gained a lot from supporting children and being a mentor and leader for them... this work helped me learn my identity and aspirations. It has made me look for other challenges and opportunities in my life."

Simara

Cooling The Exchange!

The Exchange is a multipurpose community and visitor centre in Carnamah, north of Perth. Run by North Midlands Project Inc, the heritage building is used weekly by local community groups and hosts workshops and events.

While people loved The Exchange, high temperatures rendered the space unusable for months at a time. However, a \$10,000 Strengthening Rural Communities grant, funded by Australia Post, helped transform the space, enabling installation of two air conditioners.

Clearing tracks, rebuilding community

Ngadju Conservation Aboriginal Corporation (NCAC) focuses on conservation and land management opportunities and assists in building community capacity to achieve them.

After the 2019/20 bushfire season devastated around one million hectares of Country, NCAC used a \$25,000 Strengthening Rural Communities grant, funded by IKEA Australia, for a hydraulic tipping trailer to be used with their tractor. This enabled them to clear tracks, allowing access to repair and protect old growth forests and spiritual sites.

"We are proud that the Ngadju Rangers can now access their Country for cultural burning, and they can use machinery to make fire breaks. The project has assisted in rebuilding the Ngadju community and provided healing for community who are mourning the loss of Country."

Helen Langley, CEO



Applications from TAS increased by 42.5%. Forty percent of funding was via one Future Drought Fund's Networks to Build Drought Resilience grant (\$140,000). Half of the grants were via the Strengthening Rural Communities program, and 65% of all projects focused on emergency recovery or preparedness. Developing awareness, knowledge and skills was the most common approach, with 47% of projects targeted to building community resilience.

24 Grants

\$351,855



Mapping Furneaux's geology

The Furneaux Historical Research Association in Whitemark on Flinders Island, Tasmania is connecting people to the Furneaux region landscape. The remote island community is made up of beautiful, rugged vistas.

Now, thanks to a \$24,924 Strengthening Rural Communities grant from FRRR, funded by a private donor, they're extending their GeoTrail project, helping locals and visitors to discover more unusual and striking rock formations that tell the story of how the islands originated and evolved.

"We are very proud of the fact that the GeoTrail is bringing our local community and those who visit Flinders Island closer to the geology and the environment around them. It's so rewarding to hear people talking about rocks!"

Dr Dale Williams, Project Manager



Huon Valley's mental health community response

Following several suicides in the region, Huon Valley Council used a \$9,255 grant through the In a Good Place program, supported by CCI Giving, to reduce the stigma of suicide by encouraging conversations about mental health.

They worked closely with the Rural Alive and Well program to run mental health first aid training and workshops for people supporting family members who self-harm. The community now has the confidence and resilience to better support those struggling with their mental health.



A mobile boost in Freycinet

The Freycinet Volunteer Marine Rescue Association, in Swansea on Tasmania's east coast, could only access mobile phone coverage by going outside its building. A combination of poor line of sight to the nearest Telstra tower and a steel building blocked the already weak mobile signal.

A \$2,244 grant from FRRR's Strengthening Rural Communities program, funded by a private donor, supported the installation of a mobile phone booster.

There's now 100% signal strength inside the building, providing a safety net for volunteers working onsite and enhancing community safety, as information on emergency situations can now be accessed without delay.

MARINE RESCUE

While NT grants declined year-on-year, the importance of flexible funding was evident, with 75% of grants awarded via the Strengthening Rural Communities program (21, \$199,458). Isolation, inequality in access to services, and food security issues were exacerbated by COVID lockdowns, and community groups responded with innovative projects aimed at contributing to a culturally vibrant community (25% of grants) and developing organisational resilience and capacity (21% of grants).

28 Grants

\$319,049



Strengthen pride, strengthen youth

Despite its idyllic location, Nauiyu experiences alcohol and drug misuse, yet there is strong community support for culturally appropriate and real solutions that also build local capacity and leadership.

Red Dust's Local Drug Action team coordinated the Community Art Collaboration project with Green River Aboriginal Corporation, Merrepen Arts and Ironbark. They're using a \$5,000 Strengthening Rural Communities grant, co-funded by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation & Pinnacle Charitable Foundation, to create a diversion program celebrating cultural identity and pride to connect and engage the

vulnerable community. The three large murals will not only create beautiful public spaces and bring the dreaming of the Nauiyu community to life, but also support the health, wellbeing and future opportunities for local youth.



Resilient Educators

Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School (LACS) serves a 600-strong community south east of Alice Springs. Isolation and the challenges of living and working in a community context mean that school staff need lots of support. LACS used a \$10,000 Strengthening Rural Communities grant, funded by the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation, to run the Resilient Educators Program.

The outcome has been an improvement on the health and wellbeing of the whole community and they continue to come together to support one another in challenging times.



Addressing division through dance

GUTS Dance Central Australia, the only contemporary dance organisation within 1,500 km, saw an opportunity to celebrate local diverse cultures and build social cohesion in Alice Springs through dance. With a \$9,800 Strengthening Rural Communities grant, the team delivered a Community Dance Day (CDD) as part of SPRING.LOADED.DANCE, their

inaugural contemporary dance festival. CDD included 50 dancers from nine diverse groups showcasing their practices to the public (and getting paid!).

"We see dance as a universal language that crosses cultural boundaries. People who are part of these dance groups are often newly arrived in Australia and they find cultural connection within the dance groups or are First Nations Australians on whose land we live, and whose culture needs to be seen, respected and learned about."

Madeleine Krenek, Co-Artistic Director



"Through the support of FRRR, we are truly changing lives, and providing hope and a more positive outlook for Inverell's Youth. It is a journey that we and the youth of Inverell have just begun, and we are extremely grateful to FRRR for providing the platform from which we can take off."

Inverell Community Youth Centre,
TTTT Grant Recipient



THANK YOU

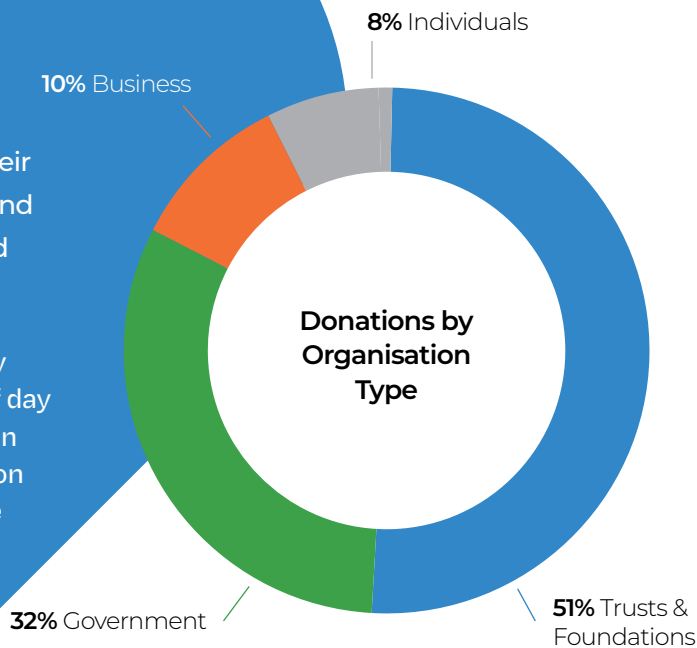


Leverage & Broker

Once again, Governments, businesses, individuals and philanthropic entities with a common goal of strengthening remote, rural and regional communities trusted FRRR to help them reach their goals by harnessing our special tax status, reach and networks. Together they donated \$21.4 million and we greatly appreciate this support.

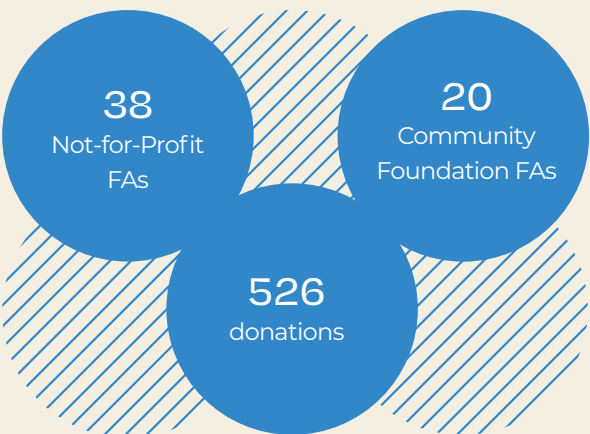
"It is an excellent service that FRRR provides. Many projects, such as this one, wouldn't see the light of day without your generous philanthropy, and once given the chance to make a start, these projects can go on to great success and have a positive impact on the lives of families living in the bush. Well done."

Isolated Children's Parents' Association - Port Augusta branch

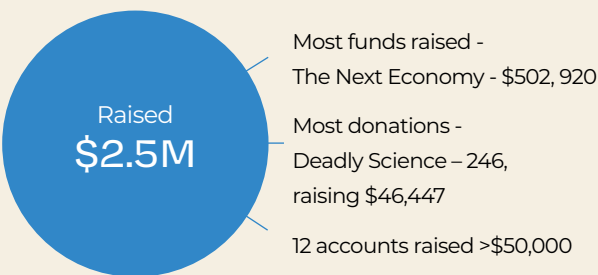


Fundraising Accounts

Fundraising Accounts (FAs) support projects that local community groups prioritise to strengthen their people and place, or to support disaster recovery and preparedness.



7 new accounts this year



Supporting the Northern Rivers

The Northern Rivers Community Foundation holds a Fundraising Account with FRRR with two focus areas – a general Community Fund, which they opened in 2017, and the Resilience & Regeneration Fund established in 2020 to respond to disasters, including COVID. To date, they've raised \$845,927 and in 2022, distributed more than \$162,000 to support local initiatives..

"The ability to fundraise to support NRCF's community impact and grants team has been essential to achieve impact in the community."

Sam Henderson, CEO, NRCF



Ourschool connects students and alumni

Since 2019, Ourschool has created school-based alumni programs to inspire and support students. They've partnered with FRRR to fundraise, using an NFP Fundraising Account to offer tax deductibility for donations so they can deliver the program in more public high schools in Victoria. The funds raised build program capacity and increase the number of regional schools receiving assistance from Ourschool. And it's working, with the program operating in 14 schools, up from 10 in 2021.

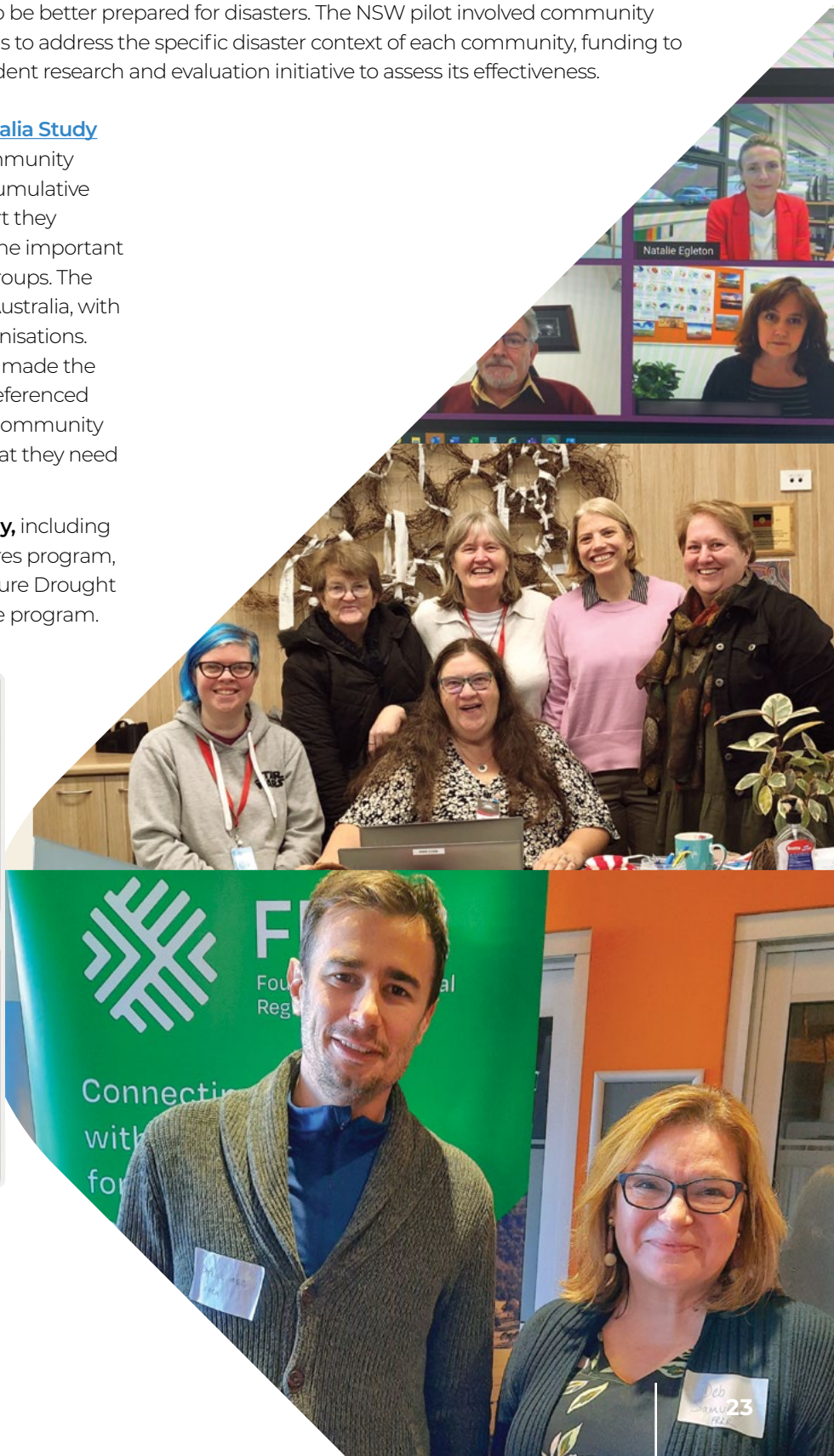
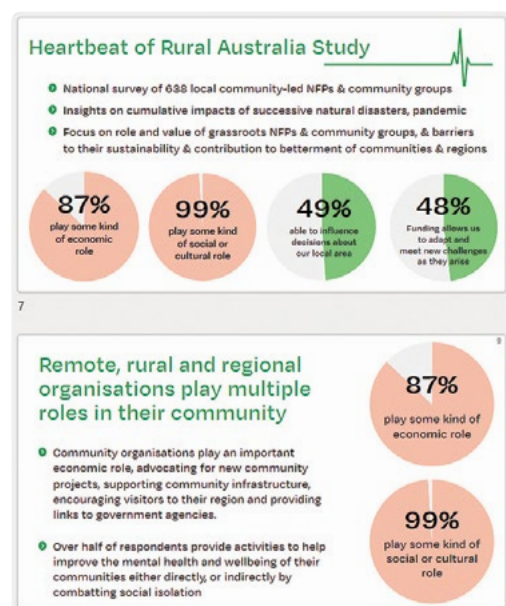
Insights & Learning

Collaboration is key to achieving meaningful change. **Sharing our knowledge and insights** – connecting policymakers, communities and funders with ideas, knowledge and lived experience that inspire and encourage new or better approaches – is an important element of our strategy. No matter the forum, we are always **advocating for remote, rural and regional communities**. Despite COVID restrictions, we still contributed to several significant panels and forums and connected with community groups right across the country.

This year we released two flagship reports which have informed our work and that of others. [The Get Ready Disaster Resilient: Future Ready \(DR:FR\) pilot evaluation](#) reported on a three-year applied research project designed to understand what it takes for communities to be better prepared for disasters. The NSW pilot involved community consultation, identification of locally-led ideas to address the specific disaster context of each community, funding to implement the ideas, and a formal independent research and evaluation initiative to assess its effectiveness.

FRRR initiated the [Heartbeat of Rural Australia Study](#) to provide an opportunity for grassroots community groups to have their say on the impacts of cumulative disasters, including COVID, and what support they needed. The report also sought to quantify the important economic, social and cultural role of these groups. The survey received 638 responses from across Australia, with 59% of respondents from volunteer-led organisations. Partnering with Seer Data and Analytics, we made the full dataset available online. It can be cross-referenced with other publicly available data, enabling community groups to better advocate for the support that they need to survive.

Further evaluations are currently underway, including into the Investing in Rural Community Futures program, Tackling Tough Times Together, and the Future Drought Fund's Networks to Build Drought Resilience program.





Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal

Dja Dja Wurrung Country

PO Box 41
Bendigo VIC 3552
ABN: 27 091 810 589
info@frrr.org.au
Ph: 03 5430 2399
www.frrr.org.au

Report written by JAW Communications,
designed by Twenty20 Graphics

Bute's "beaut" silo in South Australia.
Photo by Scott Nagy