

# Investing in Rural Community Futures

## Batemans Bay



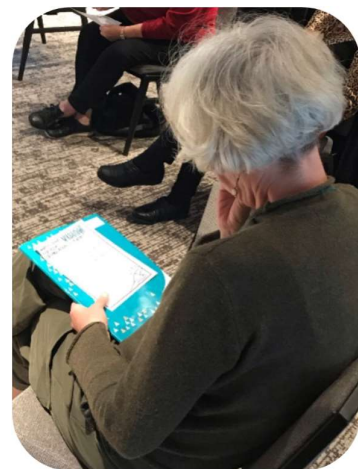
## Batemans Bay region community roadmap workshops newsletter

**5 & 6 May 2021: Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens and Batemans Bay Marina Resort**

Over two workshops, more than 30 people (volunteers, board members and team members) from community-based not-for-profit organisations in the Batemans Bay area came together to consider the question: *How can we create stronger organisations for a stronger community?*

Participants brought their passion, their ideas, and a diversity of perspectives, connected with others and had some great conversations. This information will be drafted into a Community Roadmap to help guide the Investing in Rural Community Futures program.

Here is some of what we learned.



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### Why does your work really matter to you?

#### Our check in

Here is a summary of what everyone shared as we began the workshops:

##### Helping others

- Provide people with a focus and a reason to get up in the morning
- All people matter
- Foster learning for young people
- Help people walk through the most difficult part of their lives
- Helping people take a step forward
- To create spaces for healing

##### Social equality

- To bridge gap between Aboriginal and non-aboriginal people
- Need to look after our young people
- Improve lives of young people with disability
- A stable home is important to wellbeing
- Social justice matters to me and drives what I do

##### Contribute to community

- Contribute to the joy and vibrancy of community
- This community has been good to me
- Leaving a better community for my daughter to grow up in
- Attract people to live and work in the area

##### Connection & belonging

- Strong social connections
- I feel a sense of connection to this place
- Healing power of nature

##### Having a voice

- Everyone has a story, not everyone is heard
- A lot of ears – having important conversations and chats
- Letting people be heard, know they are valued

### The Community Roadmapping process

Kate Dezernaulds from the [Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal](#) (FRRR), gave an overview of the [Investing in Rural Community Futures Program](#), a grassroots program aimed at building and supporting the capacity of not-for-profit organisations in Batemans Bay and surrounds, with the support of [The Snow Foundation](#). Kate also explained the Community Roadmapping process – a series of workshops to co-design a way forward for the NFP sector in Batemans Bay over the next 4 years. We also learned of the projects funded in the start-up grant phase.



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### Storytelling:

### How do we make a difference in our work in community?

In the first workshop, we shared stories about a time we made a real difference, big or small, in our community. We gathered insights into what helped make that difference. This is what we found:

- Space to be heard
- Taking responsibility for the future
- Community service
- Clarity
- Seeking best practice, excellence, quality
- Passion
- Passion for what we do
- Enthusiasm and interest
- Innovation
- Collaboration
- Working together towards a purpose
- Determined, dogged, persistent advocacy – holding to account
- Persistence
- Personal commitment to see a project through to conclusion
- Commitment
- Empathy
- Empathy
- Caring
- Concern for other people
- Empathy and understanding for others
- Respect
- Lived experience
- Understanding of actual community needs, not just what we think or what has always been done



### Cafe conversations:

### What are the unique strengths of our community?

Here is a summary of themes that came from our conversations about this question:

#### *Place & culture*

- Aboriginal culture
- Community strongly identifies with their 'village' 'town'
- Unique lived experiences and environment
- Attractive natural environment

- Beautiful mix of forest and water
- Canberra connection at the weekend
- Long way from Sydney
- Natural heritage

#### *People*

- Resilience
- Availability of retired people

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- Grounded, practical, knowledgeable, and connected people
- Diverse range of people doing incredible things

### *Social capital*

- A community that looks out for each other and try to help others
- Volunteer mentality with a diversity of opportunity
- Good political access and influence

### *Skills*

- Educated or skilled community
- Incredible range and depth of skills

### *Creativity*

- Amazing ideas
- Art / creative talent pool

Willing to work together in times of adversity

## What else is needed in our community?

Here is a summary of themes that came from our conversations about this question, and some others throughout the workshops. What else is needed in our community?

### *Public transport + housing*

- Affordable accessible to community and public transport
- Affordable housing

### *Mental health and wellbeing*

- Strengthen wellbeing
- Intergenerational crossover programs
- An environment where mental health & disability programs overlap with general interest groups
- Better, more, varied mental health programs

### *Education, training, jobs*

- Collaborative employment and training pathways
- For young people to be able to stay, work, volunteer, connect

### *Community spaces*

- Affordable and secure venues for community groups to use
- Heatwave & bushfire havens in all towns / communities

### *Centralised hub*

- Centralised and holistic resource hubs for health and education
- Community group headquarters with secretary functions, coordinator, bookkeeper
- Central hub / person for volunteers and organisations

### *Responsive leadership*

- Clear the pathways for people with ideas and passion
- Proactive, visionary, and collaborative efforts from big player organisations
- Council to reflect and respond to the needs of community organisations
- A council that cares
- Acknowledgement and appreciation of NFP organisations

### *Information access*

- Visibility of opportunities
- Centralised clearing house of information of community services and volunteers
- Umbrella website for community groups
- A directory of community resources

### *Collaboration*

- Strategic unity
- More integration and collaboration between stakeholders, community groups and government organisations
- More and shared community control

### *Financial resources*

- Longer term flexible funding opportunities

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### What would make our organisations even stronger, so we can meet the needs in our community?

This final conversation helped us get to the focus of the workshops. Looking inwards, what would support community organisations to make them even stronger? The themes that came up were sorted into the four IRCF priority areas (see below).



### A vision for stronger organisations

We dreamed a little for a vision for the future of our organisations - individually and collectively. What would it look like in 4 years' time if our organisations were even stronger? Here were some clear themes that came from this exercise:

- Connected, networked, and collaborating with each other
- Stronger working relationships with government and business
- Strong, capable, active, and supported volunteer base
- Engaged and thriving workforce, especially younger people
- Leaders in sustainable use of resources and climate adaptation
- Innovation leaders and lifelong learners
- Secure a places and diverse resources to support our work
- Making a positive contribution to and are a stronger voice for community needs

### What support is needed now?

What support is needed to meet the vision we have for stronger organisations? We sorted our ideas from the third round of cafe conversations into these groups:

#### Sector efficiencies

- Resource more collaboration between community groups
- Support to advocate for a place to call home
- Umbrella website for community groups
- Mentoring for new groups
- Uber for not for profits – community transport on demand
- Collaborative professional development and training
- A council that will work with us
- An image change to make volunteering appealing for young people



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### People

- Training and career pathways - Attract and retain skilled staff
- Funded traineeships for community sector
- Youth training and employment social enterprise
- Training: first aid, mental health, accidental counsellor, vicarious trauma training
- Cultural healing and cultural competence
- Outsourcing staff admin roles
- Succession planning – new members and volunteers
- Mentoring / coaching for community organisation leaders
- Address volunteer burnout
- Culturally accessible mental health services



### Investing in strategy

- Fundraising strategies and campaigns
- Community development funding
- Linkages to philanthropy, social impact investment, partnering
- Start up \$ for circular economy jobs and infrastructure
- A local NFP training day, conference, showcase to network the sector
- Strategic planning
- Building capacity for evaluation
- Research project to identify links between housing, homelessness, and child protection

### Systems and structure

- Governance training and capacity building
- Community Co-op for pooling funds / assets
- Opportunities to access unused facilities, assets, resources
- Affordable spaces and technology
- Grant writer and locater
- Extra admin to support increased intake and backfill team
- Outsourced business functions: admin, bookkeeping, HR, IT

### Next steps

Where to from here? Participants were invited to help with the next step in co-designing the community roadmap, which is to identify patterns, make sense of the data we collected in these first workshops and to draft a Community Roadmap. This half-day Sensemaking workshop is being held on Wednesday 19 May 2021. The roadmap will be published, and grant funding open for the first or 4 years.

If you have questions, contact Kate Dezarnaulds at 0418 588 537 or [k.dezarnaulds@frrr.org.au](mailto:k.dezarnaulds@frrr.org.au)

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### What are you taking with you?

Checking out, this is some of what you shared about your experience in the workshops:

- Hope for the future and NFPs in our region
- Learning many things I didn't know
- Opportunities for development and advancement
- What unites us is that we all love the Bay
- I really hope this is more than a talk fest
- Huge opportunity and huge potential
- A sense of shared objectives and shared goals – need for more collaboration
- We're all shovel ready, and we need to start digging foundations
- Thankful for the generous lives you're all leading
- Amazement at the different groups of people
- Connection and communication. I feel connected to all of you!



*Above: Roderick Slockee offering Welcome to Country. Wallawani!*

