

# Investing in Not-for-Profit Capacity in Regional NSW

## Glen Innes



Investing in Not-for-Profit Capacity in Regional NSW was a place-based program that ran in three communities affected by the Black Summer bushfires. Local NFPs came together to identify solutions to address diverse needs based around four strategic pillars: people, systems, strategies and sector efficiencies. This extract from the Community Insights Report focuses on Glen Innes.

### Community consultation workshop

Ten participants from organisations representing Glen Innes community groups, including local Council, joined an online workshop in May 2021. They discussed their resourcing and capacity needs with a goal to better respond and thrive in the face of current challenges and seed ideas for solutions to local issues.

While a small group, the messages and local priorities were clear and consistent with the themes raised in additional one-on-one community outreach:

- Governance upskilling, including succession planning, strategic planning and compliance;
- Volunteering, specifically recruitment and retention and strategies to combat low engagement in volunteering roles and availability;
- Marketing and awareness, particularly developing skills in social media and website development and monitoring; and
- Fundraising for projects, activities and operations.



# Activities

In July 2022, Glen Innes community groups were invited to attend two capacity building workshops arranged by local organisation GLENRAC. In parallel, GLENRAC was delivering their INFPC-funded project with the aim of improving the capacity of NFP organisations through a series of workshops and wrap around support, so they were the ideal partner on the ground to arrange for these additional sessions. The workshop topics identified through local consultation were:

## 1. Grant writing tips and tricks

Thirty people attended this workshop, demonstrating strong interest in improving capacity in this area to help them raise funds. Participants reported a significant improvement in their knowledge of, and confidence in, grant writing after attending the session. Overall, they highly valued the opportunity.

## 2. External communications and marketing, including effective use of social media

Local leaders indicated that many people in the region had limited digital literacy skills and know-how to navigate and harness social media for the benefit of their group. Improved skills in this area would likely translate positively into growing awareness of their activities and in turn attract support and volunteers. Attendees found the workshop very worthwhile leaving with improved knowledge, confidence and offering an average rating of 9/10 across 21 participants.

The 51 people who attended the two workshops were affiliated with 111 community groups across the region, ensuring the learnings from the workshops reached many corners of the community and a diversity of organisations.

*“Not only the education aspect, but the actual attendance and networking opportunities have brought together a diverse section of the community serving on a wide range of different interest groups, who now understand much better other roles in the community as well as making it easier and not so confronting for people to take on roles in the numerous community organisations.”*



# Grants awarded

Organisation	Project and Description	Grant
Arts North West Incorporated	<p><b>Creative Arts Recovery Expertise (CARE)</b>  <b>Building capacity for Arts North West and its arts community to support best practice project delivery in mental health and creative disaster recovery.</b></p> <p>Boost capacity and awareness in mental health and creative disaster recovery of Arts North West staff and the Glen Innes arts community through targeted training sessions.</p>	\$13,500
GLENRAC Incorporated	<p><b>Creating Confident &amp; Capable Committees for the Future - Glen Innes</b></p> <p>Build the capacity of not-for-profit organisations in the Glen Innes region through a series of workshops, one-on-one support, access to information, tools and resources.</p>	\$126,500



# Grants in action

Grant Amount:  
**\$13,500**

## Organisation Details:

Arts North West Inc

## Project Title:

Creative Arts Recovery Expertise (CARE): Building Capacity for Arts North West and its Arts Community to Support Best Practice Project Delivery in Mental Health and Creative Disaster Recovery.

## Project Locations:

Glen Innes NSW

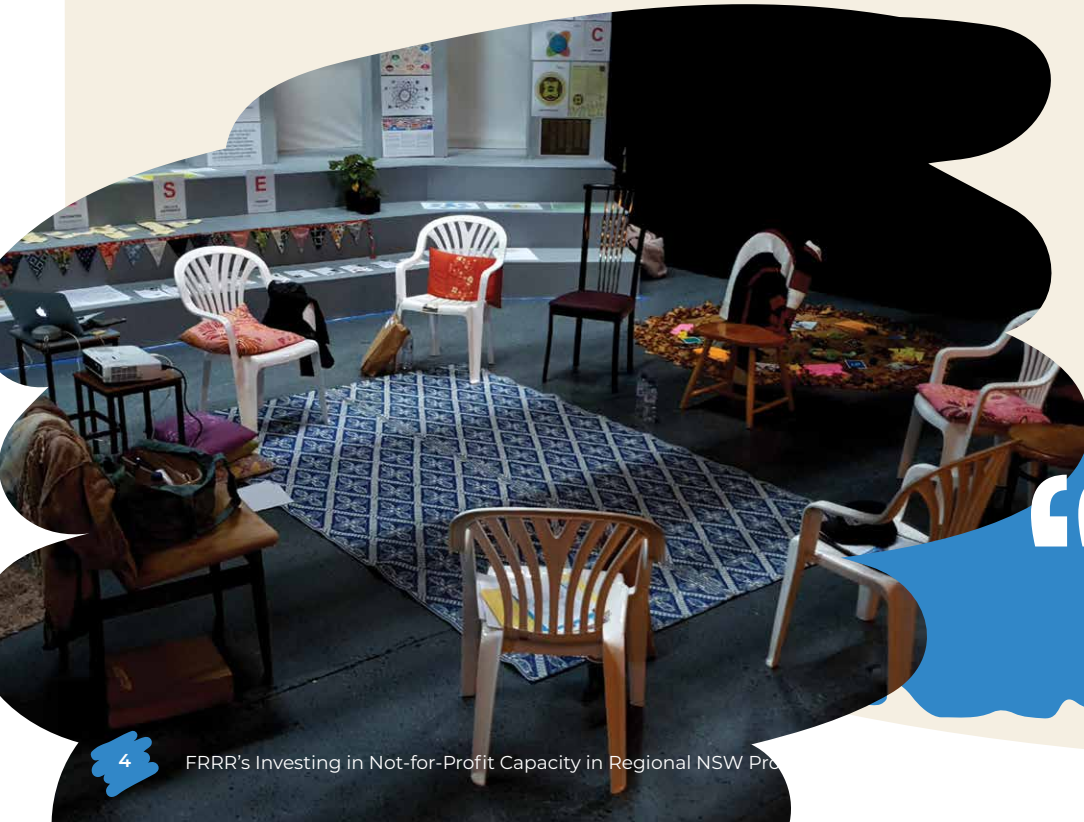
Arts North West Inc (ANW) facilitates the development of arts and cultural projects and initiatives across the New England North West region. In recent years, their projects have included a focus on mental health, and in some cases, on a creative approach to disaster recovery.

Looking to strengthen its capacity to support best practice project delivery in mental health and creative disaster recovery, ANW utilised FRRR grant funds to deliver the Creative Arts Recovery Expertise (CARE) project. This involved two professional development training programs for ANW staff, Board members and creative practitioners, which were delivered in conjunction with the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMPH / Hunter New England Local Health District) and the Creative Recovery Network (CRN)

The first workshop **Mental Health – Workplace Support** involved a full-day session facilitated by RAMPH and focused on developing participants' skills and knowledge to empathetically and effectively support people experiencing stress and loss, and to identify when to seek further assistance and link with appropriate health services. Participants also learned how to look after their own mental wellbeing to help build greater resilience during tough times.

The second workshop was an immersive three day **Creative Recovery Training** session, delivered by CRN which supported knowledge building and connection into local disaster management people and systems. This program was tailored to Arts North West and framed in partnership with the local First Nations peoples, local stories and cultural context.

These training opportunities provided participants with a better understanding of the disaster context and trauma-informed best practice, building their capacity when working with communities impacted by disaster.



*“Delighted we were finally able to secure Scotia Monkovitch of Creative Recovery Network to come and give ANW some intensive training in how arts can intersect post-disaster. Given the world that we now live in, it is becoming vitally important that arts workers are given the tools to be able to work in areas post-disaster and contribute meaningfully to recovery and resilience.”*

Grant  
Amount:  
\$126,500

**Organisation Details:**

GLENRAC Inc

**Project Title:**

Creating Confident & Capable Committees for the Future – Glen Innes

**Project Location:**

Glen Innes NSW

GLENRAC Incorporated is a community-based organisation focused on helping landowners and the community manage and maintain the natural resource base of the Glen Innes region, leading to a stronger social and productive environment.

Working with a 14-member local advisory group and through local consultation, GLENRAC identified a need to build the capability and capacity of local NFPs in the Glen Innes Severn LGA in NSW. Strengthening local groups would enhance their ability to undertake actions that would achieve their objectives and benefit the broader community.

Delivered mostly during COVID, the multi-part project was coordinated by a local part-time project officer, funded through FRRR, who engaged one-on-one with community groups.

Reviewing the governance needs of NFP groups was a key starting point. GLENRAC developed an online and hardcopy governance checklist that is available as an ongoing resource, as well as undertook one-on-one discussions.

Topics that emerged included how to make the work of committees more efficient and enjoyable, as well as equipping groups with necessary skills, including how to run effective meetings; how to bring groups to life; first aid (four courses were run); and museum display training. The sessions were designed to build the skills and confidence of long-standing committee members, as well as new or potential members.

GLENRAC also engaged an IT specialist to work one-on-one with 12 local NFP groups to identify their IT needs and develop and implement more effective systems for their

organisation. The IT specialist also facilitated access to free or heavily discounted software and services for these groups.

Another stream of work saw them facilitate a two-day strategic planning session. Groups were selected based on the outcomes from their governance health check, the size and reach of their group and engagement with the project more broadly. Leveraging the INFPC funding, these workshops also secured support from the Bushfire Community Recovery & Resilience Fund.

In total, nearly 500 people representing more than 100 local community groups directly benefitted from this project, with thousands more benefitting indirectly. In addition to enhancing governance skills and improving capacity and capability, the project strengthened leadership teams, created community “champions” and enhanced community connectedness.



*“This resulted in a new confidence, knowledge and skills both within individuals, committees and across the community. It also saw committee members feel more confident in taking on leadership roles. This confidence is being reflected in the health of the organisations involved.”*

## Learnings and next steps

For a small community, Glen Innes is home to a diverse array of community groups offering an impressive range of support services, cultural, environmental, sporting, emergency services, wellbeing and special interest groups. The local leaders are passionate, committed and hold strong connections, particularly with two key organisations, being Glen Innes Severn Council and natural resources advisory group GLENRAC.

The outcomes of the INFPC program in Glen Innes were significantly boosted by the funded project delivered by GLENRAC, which was well-aligned to the overall aims and objectives of the broader INFPC program – to build the capacity of locally governed NFP's and community groups to improve resilience and effectively achieve their objectives. In the words of a GLENRAC representative, the combined activities of GLENRAC's project, their deep knowledge of the community, and the INFPC program "brought the community together, brought people together to better their community groups, created a safe space where they

*could upskill, share information, and bring a lot to the table that hasn't been there for the benefit of everyone."* Further they said, "fires, floods, drought have changed our focus from preserving the land to preserving the people. If we don't look after the people, they won't look after the land. We've adjusted to make it work".

Glen Innes' local leaders know what is important to build their capacity and resilience to cope with future shocks. Resourcing to back them and ensure there are people on the ground to lead and maintain momentum is critical. Through their project to build the capacity of local groups, they reflected that "we now recognise the time required in developing slow and considered relationships with potential participants for them to feel comfortable in sharing 'their stories' with external facilitators. In saying this, we believe the hard yards have been done, in an area of community service not previously provided by ourselves or anyone else. In delivering this project we have now created an expectation from community and organisations."

**For more insights,  
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