



Photo credit – Amber Williams Photography

Elevating Community Voices in Recovery: promoting community-led decision- making in allocating recovery funds

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Appeals & Donors



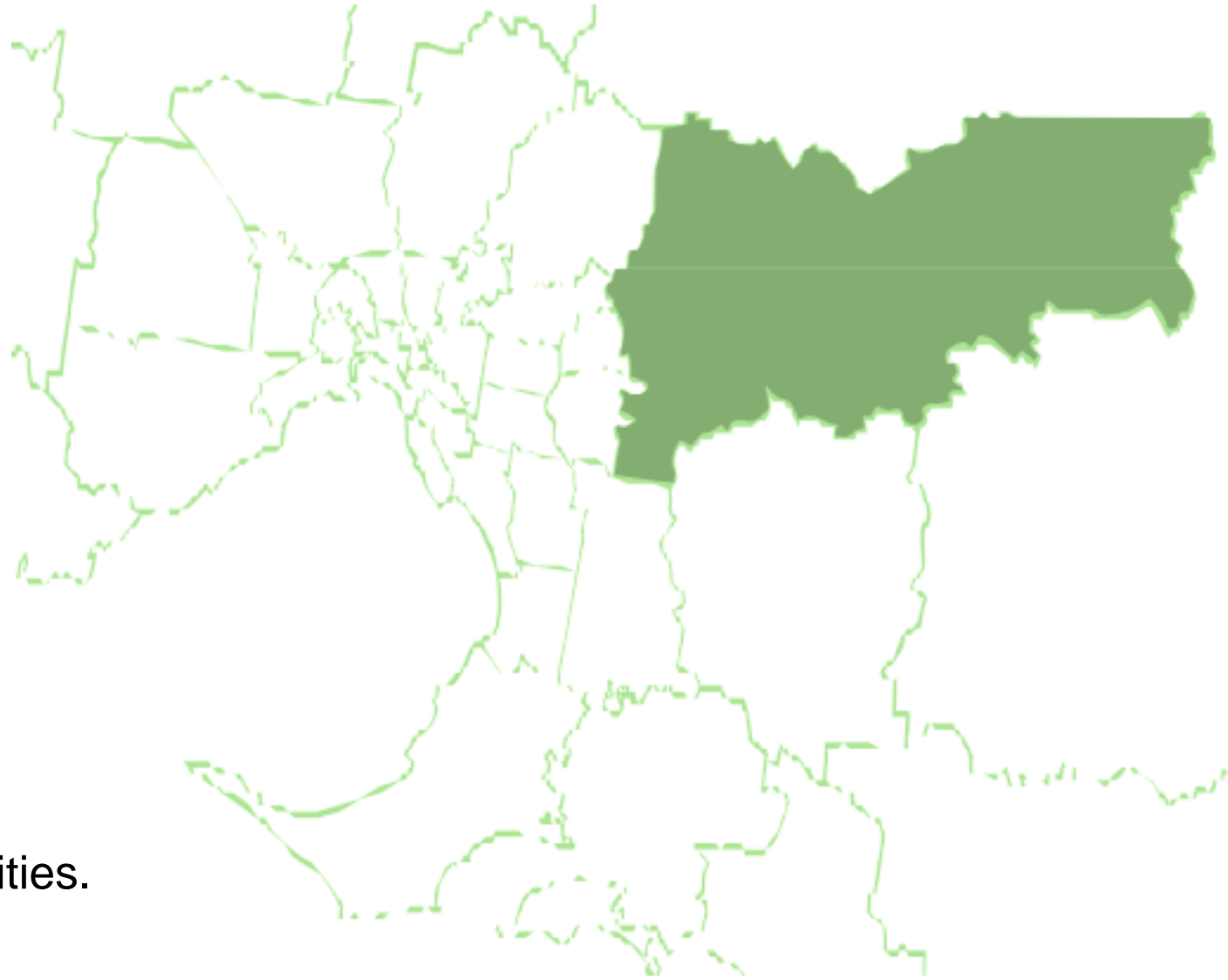
Hills
**Community
Recovery
Committee**

Upper Yarra
**Community
Recovery
Committee**

Urban
**Community
Recovery
Committee**

Valley
**Community
Recovery
Committee**





Land Area
2,500 km²

Residents
161,325

55 Suburb, townships and small communities.

188,000 Hectares of native vegetation.



About the 2021 storms

June 2021

An unprecedented severe weather event on the 9 June 2021:

- Significant storm damage
- 79 homes were deemed uninhabitable
- Wind speeds of over 120km/hr from Southeast
- 25,000 trees fell
- Moderate flooding
- Prolonged power outage – peak of 54,000 residents
- No power - no access to triple zero emergency calls
- No water or septics for others

October 2021

Lockdowns were over and our tourist areas geared up for a busy Melbourne Cup weekend.

- More homes lost

Mount Dandenong Tourist Road

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MAKING SPACE



Prioritising Community Led Recovery

“Empowered local communities and local decision-making by local people should be a fundamental principle for any disaster recovery. There is ample research to support the view that locally led recovery is essential to a community’s long-term recovery.”

Lessons Learned by Community Recovery Committees of the Victorian Bushfires: Advice for Government 2011





Jun 21 – Oct 21

Nov 21 – Feb 22

Mar 22 – Jun 22

Jul 22 – Oct 22

Nov 22 – Apr 23

Apr 23 – Jun 23

Planning
Finalising
governance
Recruitment

Induction
Definition
Goal
Setting

Engaging with
community to
identify
recovery
priorities

Grant Round 1:
Planning
Promoting
Assessing

Grant Round 2:
Planning
Promoting
Assessing

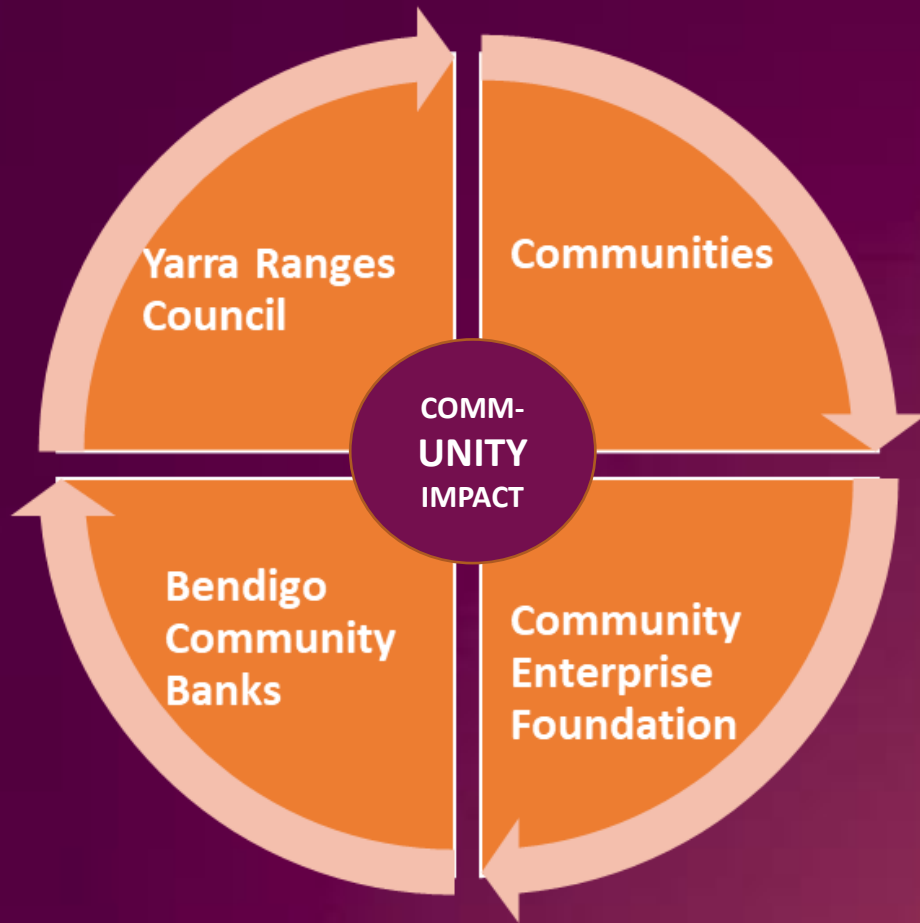
Documenting
their Legacy:
Reflecting
Celebrating

Yarra Ranges Community-led Recovery Grants

Fiona Beckwith-Elmi
Donor and Appeals Manager



Yarra Ranges Council Partnership Model



Community Enterprise Foundation was established in 2005 as the philanthropic arm of the Bendigo Adelaide Bank, to provide the Community Bank network and communities in Australia access to a Foundation Structure.

Our team works closely with our partner across Australia to facilitate the collection and distribution of funds through grant programs and community focussed appeals.

To date on behalf of partners we have returned more than \$200 million back to community.

The Yarra Ranges has 8 Community Bank Companies operating 10 branches, all partners of the CEF with representative directors giving their time as mentors to the committees.

Community Led Recovery Grants – Governance Framework

Governance

- Partnership MOU in place
- Funds held in Trust - Sandhurst Trustees Ltd (5% fee on all funds in, all interest earned returned to funding pool)
- Grant making expertise & online application process
- Adherence to Charitable & Trust law
- CEF eligibility checks – ABN, ACNC, AMLKYC, Financials, quotes, adherence to charitable law

Local Advisory Committee

- Distributions overseen by advisory committee underpinned by funding guidelines and local knowledge, protected by council
- Final approval by Yarra Ranges Council director & Manager & CEF on behalf of Sandhurst Trustees Ltd
- Supported by Project Co-Ordinator CRC, YRC Secretarial support, CEF, local councillors, Com Dev Officers and Community Bank Mentors

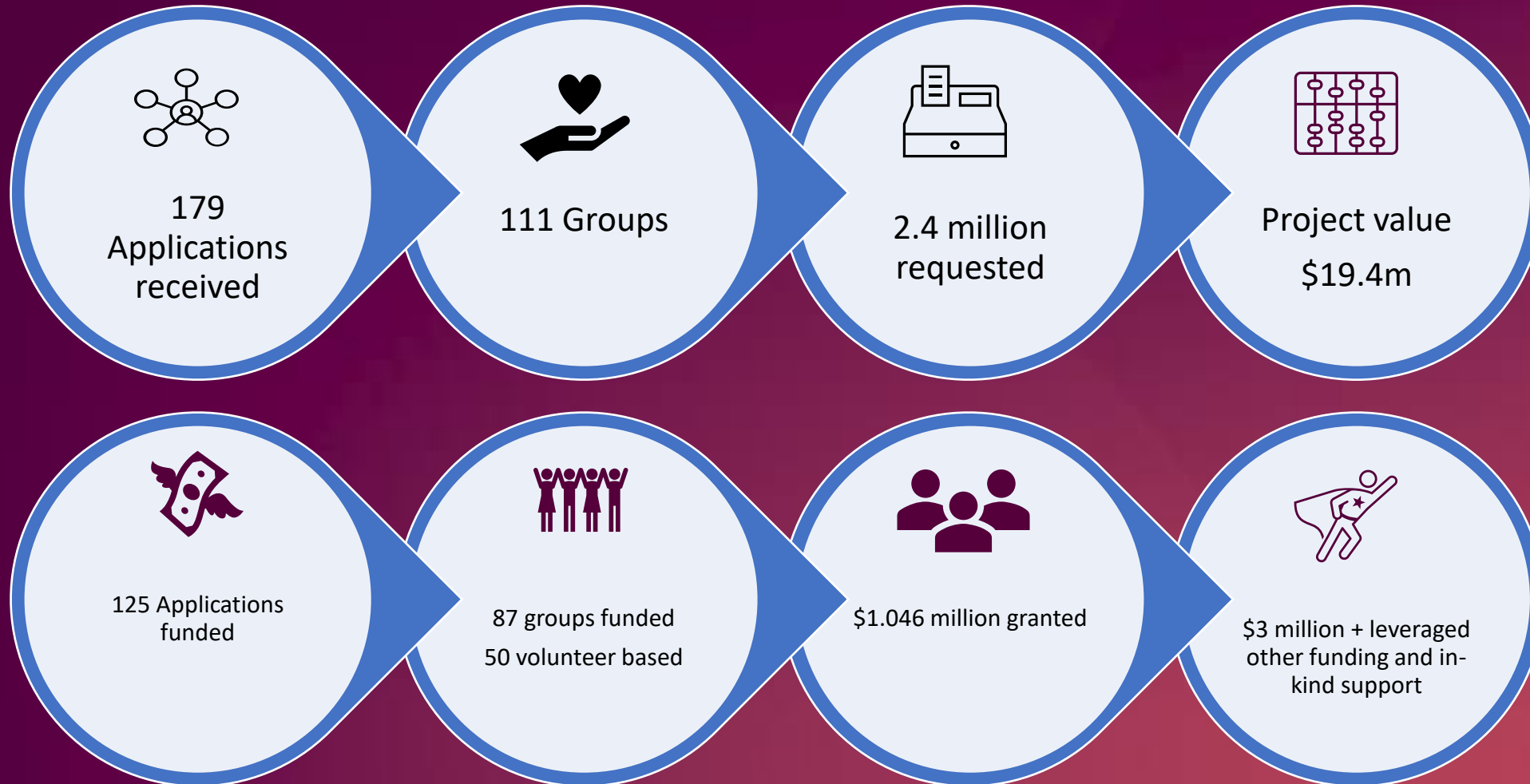
Reporting

- Acquittals – funding spent in accordance with application
- Partnership reporting
- Independent Evaluation

Flexibility

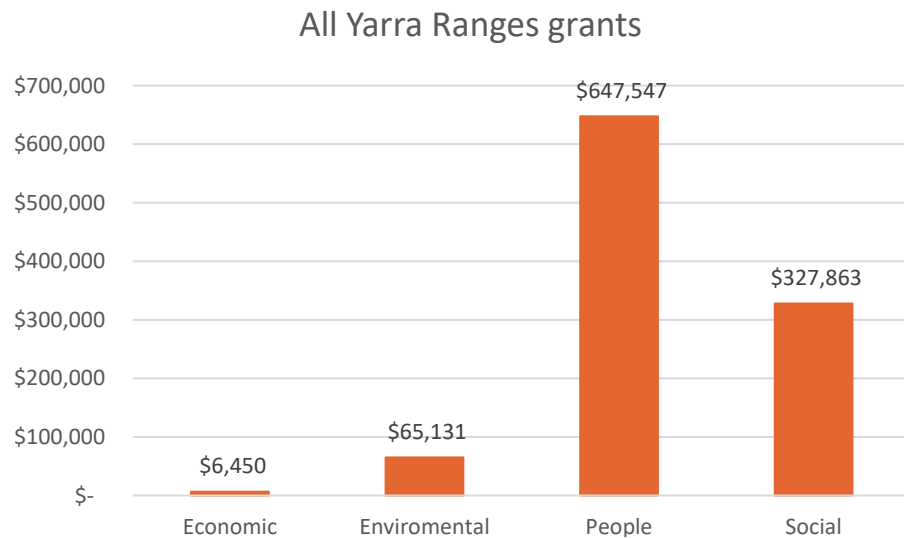
- Able to pivot
- Received & distributed storm funding from Emergency Recovery Victoria

Grant Application and distribution



Community Led Recovery Grants, Yarra Ranges Council/ERV investment

Key themes are supporting health and wellbeing and re-establishing social connection, reducing vulnerability and decreasing marginalisation



\$1.045
million directly investment into
community led recovery

\$200k
in resource including co-ordination,
consultancy, evaluation and ancillary
costs

\$1.26 million total investment

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your local Community Bank



Community-led recovery – reflections

- . Resourcing the program with a Community Recovery Coordinator and admin support was critical
- Recovery has its own pace, but the committees were driven by the terms of their agreement, council and government deadlines for distribution of funds

- Funding became a focus - time required by committee to undertake the grant making component of their remit was considerable and took their focus off other tasks such as the recovery plans

- Two rounds over 12 months allowed them time to re-assess key priority areas of community need.
- This also benefited applicants by having 2 opportunities to apply

- CEF had high touch in supporting applicants in the application process
- Groups low on volunteers and were burdened by grant writing process
- Multiple grant programs on offer from council & others which also created some confusion.

- Committee members felt real satisfaction of funding great projects feeding into recovery of their community
- Saying 'no' to applicants was challenging for committee members because of their local connections
- The committee members capability in the grant making process has grown
- Committees were tired and 'done' by the end of program

Community partnership model

For the CEF this was a landmark partnership which we hope will inspire other local councils across Australia to think differently about how they engage with and empower their community to have a voice in their recovery.

We commend the Yarra Ranges Council for taking this approach and for providing the significant investment, ensuring that the Committees were well supported and they were empowered to apply funding into local projects.

An opportunity to represent and engage the strong Community Bank network within the Yarra ranges.

The program aligns to our values and purpose to feed into the Prosperity of Community by taking a community centred approach, empowering them to have a voice to lead their own recovery

Community-Led decision-making in a Local Government setting:

“A key challenge of government is therefore how best to support CRCs in making effective decisions that are representative of the community as a whole, while maintaining a flexible approach that respects the unique structure and context of each CRC and the wishes and timelines of that community.”

Gibbs L, et al (2021) *Community-led recovery – Black Summer final report*, Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC, Melbourne.





“Collaborative decision making creates great capacity and that our community will benefit much more because this process of grant delivery”

RCRC member

“The RCRC gave us a chance to meet people in our community we never knew before”

RCRC member

“This community led model provided inspiration for collective action”

RCRC member

“We believe groups have applied for RCRC grants that haven’t applied for Council grants before”

RCRC member





RESILIENCE IN THE RANGES



THE HILL COMMUNITY RECOVERY COMMITTEE

