



**FRRR**

Foundation for Rural  
Regional Renewal



beqa valley  
shire council



## Investing in Rural Community Futures Program

### Bega Valley Community Update – July 2023

#### What's happening now and what you can do ...

- **Fill in the Gaps** a second series of skills development training is currently being scheduled, taking into the consideration the needs identified by your organisations. The *Managing Conflict & Difficult Conversations* training with Saul Nightingale will run on July 19 - please note this event is **fully booked**, but if we receive enough interest a second session will be scheduled. Get in touch.
- **Save the Date:** Volunteer Expo *Many Hands* will be held in Bega on 8 September 2023. EOIs will be open in the next week. This is a great opportunity to showcase the activities of your organisations, recruit new volunteers and celebrate your integral work! Keep an eye out for an email regarding the process for being involved.
- [The Bega Valley IRCF Roadmap](#) has been updated and summarises the co-design work so far as well as findings from the survey sent out in April.
- **Share** your capacity building idea with Leah and Bree ASAP so you can get some assistance/feedback and refine your project idea if needed. A form in which to outline the scope of work of your project has been developed to assist you in further developing your project. Reach out to the team if you would like a copy or simply to get an opinion about your proposed project and its relevance to the IRCF program/guidelines.



## June 20 networking/update overview

### Bega Valley Regional Learning Centre

16 participants representing a diverse range of not-for-profits across the Bega Valley came together to network; share their collective experience and knowledge and reconnect to the [Investing in Rural Community Futures program \(IRCF\)](#) – with the calling question:

**‘How can our collective experience and knowledge strengthen the NFP sector?’**

Bree Morgan opened the morning with an Acknowledgement of Country. We were hosted by Mel Geltch (Campfire Coop), Carolyn Ardler, Jules Klugman, April Merrick (Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal), Chani Keefer, Leah Szanto, Bree Morgan (Bega Valley Shire Council).

Leah gave an update on the IRCF program, including additions to the roadmap, NFP needs survey findings, upcoming training, Many Hands expo, approved projects, and BVSC’s Business Activator program.

### Sharing stories

We played the ‘Listen for’ game, a light and simple storytelling process conducted in groups of 3, with the theme: **your experience in the Bega Valley community** to share knowledge and insights gained through engagement in the NFP sector. This process highlighted what was important to people in the work they do and allowed a diversity of perspectives to be shared.



## Project stories

Three stories of projects funded through the both the INFCP and IRCF programs were shared by Nigel Ayling of Bega Valley Business Forum/Merimbula Chamber, Carina Severs of Eden Community Access Centre, Mick Brosnan and Jacob Shields of the Social Justice Advocates of the Sapphire Coast.

These inspiring projects acknowledged work which has already been done, as well as outlining future plans for building capacity and sustainability in the region. They also demonstrated the wisdom in the community which is driving positive change.

## Ideas and collaboration

A session of 'Open Space' was held, creating time and space for participants to have conversations that mattered to them, prompted by the question, **What are the bold conversations we want to have now to strengthen our NFP sector?**

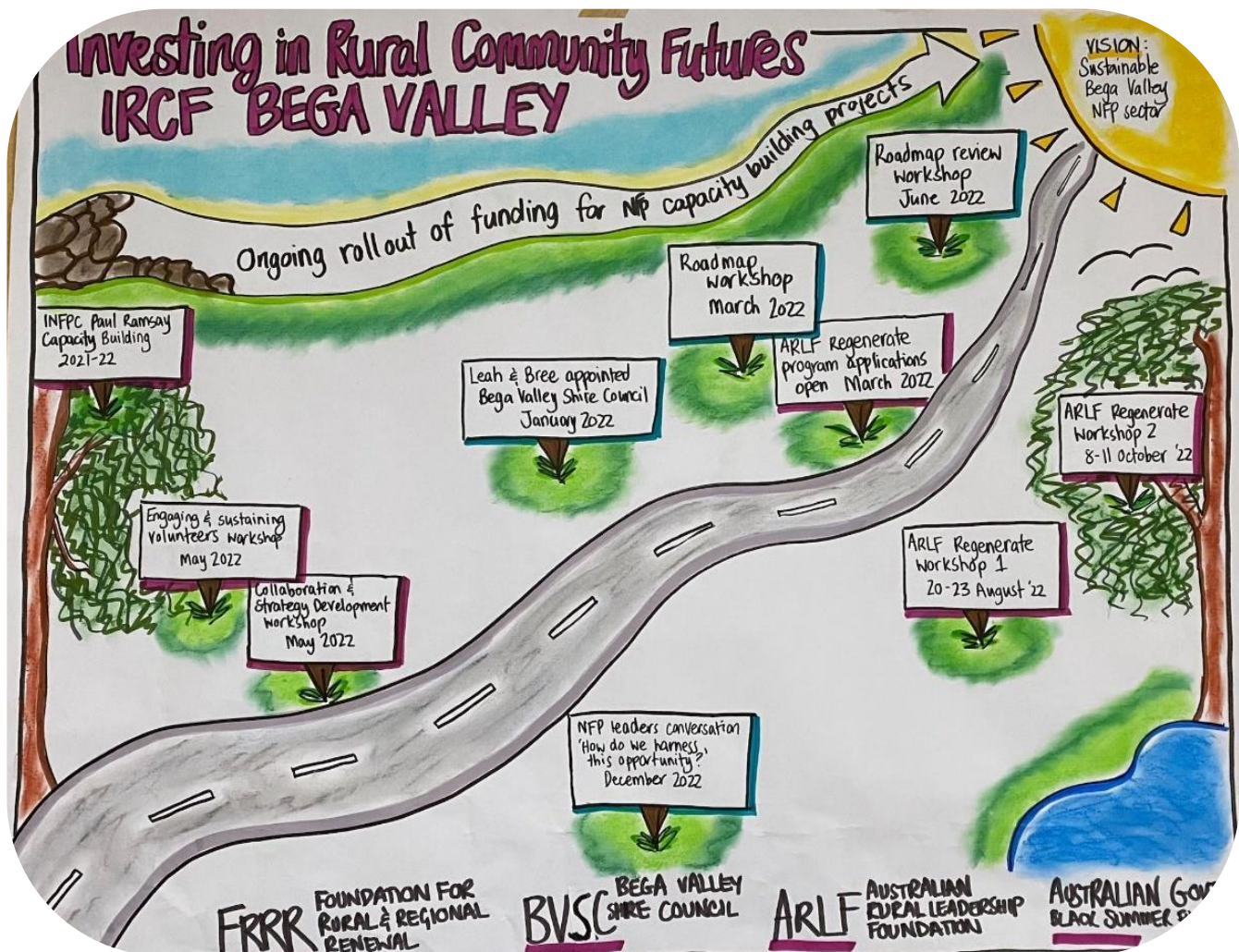
Topics offered for conversation surrounded the following:

- NFP does not equal no income/turnover, paid staff can do the work of many volunteers.
- Supporting each other's organisations, working better together, having each other's backs.
- Social enterprise – do we need more in the Bega Valley?
- Dignity for the homeless.
- Volunteers – how to support them, recruit them and give them fulfilling experiences.



These conversations highlighted the following points when shared back to the whole group:

- NFPs thinking commercially: business models, paid services, paid staff, using assets
- Think like a business: workshop ideas, sustainability
- Generalist funding for rural areas & government responding to community need. Do regions really exist?
- Volunteers: 'they' should be coming to us. We need to use data to our advantage
- Social enterprise: it can be an NFP for purpose, or FP. Impact investing is growing
- More education to understand NFP/FP
- Volunteers: connection and collaboration
- Power of unmarked ongoing funding and having each other's backs – value of place-based gatherings
- Could we get together once a month, just to talk?



## Check out

Attendees were posed with the question, **‘What are you inspired to do now?’**:

- To learn more about social enterprise
- To continue collaborating & learning from amazing people – it’s so good to hear from others who think well about supporting the community
- To activate things in the roadmap and offer ways to connect & solve some issues
- To keep connecting with organisations outside the health sector, there is so much to offer
- I’m inspired by hearing Jacob’s talk, want to keep finding ways to strengthen the sector
- To think more creatively to use data and get it in the frame of people who need it
- To take time to get to know people and organisations
- I’m inspired by the openness and enthusiasm of everyone
- To act, to move forward
- To keep collaborating, sharing and listening to others ideas
- To keep creating spaces for learning
- I am inspired by others, by learning, input into community, supporting community, caring for community
- To help NFPs act like business -sustainably
- To look to access more funding and resources for NFPs
- To be helpful and supportive
- To share and learn from others
- To listen to other’s passions and ensure listening to the needs of the community

## Resources

Great interest was expressed in social enterprise and impact investing. April Merrick from FRRR has kindly provided the following definitions and list of resources:

Social enterprise definition from SECNA <https://www.secna.org.au/>:

**“A social enterprise is a business, for good. They trade like any other business, but exist to make the world a better place.**

Social enterprises do three things: Have a social, cultural or environmental purpose; Generate a substantial portion of their income from trade; Invest profit & resources into their purpose so that public/community benefit outweighs private benefit.”

### Social enterprise links:

- <https://www.socialenterpriseaustralia.org.au/>
- <https://www.socialtraders.com.au/news/what-is-a-social-enterprise>
- <https://au.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/social-enterprises>
- <https://www.asena.org.au/>
- <https://www.philanthropy.org.au/news-and-stories/what-does-social-enterprise-contribute-to-australia/>

Impact Investing definition from <https://impactinvestingaustralia.com/new-impact-investing/>

**“Impact investments are investments made into organisations, projects or funds with the intention of generating measurable social and environmental outcomes, alongside a financial return.”**

**Impact investing links:**

- <https://communityfoundation.org.au/advice-and-support/impact-investing/>
- <https://www.socialventures.com.au/impact-investing/>
- <https://www.ledge.com.au/news/what-is-social-impact-investing/>
- <https://indaily.com.au/news/business/2022/01/31/social-impact-investing-an-australian-perspective/>
- <https://www.digitalnationaus.com.au/video/cover-story-impact-investing-is-about-making-change-not-dollars-597070>
- <https://www.vanguard.com.au/personal/learn/smart-investing/understand-the-basics/what-is-impact-investing>
- <https://treasury.gov.au/programs-initiatives-consumers-community/social-impact-investing>
- <https://www.osii.nsw.gov.au/what-is-social-impact-investing/where-can-i-get-help-intermediaries-and-other/>
- <https://www.osii.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-guidance/>