



Annual Report

2022/23



A photograph showing three people standing in front of a large array of solar panels. On the left is a woman in a blue shirt and dark shorts, smiling. In the center is a man in a light-colored shirt and red shorts, with his hand on the woman's shoulder. On the right is a man in a light-colored shirt and dark shorts, wearing a cap. The background features trees and a cloudy sky.

**Australian Communities Foundation
acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander peoples as the first inhabitants and
Traditional Custodians of the lands on which
we live and work. We pay our respects to all
Elders past and present.**

Image: Grantee partner Original Power is a community-focused, Aboriginal organisation that builds the collective power of First Nations people to achieve self-determination in community and on Country. Original Power supports the development of renewable energy systems like the standalone solar system at Twenty Mile Outstation on Garrwa Country pictured here.



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Welcome



Australian Communities Foundation enables and inspires smarter giving for greater impact.

Australian Communities Foundation is a non-profit organisation that supports and enables smart, rewarding and effective giving. With more than 26 years of experience in catalysing positive social and environmental change, we make impactful philanthropy easy and accessible.

As Australia's only national community foundation, we are a community of givers made up of thousands of people from all over the country. What unites us is our desire to make a difference.

Our Purpose

To activate a nation of givers to create a fairer and more sustainable Australia.

Our Role

As a broker of change, we enable, support and amplify giving. We connect those who can give with those making positive change.

Our Values

As we work towards a fairer and more sustainable Australia, we are guided by four underlying values: inclusion, agency, courage and fairness.

Focus Areas

At Australian Communities Foundation, you can give to the causes and organisations of your choosing. As a Foundation, we track our impact across five focus areas:

Tackling Inequality

Safeguarding the Environment

Supporting First Nations Self-Determination

Strengthening Democracy

Building a Culturally Vibrant Society

← Members of our giving community gather on the northern bank of the Birrarung / Yarra River, Naarm/ Melbourne for a smoking ceremony to open our Voices for Impact program, dedicated to supporting First Nations leaders.



From the Chair



Welcome to Australian Communities Foundation's Annual Report for 2022/23.

The generosity of our donor community this year resulted in more money being distributed to grant partners than ever before. In fact, the amount distributed was more than double that of last year.

Such generosity at a time of economic and market volatility reflects the deep altruism of our giving community of more than 550 funds and foundations.

The exceptional growth of our giving community is something that Australian Communities Foundation's co-founders and patrons, Hayden Raysmith AM and Marion Webster AM, could never have anticipated when they established the Foundation in 1997.

This year, we were thrilled to see Marion's tireless service to the sector recognised in the 2023 Australia Day Honours for her "significant service to the community, to the philanthropic sector, and to women" with her appointment as a Member of the Order of Australia.

In a year when Australia grappled with the question of constitutional recognition of our First Nations peoples, I'd like to pay particular thanks to the founding members of ACF's First Nations Advisory Group.

Chris Croker, Rueben Berg and Jody Barney each provided invaluable perspectives and experience that continues to inform the work of the Foundation and heighten our cultural understanding.

At the Board level, we welcomed Gia Cari and Caroline Vu, while farewelling long-standing Board Director Cath Smith, Sue Woodward who took up the role of Commissioner at the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, and Rueben Berg who became Co-Chair of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria.

I'd like to extend my thanks to all my fellow Directors for the insights and experience they have contributed to the Board this year.

A final thank you goes to Maree Sidey and the team at ACF. It is through their efforts that we are able to support and grow the ACF giving community to help create a fairer Australia.

Eric Beecher
Chair

From the CEO



In what was another year of exceptional giving, I'm heartened by the diverse range of causes we have been able to support through our ACF giving community.

Community foundations occupy a special place in the philanthropic landscape, with their ability to make strategic giving accessible to everyday Australians.

ACF is home to Australia's largest community of everyday philanthropists. Our impact continues to grow with more than 70 new funds and foundations joining our community this year.

Together, our giving community distributed more than ever before: \$37.4 million via grants to 698 organisations and individuals.

One of the absolute highlights of the year was the remarkable generosity shown by our giving community for the Voices for Impact program which generated \$2.3 million in support for First Nations organisations mobilising for the referendum. This is the largest-ever collective funding effort in ACF's 26-year history.

Despite the Referendum result, the Foundation's commitment to First Nations justice remains unchanged. Consistent with our long history of support, we will continue to stand with First Nations leaders and organisations striving for a better and fairer future.

Another highlight this year was the growth of ACF Advisory, our social business arm that provides a range of light touch to full-service solutions for anyone looking to do more with their giving, including trusts and foundations.

Our partnership with the Paul Ramsay Foundation saw the distribution of \$22 million through targeted grant rounds, including grants to help prevent contact with the justice system and to grow the impact of specialist organisations working to end domestic and family violence.

Community is ACF's superpower and I would like to thank every member of our giving community for their continued generosity and participation in the many events and opportunities that make ACF such a vibrant and dynamic place.

Thank you to our Patrons, our Board Directors, our sector partners and critical friends, and of course the wonderful ACF team.

And finally, a special thank you to the leaders, the movement builders and the organisations whose work inspires us every day.

Maree Sidey
Chief Executive Officer





Our Strategy

2023-25

What we're doing

Activating a nation of givers

We support individuals, families and groups across the country to give to the causes they care about. As we look to the future, we will continue to help grow giving in Australia, with a particular focus on helping a new generation get started with giving.

Objectives

- Getting more people involved in giving
- Engaging and supporting younger givers



Investing for impact

We put our values at the centre of everything we do, which is why 100 per cent of our portfolio is responsibly invested. We will continue to help lead the way on investing that achieves both financial returns and positive outcomes for people and planet.

Objectives

- Building our impact investment portfolio
- Showcasing the value of ethical investing



Supporting, enabling and amplifying impact

As one of Australia's largest public foundations, we have a significant role to play in growing the size and impact of our sector. We will continue to leverage our infrastructure to support, enable and amplify the impact of other funders across Australia.

Objectives

- Supporting other foundations
- Collaborating on grantmaking



“Our ambitious strategy builds on the impact and growth we’ve achieved at Australian Communities Foundation over the last 26 years. At its heart, our strategy is about inspiring smarter giving for greater impact on the journey towards a fairer Australia.”

Maree Sidey, Chief Executive Officer

How we're doing it

Building our culture, capability and sustainability

The work we do is strengthened by who we are as an organisation.

As we work towards a fairer and more sustainable Australia, we will continue to support our giving community by investing in our people, our culture, and the organisation's capacity into the future.

Objectives

- Strengthening diversity, equity and inclusion with a particular focus on First Nations justice
- Building our capacity by continuing to invest in our people and infrastructure and supporting sustainable practice



What it's all for

Advancing social, environmental and cultural justice

Together with our funders and partners, we play a key role in helping to create a fairer and more sustainable Australia.

We will continue on this journey by engaging our giving community, advocating for positive social and environmental change, and growing and measuring our community's impact across five focus areas.

Objectives

- Building a community of engaged givers
- Supporting changemakers working across our focus areas
- Advocating for change (in philanthropy)
- Understanding our impact





Our Impact



In 2022/23, our giving community distributed **1,156** grants to **698** organisations and individuals.

Together, we granted **\$37.4 million**

including **\$15.4 million** on behalf of our giving community and **\$22 million** in partnership with Paul Ramsay Foundation.

← Students participating in an education program supported by ACF Advisory client, the GHD Foundation.



2022/23 Impact

Supporting the causes you care about



First Nations communities
\$12.6 million

↑ from \$2.6M in 2021/22



Individual/family services and support
\$7 million

↑ from \$2.7M



Education, training and employment
\$6.9 million

↑ from \$3.8M



Environment conservation and climate change
\$2.8 million

↓ from \$2.9M



Health, wellbeing and medical research
\$2.5 million

↑ from \$1.2M



At Australian Communities Foundation, we help you give effectively to the causes you care about. In 2022/23, we distributed \$37.4 million to the following sectors:



Arts and culture
\$1.6 million

↑ from \$1.3M



Civic engagement and social inclusion
\$1.5 million

↑ from \$603k



International aid and development
\$1.1 million

↓ from \$1.5M



Housing and homelessness
\$907,000

↑ from \$704k



Community and economic development
\$509,000

↓ from \$1.2M

↑ Children's Ground, Multicultural Youth SA, BackTrack (image courtesy of The Land), Environment Tasmania, World Wellness Group.

↑ The Torch, Banksia Gardens Community Services, CARE Australia, For Change Co, Community Hubs Australia.



2022/23 Impact

Funding by Focus Area

By supporting our giving community to give to the causes they care about, we're making progress across five focus areas on our journey towards a fairer and more sustainable Australia.



Tackling Inequality
\$18.8 million

Supporting projects and organisations combatting the unequal distribution of opportunities across the social, economic, political, and cultural spheres.



Supporting First Nations Communities
\$12.6 million

Supporting projects and organisations pursuing First Nations justice, with a focus on those that are led by First Nations peoples, who are best placed to improve outcomes for their communities.



Safeguarding the Environment
\$2.8 million

Supporting projects and organisations protecting Australia's natural ecosystems and working towards a safe and stable climate.



Strengthening Democracy
\$2 million

Supporting projects and organisations working to strengthen the foundations of Australia's democracy.



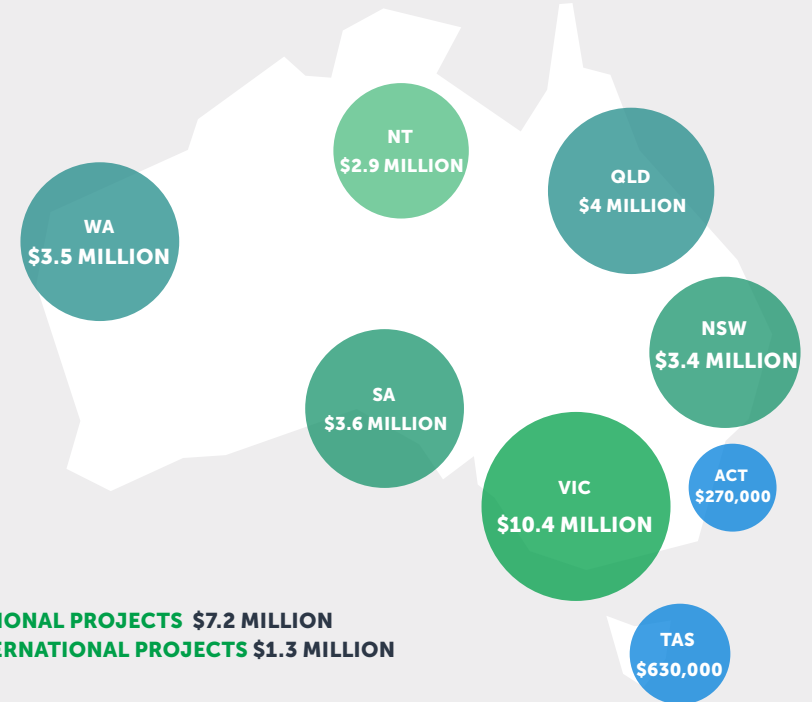
Building a Culturally Vibrant Society
\$1.6 million

Supporting projects and organisations that facilitate creative expression. We see the arts as integral to healthy public debate, a robust civil society, social cohesion and the celebration of our differences.



2022/23 Impact

More giving in every corner of the country



Key insight: More giving across the country

With most of Australia's charities located in major cities and concentrated on our east coast, the distribution of philanthropic funds can often be biased toward these locations. Our giving community has been increasing the geographic diversity of its funding year on year, and this year was no different. Forty per cent of funds landed in rural, regional and remote areas, and more than half of the Foundation's total funding was allocated to initiatives outside the eastern states.



2022/23 Impact

Giving together ACF Impact Fund

The Impact Fund is our flagship fund tackling the most pressing issues facing our country through best-practice collective giving.

Backed by a growing community of funders, the Impact Fund identifies and supports the boldest solutions to issues across four Impact Areas.

How it works

1. Identifying opportunities for change

We work with community and civil society experts to identify priority issues and windows of opportunity for change.

2. Supporting the work

The Foundation commits funding from the Impact Fund, which is pooled with contributions from our giving community.

3. Amplifying our impact

We leverage our support by inviting others to co-fund with us, and together, we maximise our impact.

The power of giving together

Since 2017

\$9M+

Funds raised

150+

Funders giving together

15+

Positive policy reforms achieved

In 2022/23

\$270k

Committed by ACF Impact Fund

\$4.1M

Funds raised

15x

Funding leveraged

Become an Impact Funder

Give through the Impact Fund and join a national movement of 150+ funders and changemakers creating a fairer Australia. You can either contribute directly or give alongside the Impact Fund through your own Fund or Foundation.

Contact our team to get involved: 03 9412 0412 or email grants@communityfoundation.org.au



Key insight: Continued support for Impact Partners

Understanding that change takes time and ongoing support, our Impact Fund community continued to back our cohort of 40+ Impact Partners, providing an additional \$1.2 million in follow-on funding to Partners including the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Environment Justice Australia, Australian Democracy Network and many more.

↑ Willum Warrain ('home by the sea') is the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula. The Impact Fund supported Willum Warrain in 2023 to host community forums with Rueben Berg (Co-Chair, First People's Assembly of Victoria), Jeanette Kaindel (President, Willum Warrain), and Peter Aldenhoven (CEO, Willum Warrain) (L-R).



First Nations-led granting

\$2.3M

Funds raised

65

Co-funders

\$16k

Average contribution

For 2023, the Impact Fund community turned its focus to supporting First Nations-led efforts towards a Voice to Parliament.

Together, we raised over \$2.3 million for our five Voices for Impact partners, including the ACF Rapid Response Referendum Grants Pool, which provided over \$366,000 in support for 80+ community groups and grassroots organisations across the country.

First Nations Advisory Group

This work was led by our First Nations Advisory Group, established in 2022 to oversee grants from the Impact Fund in the First Nations Self-Determination impact area, as well as advise on other elements of the Foundation's work in supporting First Nations communities.

The Australian Communities Foundation staff and Board thank founding members, Jody Barney, Rueben Berg and Chris Croker for the experience and expertise they have brought to this work over the past 12 months.



Jody Barney
Aboriginal/South Sea Islander
Founder, Deaf Indigenous Community Consultancy



Rueben Berg
Gunditjmara
Co-Chair, First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria, and former ACF Director



Chris Croker
Luritja
ACF Director



Voices for Impact Partners



Uluru Dialogue
Indigenous Law Centre UNSW
\$228,000+



Passing the Message Stick
Australian Progress + GetUp
\$226,000+



Yes23
Australians for Indigenous Constitutional Recognition
\$388,000+



WriteYes
GetUp
\$155,000+



Rapid Response Referendum Grants Pool
Australian Communities Foundation
\$366,000+

Australian Communities Foundation also supported the movement through the Yes Alliance Capacity Fund (in partnership with Australians for Indigenous Constitutional Recognition) and the First Nations Referendum Grant Round (in partnership with GetUp and Australian Progress), which respectively distributed \$550,000 and \$128,000 to organisations and community groups across the country.



Leading with lived experience: **Global Refugee-Led Network**

Refugee leaders from across the world met in Sydney in late 2022 at the Global Refugee-Led Network Retreat. Co-Founder Najeeba Wazefadost says the important meeting would not have happened without the Impact Fund's support.

“We know that when refugees are involved in decision making then we end up with better policy”, says Najeeba Wazefadost, Co-Founder of GRN and its local chapter, Asia Pacific Network of Refugees.

“Too often refugees are asked to tell their personal stories but not asked to share their significant expertise.”

Najeeba came to Australia from Afghanistan by boat when she was ten, an experience which helped shape her identity as a global advocate for refugee leadership.

In August 2022, the ACF Impact Fund supported the GRN Retreat held in Sydney. The goal was to increase the meaningful participation of refugees in our region.

“This was the first time we met face to face since the pandemic, and it would not have happened without the quick and flexible support of ACF Impact Funders”, says Najeeba.

“As you can imagine, bringing together refugee leaders from all six regions of the world involved a lot of waiting for visa approvals. But it was very heartening for the leaders to know that Australians were willing to step up and pay for their travel to get here.

“We ran a highly productive week during which we set our strategy for the next three years, and engaged with key government departments and civil society groups to advance refugee leadership in the Asia Pacific.”

“No movement will be successful without the genuine support of allies,” says Najeeba. “To advance the goals of refugee participation in decisions that affect us, we need to deeply engage with the wider community.”

To that end, Najeeba and her colleagues developed the UN-endorsed Refugee Leadership Pledge. In the Asia Pacific region, the next step is to engage with signatories to the Pledge, to help them realise their

↑ Najeeba Wazefadost, Co-Founder, Global Refugee-Led Network



commitment to refugee leadership in their work, and to increase the overall number of signatories while building ambition around what refugee leadership means in this region.

“Too often refugees are asked to tell their personal stories but not asked to share their significant expertise.”

Najeeba Wazefadost,
Co-Founder, Global Refugee-led Network



Key insight: Elevating lived experience

Across the sector, we're seeing more support for initiatives created and led by people with firsthand experience of the issues they are trying to solve. As part of this shift, the sector is bringing more people with lived experience into decision-making roles. Our giving community has a long history of supporting those with lived experience to use resources in the ways they know are most effective.



'The flood crisis isn't over': Partnering with the Northern Rivers Community Foundation

With the support of partners like Australian Communities Foundation, the Northern Rivers Community Foundation is continuing to help communities in northern NSW recover from the flood crisis.

The 2022 floods that hit northern New South Wales and southeast Queensland are now Australia's costliest natural disaster. Over 8,000 homes were significantly damaged and 6,000 rendered uninhabitable, leaving 10,000 people displaced.

"We often hear from our communities that they're tired of talking about wellbeing or attending community concerts – they just want their houses back!" says Sam Henderson, CEO of the Northern Rivers Community Foundation (NRCF).

NRCF's local knowledge and proximity to the affected areas proved invaluable after the floods.

By reaching out to other community foundations that shared their disaster experiences, NRCF was able to shortcut knowledge gaps, enabling efficient knowledge sharing and response time.

"The support from other foundations like Australian Communities Foundation's National Crisis Response Fund was critical," Sam explains.

"It allowed for our team to respond faster and get a clearer idea of the big picture."

That knowledge and information has been compiled into a robust data set that NRCF continues to update.

Still, concerns remain, with 60 per cent of organisations anticipating a funding gap once recovery funding runs out, and 62 per cent reporting ongoing mental health challenges among their staff.

Unsurprisingly, 2022 was NRCF's biggest year, with \$2.9 million facilitated and distributed across six grant programs and over \$4 million raised with partners for disaster response, women's empowerment, affordable housing, education, environment, and community grants.

When asked about the most valuable lesson learned during such a challenging year, Sam says it was the importance of prioritising grassroots community groups.

"There's a misconception that these communities are 'on the road to recovery' but the reality is that road is a really long journey."

Sam Henderson,
CEO, Northern Rivers Community Foundation



Key insight: Ongoing support for communities in crisis

With increased extreme weather events due to climate change, the flow-on effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, and global conflicts creating humanitarian crises, our giving community was fast to respond in times of need. Together we rapidly distributed over \$2.8 million in the form of emergency relief in the wake of floods, the long tail of the pandemic, and the crisis in Ukraine.

"They understand the hard practicalities, the need for support, and can respond faster than many government agencies," he explains.

"More importantly, these organisations have existing trust, social capital, and local networks which means they can so effectively provide support in emerging situations."

Sam says a regional vision that focuses on the bigger picture of rebuilding and regenerating the region is sorely needed.

"Specifically, how do we rebuild and regenerate the Northern Rivers in a way that won't be so badly impacted by the next disaster?" he says.

"How can we do it in a way that doesn't contribute to climate change? How do we give our communities a sense of influencing a bigger global picture?"

"That's an important discussion that needs to happen so our communities have a feeling of hope and a sense that there's something we can all be doing."



A ground-breaking resource for truth-telling: **Towards Truth**

A new website aimed at driving national truth-telling was launched this year thanks in part to early philanthropic funding, including support from the Impact Fund.

Backed by Australian Communities Foundation's Impact Fund and 10 other ACF Named Funds since early 2022, the Towards Truth website maps laws and government policies that have affected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people since 1788.

It is the first attempt to document and analyse the full scope and impact of these laws on First Nations communities.

A partnership between the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) and the UNSW Indigenous Law Centre (ILC), the project has also been made possible through pro bono support from across the legal field.

The website maps a history of dispossession and disempowerment across four key themes – Kinship, Country, Law and Culture, and People – alongside the ways in which laws have sought to protect and provide for reparation.

Described by Professor Megan Davis (Pro-Vice Chancellor Indigenous, UNSW and Co-Chair of the Uluru Statement

from the Heart) as the 'engine room of truth-telling', the project is also testament to the long history of First Nations resistance.

"Before working on Towards Truth, I didn't have an understanding of the pervasiveness of laws designed to erase First Nations culture," Towards Truth Project Coordinator, Corey Smith, told the National Indigenous Times.

"From voting rights to participating in court, child removals and suppressing languages, our work shows a history of harmful government decisions that have a lasting impact on families and communities. My work has helped me understand the pressures my own family were under to hide or diminish their Aboriginality."

The website's launch comes after years of dedicated work from the First Nations-led team, said PIAC Chief Executive Officer, Jonathon Hunyor.

"There's nothing like this in the world. That's been one of the reasons why these first years have been such hard



↑ Public Interest Advocacy Centre and Indigenous Law Centre staff with Professor Megan Davis (fourth from left).

work, but we're now really interested to see how people engage not only nationally but overseas too.

"We're a long way now from when it was just an idea, and philanthropy's played a vital role in that.

"The willingness from our funders to recognise the long game and take the risk of our ambitious idea made all the difference, and the support from the ACF Impact Fund gave us that real shot in the arm."

"The willingness from our funders to recognise the long game and take the risk of our ambitious idea made all the difference."

Jonathan Hunyor,
CEO, Public Interest Advocacy Centre



Key insight: Supporting all the reforms set out in the Uluru Statement

Our First Nations communities extended an important invitation in the Uluru Statement from the Heart to walk with them toward justice via Voice, Treaty, and Truth. With the announcement of the referendum for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament, our giving community ramped up its support for this process. Together, we contributed over \$2.3 million to the Yes campaign.

Regardless of the referendum result, Australian Communities Foundation's commitment to First Nations justice remains unchanged and we will continue to build the momentum that has been generated this year in one of Australia's biggest-ever social movements.



Elevating the voices of people facing economic injustice: **Economic Media Centre**

The surging cost of living has had a devastating impact for people across Australia. With support from the Impact Fund, the Economic Media Centre is working towards more inclusive economic policy by amplifying the voices of people with lived experience.

Research from the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) this year found six in 10 people on income support are eating less or reporting difficulty getting medicine or care.

As ACOSS and partners continue to call on the Government to lift income support, elevating the voices of people with lived experience into the public debate has been an increasingly central focus of the campaign.

Supporting this approach is the Economic Media Centre – a joint project between ACOSS and Australian Progress, led by Co-Directors Aliya Ahmad and Jess Kendall.

Established in 2020, the Centre identifies and equips diverse spokespeople on economic issues and connects them with journalists.

“The Economic Media Centre has a simple theory of change,” says Kirsty Albion, Australian Progress Executive Director. “By increasing the diversity of voices represented on economic issues in mainstream media, we generate more

inclusive economic policies.”

Australian Communities Foundation’s Impact Fund provided critical support for the establishment of the Centre at the outset of the pandemic.

“When the pandemic and recession hit and governments were rethinking how to distribute billions of dollars in economic policy, civil society leaders around the country told us a lack of media advocacy skills were holding them back,” Kirsty explains.

“We were inundated with requests from small organisations that had the policy solutions to these complex issues but lacked the media capacity to secure them.

“We looked at best-practice models from around the world and piloted the Economic Media Centre which fills a critical capacity gap, delivering media training, strategy and messaging support to make it possible for social change advocates to get their campaign stories in newspapers, broadcast and digital outlets and set news agendas.”



As of late 2022, the Economic Media Centre had trained more than 630 diverse spokespeople across a huge range of issues – migrant rights, housing, gender, LGBTQIA+, First Nations justice, and many more.

“The Impact Fund has been absolutely pivotal in helping the Economic Media Centre go from a pilot project to a long-term piece of infrastructure,” explains Kirsty. “The Centre is now meeting huge community need and getting people with lived experience into mainstream media, shifting economic policy debates and economic policy.”

“The Impact Fund has been absolutely pivotal in helping the Economic Media Centre go from a pilot project to a long-term piece of infrastructure.”

Kirsty Albion,
Executive Director, Australian Progress



Key insight:
Protecting the right to protest and participate in democracy

So much of the work our giving community supports is about enabling members of our society to participate in our democracy – from speaking out on issues to ensuring everyone is considered fairly by policy makers. Maintaining the right to protest is central to many of our partner organisations being effective in this work. This year, when these rights came under threat in certain states, our community supported Australian Democracy Network’s Protecting Protest initiative. Sometimes, funding to keep things in place is just as important as funding to move them forward.



The ability to be transformed: Henkell Family Fund

An avid supporter of the arts, and in particular, opera, Hans Henkell's giving journey with Australian Communities Foundation spans twenty years.



↑ Hans Henkell

It's impossible not to be swept up in the exuberance of an encounter with German-Australian philanthropist Hans Henkell.

The zest he brings to his passion projects underpins his approach to philanthropic giving.

"I just love it!" he says with gusto. "Opera gives me that ability to be transformed."

Hailing from the family for which Henkell sparkling wine is named, Hans immigrated to Australia in 1982 and built a successful Melbourne-based property business from the ground up.

Hans credits his business success as a major driver of his philanthropic giving. "I couldn't be charitable without it," he says.

The establishment of the Henkell Family Fund came about after a discussion with the family's solicitor.

"I was thinking about creating a foundation on my own, but my solicitor explained that you need to have a few

million dollars to get started and I didn't have that sort of size," Hans explains.

"Instead, my solicitor suggested a fund at Australian Communities Foundation as a sort of 'in-between' and that has worked out very well.

"I'm very proud to have been with Australian Communities Foundation for all these years."

For Hans, one of the benefits of using a Named Fund is the ability to plan for the future, making giving decisions and distributions at a time that suits.

"I compare it to being like a farmer who has a dam where he stores the water," Hans explains. "The water isn't needed immediately for the pastures but it's good to build up that supply. "Australian Communities Foundation gives me that ability. I pre-donate money into the Fund in order to be able to give it out when I want to."

Over the years the Henkell Family Fund has provided support to the German-

Australian community and hardship relief via a range of organisations, but Hans' primary passion is his support of Australian opera.

While opera may be less revered in the Australian cultural landscape when compared to its long and illustrious history in Europe, it hasn't dimmed Hans' ebullience.

"There aren't the battleships of opera houses here as there are in Germany that were started hundreds of years ago," he says. "It's different here, but it's full of enthusiasm, and that's what I like."

"Opera changes your consciousness, your mental state and your disposition, and you come out of that experience with a more creative mindset."

Hans Henkell,
Henkell Family Fund



Key insight: Continued support for the arts in challenging times

At Australian Communities Foundation, we believe a thriving arts sector is integral to our journey towards a fairer Australia where we celebrate our differences. In 2022/23, our community gave more than ever before in untied funding for arts organisations to use as they see fit as the sector continues to recover from Covid lockdowns.



Tailored solutions for your giving ACF Advisory

Building on our long track record of strategic giving, connections to community and strong infrastructure, we offer a range of philanthropic solutions through ACF Advisory.

With a variety of options from light touch to full-service packages, ACF Advisory designs bespoke solutions for anyone seeking support with their giving, not just those who structure their giving with us.

Tailored solutions

Structures

There are several ways you can structure your giving. We're experts in identifying the best option for a range of circumstances and can help you choose the right one for you.

Services

ACF Advisory services span compliance and administration, philanthropic strategy, and end-to-end delivery of grant rounds and scholarships.

We also provide tailored packages for the establishment and support of Private Foundations.

12-month snapshot

In 2022/23, ACF Advisory supported over 25 clients, ranging from Australia's largest philanthropic foundation to small businesses, corporates, professional advisory firms, other trusts and foundations, and families and individuals looking to do more with their giving.



25+
Clients



\$24M+
Distributed to communities



\$83M+
Funds guided by ACF Advisory



\$1M
Reinvested to activate more giving



What our clients say



"ACF has been there for us since right after we began, helping us structure our operations, execute major grant rounds and develop a stronger understanding of how to partner and give in ways that are effective."

Jo Metcalfe, Managing Director, GHD Foundation
Corporate Foundation client | Read the story on pg 52



"The thing I value most about working with ACF is that it's full of people who have a deep understanding of the for-purpose space."

Paul Steele, CEO, donkey wheel
Private Foundation client | Read the story on pg 42



"ACF's established but flexible approach to grant reporting enables a robust acquittal process to enhance our impact evaluations without placing undue burden on grantees."

Ruth McNair, Chair, Pride Foundation Australia
National Foundation client | Read the story on pg 54



**Take your giving to the next level
with ACF Advisory**

Reach out at any time for a conversation with our Engagement team:
03 9412 0412 or email info@communityfoundation.org.au



Our Community



A vibrant community of givers

In 2022/23, we welcomed over **150 new givers** to our community.

We're now home to more than **550 funds and foundations**, each nurturing their own vision for **positive change** yet united in their commitment to social, cultural and environmental justice.

← Members of our giving community at our Voices for Impact event in April 2023.



Coming Together

Throughout the year, our giving community connected at over 20 events, including our 25th anniversary celebration and our largest-ever Impact Fund Showcase.



↑ Members of our giving community at Australian Communities Foundation's 25th anniversary celebration in December 2022.



25th Anniversary Celebration 5 December 2022

With 2022 marking our 25th year, more than 100 guests joined our end-of-year celebration at famed social enterprise STREAT Collingwood.

Australian Communities Foundation Co-Founder and Patron Marion Webster AM shared her personal reflections in a moving speech on the extraordinary growth of the Foundation's giving community over a quarter century.

“Over 25 years, the ACF community has thrived and diversified to much better reflect the breadth of donors and supporters who make up the broader community.”

Marion Webster AM



↑ ACF Co-Founders and Patrons, Marion Webster AM and Hayden Raysmith AM



**Impact Fund Showcase: Voices for Impact
27 April 2023**

More than 400 funders and friends of our giving community came together at The Edge in Melbourne's Fed Square to hear from First Nations leaders on the campaign for a Voice to Parliament. Historian, activist and Bidjara and Birri Gubba Juru woman Dr Jackie Huggins AM FAHA emceed the evening, and was joined by First Nations leaders from the Uluru Dialogue, Passing the Message Stick and the Yes23 campaign.



↑ L-R: Larissa Baldwin-Roberts, Rachel Perkins and Australian Communities Foundation CEO Maree Sidey during the live Q&A at the Voices for Impact event.



Calendar of Learning Circles

Learning Circles are designed to bring our giving community together with organisations working across our focus areas, helping to spark conversations and gain a deeper understanding of the issues we fund. In 2022/23, we hosted Learning Circles covering a range of issues, including:

- How to tackle the climate emergency and the inequality it drives
- How automation is impacting people on income support
- Drug reform in Australia: Shifting stigma and rethinking our response
- The compelling case for global giving
- Introducing new tools for climate-lens giving

Connecting with our sector

Over the last 12 months, the Australian Communities Foundation team connected with the broader philanthropic sector across many events.

At **Philanthropy Australia's National Conference**, Australian Communities Foundation CEO Maree Sidey joined the panel in a standout session on the opportunities to grow structured giving in the context of the sector's commitment to double giving by 2030.

At the **National Community Foundations Forum**, members of the Australian Communities Foundation team shared their insights on best-practice community philanthropy across several sessions. In a highlight session, we shared the story of the Foundation's journey to 100 per cent responsible investing. CEO Maree Sidey also joined Jack Heath (CEO, Philanthropy Australia) in a plenary session to explore the role of community foundations in achieving the 2030 target to double giving.



↑ Members of our giving community at 'The compelling case for global giving' Learning Circle in March 2023.



Taking innovation to transformation: **Ellen Koshland**

Long-standing member of our giving community, Ellen Koshland, is a passionate supporter of equity in education. For Ellen, giving through a community foundation has brought a welcome sense of collaboration to her philanthropy.

Ellen Koshland has been hailed as one of Australia’s most visionary philanthropists.

Her unwavering commitment to equity in education led her to establish the Education Foundation in 1989, which raised more than \$10 million to fund 500+ innovative education programs across Australia.

In 2015, Ellen founded the Australian Learning Lecture, a 10-year initiative to demonstrate that new ideas in learning can better equip students for our changing world.

“Education is very important to me,” says Ellen. “I believe deeply that every child

has a talent and that they deserve the opportunity to develop that talent.”

As one of Australian Communities Foundation’s largest fundholders, Ellen is also a passionate funder for the environment and the arts. In 2012, she became a founding patron of the Stella Prize, a major literary prize profiling and celebrating Australian women’s writing.

The throughline that connects each of Ellen’s philanthropic passions is a pronounced sense of activism which she attributes to her American family and her grandfather and philanthropic role model, Daniel E. Koshland, Snr.

“I absolutely think we need philanthropy and it’s a dimension that really needs to function well to have an active civic society. Philanthropy can pull levers because it can be a neutral, non-political catalyst acting as a hub,” she says.

For Ellen, giving through Australian Communities Foundation has brought a welcome sense of collaboration to her philanthropy.



↑ Ellen Koshland

“I think the growth of community foundations is one of the greatest developments in philanthropy,” says Ellen.

“Giving is about building a better community... [But] when I started in philanthropy all those years ago, it felt as though it was all quite competitive. Everyone was trying to get money from this and that and on to the next thing. In contrast, now you have the collaborative and collective nature of community foundations.

“I love that organisations like Australian Communities Foundation and the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network work closely together and learn from each other. When that level of collaboration happens, it doesn’t matter as a philanthropist how much money you have – you can still make a contribution that’s invaluable.



Named Funds

Ellen Koshland supports education, the environment and the arts through her Named Fund at Australian Communities Foundation. Establishing a Named Fund is an easy, tax-effective and strategic way to support the causes you care about. All funds are responsibly invested and can be distributed at any time to the charitable organisations of your choosing.



A centenarian's view on giving: **Meriel Wilmot-Wright**

Meriel Wilmot-Wright is a pioneer of Australian philanthropy, and at age 100, she chose to create a lasting legacy by leaving a gift to her own Named Fund.

Meriel Wilmot-Wright has dedicated her life to making the world a better place. From heading up The Myer Foundation to giving her personal support for organisations helping single mothers, Meriel has always given in one way or another. And at age 100, she has ensured her legacy of giving will last beyond her own lifetime.

After a conversation with a friend, Meriel decided to leave a gift in her Will to Australian Communities Foundation, establishing her own Fund to support her chosen cause. She named it the Beatrice Fund in honour of her beloved mother. Her bequest will help support women raising children alone – even after she passes, ensuring her love of giving lives on.

“My mother, Beatrice Charlotte Wilmot, was born in 1887. She was a saint and was adored by everyone who knew her,” says Meriel.

“Although my family was never well off, my mother was very generous, not only

with the little she had to give away, but also with her time – she supported people in need of help and caring. With such a background, how could I not grow up believing that sharing was an important part of life?

“I first came to learn about professional philanthropy when I was employed by the Nuffield Foundation in London. Although I have lived in England for 33 years, I have retained all my personal funds in Australia.

“My friend brought Australian Communities Foundation to my attention and after reading several reports I realised it would provide me with the umbrella organisation for charitable giving in Australia I had been seeking.

“My advice for someone thinking of becoming involved in philanthropy for the first time is to study your community, find out both areas which are in need and those which are already well supported – and seek the advice of Australian Communities Foundation staff!”

“My mother was very generous – she supported people in need of help and caring. With such a background, how could I not grow up believing that sharing was an important part of life?”

Meriel Wilmot-Wright



Leave a lasting gift for a better future

When you leave a legacy through your own Fund or Foundation, your gift is invested and can grow into an ongoing source of funding for the causes and charities you care about.

- ✓ Easy way to leave a lasting legacy
- ✓ Always your wishes
- ✓ Named Fund gifts are 100% responsibly invested
- ✓ Public or anonymous – it's up to you

Contact our team for a conversation about how we can help make your gift last forever.

Call us on **03 9412 0412** or email info@communityfoundation.org.au



'Making a different difference': donkey wheel Foundation

Australian Communities Foundation's Advisory services provide additional support for trusts and foundations, including tailored packages for private foundation clients, such as donkey wheel.



↑ Paul Steele, CEO, donkey wheel.

A prescribed private fund and charitable trust, donkey wheel was established by the Brunner family in 2004, with a view to supporting and nurturing the changemakers who have the potential to create a new world.

"The thing I value most about working with Australian Communities Foundation is that it's full of people who have a deep understanding of the for-purpose space," says Paul Steele, CEO of donkey wheel Foundation.

"I'm grateful that I don't have to explain things over and over – they understand this space because it's their core business, whereas a lot of accountants and lawyers don't understand the nuances."

Paul has been at the helm of donkey wheel since 2010, and says he is passionate about "making a different difference that leads to systemic change".

"We're more focused on the environmental conditions that facilitate success, rather than the successes of

single projects or organisations," Paul explains.

With this in mind, donkey wheel regularly supports intermediary organisations that work with the changemakers on the frontlines. This has included organisations such as The Difference Incubator and The Australian Centre for Social Innovation.

Providing bespoke support to established trusts and foundations is an area of expertise for Australian Communities Foundation's Director of Engagement & Advisory, Olivia Clark-Moffatt.

Olivia says donkey wheel occupies a unique space in Australia as a profound changemaker and supporter of changemakers.

"There are very few organisations that take such an open-minded and creative approach as donkey wheel to supporting the potential to create a better world," she says.

"One of the ways we're able to support that approach is by providing compliance support that lifts the administrative burden off the donkey wheel team so that all their energy can stay in the creative and liminal spaces where they're able to get results."

That support has helped donkey wheel stay focused on "the slow, hard work" of ecosystem building rather than "quick wins".

"We're not under any illusion that everything we try will work," says Paul.

"But if we don't think different and act different, we won't be able to make a different difference."

"The thing I value most about working with Australian Communities Foundation is that it's full of people who have a deep understanding of the for-purpose space."



Private Foundations

Private Foundations are an attractive option for those comfortable with the additional compliance obligations required, including maintaining greater control over investment management. We can help establish your foundation and provide ongoing granting and compliance support through our ACF Advisory services.



Getting started with giving: A new fundholder's perspective

Catheryn Khoo has always been passionate about giving, completing pro bono work across the globe and raising money for charities. This year, Catheryn began her structured giving journey by opening a Gumnut Account.

Growing up in Malaysia, Catheryn Khoo was regularly involved in her local community and actively encouraged by her family to do her part to make it a better place.

Her early giving experiences and family influence led Catheryn to design a deeply philanthropic life. She studied and worked across the globe, all while completing pro bono work on the side.

Now, Catheryn is a Professor and Gender Expert for the United Nations World Tourism Organization and spends her time championing women's equality in tourism.

"I have travelled and worked with people from all over the world, and I've seen the disparity of opportunities one gets in a country like Malaysia versus Anglo-Saxon countries," Catheryn says.

"I know what the difference is, and what opportunities can do for someone like me."

Her motivation to make a difference and have a sustainable impact prompted Catheryn to re-assess her giving and embrace a more structured model.

"I've always known that I would set up a fund someday, but I hadn't known how to do or manage it," Catheryn says. "Then I found Australian Communities Foundation online. Everyone at ACF was so helpful...it all felt very doable."

"Now I could just do the job of philanthropy without having to worry about the legal and financial details, which was what stopped me when I first had this seed of an idea."

After discussions with the ACF team, Catheryn decided to open a Gumnut Account – The Patricia Tan Equality Fund, named after her mother.

"The Fund will enable equal opportunities for people like my mum – talented, disadvantaged, and limited by a lack of education, resources and finances," Catheryn explains.

"The Fund will enable equal opportunities for people like my mum – talented, disadvantaged, and limited by a lack of education, resources and finances."

Catheryn Khoo (right), Patricia Tan Equality Fund, named after her mother (left)



"It will directly help reduce the barriers, encourage growth, stimulate career prospects, and provide a pathway to eradicate gender inequality and geographical disadvantage in developing nations."

When asked about the advice she'd offer to people thinking of opening their own fund, Catheryn says it's about making a start.

"Don't be overwhelmed like me! Reach out to an organisation like ACF and start talking to people. Just start. Just start and everything will fall into place."

"Now I could just do the job of philanthropy without having to worry about the legal and financial details."



Gumnut Accounts

Catheryn Khoo opened a Gumnut Account in honour of her mother to take a more structured approach to her giving. A Gumnut is an easy way to start your journey towards structured giving. Simply open an account and make regular, tax-deductible donations to build a giving fund over time.



Honouring a loved one: Joanna Knight Scholarship

When Sydney barrister Joanna Knight passed away at just 36 years old, her family and colleagues established a scholarship in honour of her dedication to social justice. The Joanna Knight Scholarship Fund is now helping people from diverse backgrounds enter the legal profession.

A lawyer and barrister, Joanna Knight had built an impressive career spanning legal aid and pro bono briefs over nearly 10 years in the sector.

She was first admitted as a lawyer in 2013, and up until her passing, worked at Culwulla Chambers in Sydney.

Jo's friend and barrister at Wentworth Chambers, Gina Edwards, says Jo reflected "the very best of human nature."

"She was genuine, good-natured, and a model family law practitioner," Gina says. "To those who met her, Jo left a lasting impression."

"Throughout her legal career, she was passionate about public service, and believed that socio-economic diversity in the legal profession would strongly benefit both the system and the community."

Studying law is time-intensive and expensive, and without a privileged upbringing, can be difficult to manage, limiting diversity in the profession.

"For many students, there is no easy road to being admitted into legal practice. This is especially the case for people experiencing financial disadvantage and for First Nations students," says Gina.

This is why, following Joanna's death, the idea of a scholarship in Joanna's name was raised.

"Joanna's family and colleagues at the NSW Bar wanted to create scholarships to honour Joanna's dedication to social justice," Gina explains.

After exploring her options, Gina approached Australian Communities Foundation about opening a Scholarship Fund.

Following discussions with the ACF team and Community Legal Centres NSW, the Joanna Knight Scholarship Fund was established, with the scholarship's selection criteria and purpose in line with Joanna's family's giving goals.

The Joanna Knight Scholarship Fund has three streams, each targeting a minority

"Joanna's family and colleagues at the New South Wales Bar wanted to create scholarships to honour Joanna's dedication to social justice."

Gina Edwards, who helped establish the Joanna Knight Scholarship in honour of her late friend Jo (pictured)



group that would benefit from financial assistance when accessing legal education.

"The scholarships aim to level the playing field, making it more accessible for people from diverse backgrounds to gain professional experience in community legal centres and become lawyers," Gina says.

"For many students, there is no easy road to being admitted into legal practice. This is especially the case for people experiencing financial disadvantage and for First Nations students."



Scholarship Funds

Barrister Gina Edwards established the Joanna Knight Scholarship Fund to honour her late friend and colleague's commitment to social justice. Scholarship Funds support people to provide payments that give others greater access to education. When you open a Scholarship Fund, you have the choice of providing educational payments, prizes and bursaries to scholarship-providing charities or directly to students. You can choose an existing scholarship to support or engage our team to assist in designing your own, including its purpose and selection criteria.



Giving together for women-led environmental and climate action: **WELA Giving Circle**

A new giving circle is tackling the climate crisis by getting behind women leading positive change.



↑ WELA Strategic Director, Victoria McKenzie-McHarg (far left), with participants from WELA's National Leadership Program 2022.

“Women and gender diverse people all over Australia are stepping up to the challenges facing our planet,” says Victoria McKenzie-McHarg, Strategic Director of Women’s Environmental Leadership Australia (WELA), a not-for-profit connecting women for environmental and climate action.

“But women-led projects are chronically underfunded with less than 0.2 per cent of global charitable funding going to women’s environmental action,” says Victoria.

Enter the WELA Giving Circle – Australia’s only giving circle dedicated to funding women’s action on environment and climate issues.

In this Q&A, Victoria reflects on women’s leadership in environmental and climate action, and the value of collaboration, in both leading and giving to the movement.

Australia has a long history of women-led environmental action. How has that history shaped WELA into the organisation it is today?

WELA was founded in 2016 by a group of women who are essentially the matriarchs of the environment movement in Australia. These women ran the campaign to save the Franklin River in 1982. Over 40 years on, they were still seeing the same gender-based issues playing out that had plagued their whole careers, and decided to do something about it and started WELA.

It’s important to acknowledge that First Nations women have been leading for Country, Community and Culture for millennia. We recognise the strength of that leadership, and the central role this must play in any sustainable future we aspire to.

Collaboration is key to WELA’s approach. Why is collaboration important for environmental leadership?

Collaboration is the genesis of innovation, and we need innovation at a scale like never before.

Collaboration is also a leadership style that is prevalent in women’s

environmental leadership. Given the scale of the challenges we face, we need more of it.

What advice do you have for funders looking to support climate action?

There is no shortage of opportunities to have an impact. If you find a project or a group that inspires you, go for it.

But when we give together, we can multiply our impact, increase connection and build power. That’s why we’ve started the WELA Giving Circle.

It’s exciting to bring people together to make and fund change. The benefits of a giving circle extend beyond the funds raised and granted, and into the power of networks to connect, inspire and enable impact and action.

“When we give together, we can multiply our impact, increase connection and build power.”



Collective Giving Funds

The WELA Giving Circle is a Collective Giving Fund at Australian Communities Foundation. Collective Giving Funds support like-minded groups and giving circles to pool their donations and give together for collective impact. We take care of all granting administration and compliance, allowing you to focus on the joy of giving together. Our two-week granting cycle means you can distribute grants quickly and responsively. Whether you are holding a fundraising event or seeking payment of recurring membership fees, our online donation services provide quick and easy solutions.



Unlocking cultural ambition: Regional Arts Australia

Not-for-profit Regional Arts Australia is the national voice for the arts in regional Australia. Executive Director, Ros Abercrombie, explains how the organisation is using a Future Fund at Australian Communities Foundation to fundraise and increase its core capacity.

“What’s incredible is realising that wherever you land in this country, there’s an amazing breadth of cultural practice and experience and an incredible creative ecosystem embedded in the fabric of regional communities,” explains Regional Arts Australia (RAA) Executive Director, Ros Abercrombie.

As the not-for-profit peak body for regional arts in Australia, RAA works across all states and territories and all art forms. Its work includes a series of short and long-term capacity building programs and research-based advocacy designed to unlock the cultural ambition and potential in regional Australia.

“Our role is to ensure there are multiple generations of creative practitioners across regional centres because we believe the arts should be accessible for anyone to participate in and enjoy, regardless of where they choose to live, work or study,” she explains.

“Our job is to facilitate connections, connect the dots and open the doors.”

Celebrating its 80th year in 2023, Ros attributes RAA’s longevity to its ability to listen and respond effectively to the ever-changing arts landscape.

“RAA has changed and adjusted in order to respond to what’s needed at the time,” Ros explains.

Since 2001, RAA has managed the Regional Arts Fund on behalf of the Australian Government’s Office of the Arts. The Fund provides more than \$3 million per year to support artists and communities in regional and remote areas.

A recent five-year impact analysis (2016-2021) of the Fund has shown that an investment of \$14.57 million has supported 1,760 projects with 96,309 participants across more than 700 locations, reaching an audience of 8.3 million. Importantly, the funding leveraged a further \$43.3 million, effectively trebling the initial investment.



↑ Mimili Maku artist Linda Puna celebrating her fashion collaboration with Unreal Fur in her community, recipient of a Regional Arts Fund Grant, managed by Regional Arts Australia on behalf of the Australian Government.

This level of impact, Ros suggests, is something RAA’s founder, singer Dorothy Helmrich OBE, would have been immensely proud of.

It’s in Dorothy’s honour that RAA has launched the Pledge a Dot initiative using its Regional Arts Australia Fund, a Future Fund at Australian Communities Foundation.

The initiative, Ros explains, seeks to raise \$1 million to increase core capacity in the delivery of support for arts in regional Australia.

“This initiative will help Regional Arts Australia continue to support artists and communities that want to tell Australian stories across all art forms and landscapes.”



Future Funds

Regional Arts Australia uses a Future Fund to fundraise and increase its core capacity. Future Funds are a low-cost way for not-for-profit organisations to build an endowment for their long-term sustainability. You gain access to our fundraising and donation infrastructure, and can enjoy investment returns through our pooled ethical investments. Future Funds are also available to individuals, families and other groups looking to support a single organisation.



Corporate giving for educational equity: GHD Foundation

Professional services firm GHD has a long history of supporting local communities. In 2020, the firm honoured this legacy by establishing the GHD Foundation. Australian Communities Foundation is now helping the firm increase its impact beyond local initiatives.

With over 11,000 employees across 160 offices worldwide, GHD has evolved from a small engineering office in Melbourne into a global industry leader, but its culture of giving back has never been stronger.

“Since GHD opened its doors in 1928, employees have been helping the community in different ways – from fundraising to volunteering and undertaking pro-bono work,” explains Jo Metcalfe, GHD Foundation Managing Director.

With increasing global challenges – pandemics, natural disasters, racial and economic inequity, and climate change – local community work no longer “seemed enough,” says Jo. And with the resources to do more, the firm established the GHD Foundation.

“ACF has been there for us since right after we began, helping us structure our operations, execute major grant rounds and develop a stronger understanding of how to partner and give in ways that are effective.

“The focus of our support is to widen access to STEAM education and careers. STEAM stands for science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics, and we know that greater diversity in these fields leads to solutions that better serve the community.

“We’ve found that the best way to learn is to connect. The ecosystem of relationships range from GHD to the team at ACF and the charities we walk alongside. It’s the diverse views, points of collaboration and at times co-creation that help us stay strategic.”

“We’ve found that the best way to learn is to connect... Engage with organisations who can help guide you along the way.”

“ACF Advisory helps us structure our operations and execute major grant rounds.”

Jo Metcalfe (centre),
Managing Director,
GHD Foundation



Snapshot: Our corporate clients

APT Travel Group	Hall & Wilcox	Pitcher Partners
BESIX Watpac	HDR Australia	Rork Projects
Clemenger Group	Holding Redlich	Schneider Electric
Ethical Wealth Partners	Influence Global	Sea Forest
FG Advisory	Koda Capital	Slater + Gordon
Gembridge	Kollosche	Walker Wayland
GHD Foundation	Melbourne Airport	Wealth Mentoring Group
Grocon	Nation Partners	Woodbridge Capital
Guzman y Gomez	Netwealth	



Corporate and Workplace Giving

Australian Communities Foundation supports dozens of corporate clients to establish and extend their giving programs. We can help you set up a Corporate Fund, design a bespoke solution through ACF Advisory or simply provide philanthropic advice and coaching.

Contact us for a conversation about how we can help your organisation:
03 9412 0412 or email info@communityfoundation.org.au



Advancing equity for LGBTQIA+ communities: [Pride Foundation Australia](#)

At Sydney WorldPride, Pride Foundation Australia Chair Ruth McNair spoke with us about current funding needs for LGBTQIA+ communities and the Foundation's latest grant rounds, which are now being delivered through a partnership with ACF Advisory.



↑ Pride Foundation Australia Chair, Ruth McNair (fifth from left), at Sydney WorldPride.

Since 2004, Pride Foundation Australia (PFA) has been working to advance equity for Australia's LGBTQIA+ communities and individuals facing discrimination and structural inequalities.

What is philanthropy's role in supporting LGBTQIA+ communities in 2023?

Increasing levels of poverty and exclusion during the pandemic have exacerbated issues for so many sub-groups, such as young people trapped in abusive families, refugees trapped in home or transition countries, trans people unable to access life-affirming gender affirmation care, and so many more.

The role of philanthropy is to unapologetically raise awareness of the dire needs in our sub-communities, and to advocate for systemic change.

Tell us about PFA's granting streams and the recent partnership with Australian Communities Foundation.

The Foundation generally awards grants through our regular Major Grants and

Small Grants programs. In 2023, we have run Major Grant Rounds focused on supporting LGBTQIA+ communities in areas affected by recent natural disasters, as well as reducing harm from alcohol and other drugs. All the while, we have continued supporting groups and individuals promoting social inclusion through our Small Grants Round, which is open all year.

This year we partnered with Australian Communities Foundation to support our grant rounds. The ACF team has been working closely with us, providing administrative support and offering their expertise in grant making. We have realised that as our work expands, we need to invest financial resources into ensuring that we are utilising best-practice approaches. For example, the Foundation's established but flexible approach to grant reporting enables a robust acquittal process to enhance our impact evaluations without placing undue burden on grantees.

What advice do you have for funders interested in supporting LGBTQIA+ communities?

Prospective funders and donors need to get to know the diverse array of communities within the LGBTQIA+ umbrella, to partner and ally with us, and to choose the right group to be involved with based on our mutual interests.

"ACF's established but flexible approach to grant reporting enables a robust acquittal process to enhance our impact evaluations without placing undue burden on grantees."



ACF Advisory

Pride Foundation Australia's grant rounds are delivered in partnership with Australian Communities Foundation through our ACF Advisory service. Building on our connections to communities and our infrastructure, we can support both new and established trusts and foundations with grant rounds and other grant making services, plus all administration and compliance.



Taking clients on the philanthropic journey: Chris Wilson

Professional advisers play an important role in helping people achieve their giving goals. Chris Wilson, Partner at financial advisory firm Koda Capital, knows firsthand how a community foundation can support advisers to meet increasing demand for philanthropic advice.

Chris Wilson, Partner at Koda Capital's Philanthropy & Social Capital division, has worked at the nexus of financial services and philanthropy for more than 14 years.

Philanthropy has been a key offering at Koda Capital since its inception and Chris says that's because the company's founders understood how critical philanthropy is for private wealth clients.

"For many of our clients, the philanthropy conversation is where they derive the most satisfaction and joy when it comes to their wealth planning," Chris explains.

"It's also where we get to truly know our clients, their passions and values – it's often where we discover what is most important to them. If we can support their philanthropic goals and add value to this important part of their lives, it only works to enhance our relationship with them and their families."

As philanthropic practices continue to evolve and change over time, so too are

client expectations and their giving goals, Chris says.

"Clients want to be more engaged in the causes they are focussed on, understanding the issues and thinking strategically about where their dollars can have the most impact," he explains.

"Many are looking at bigger picture systems change and thinking about their philanthropy as the risk capital that can create real change. For some, this is also about rolling up their sleeves and actively offering their time, talent and networks as well as their dollars."

Drawing upon the deep philanthropic sector experience of the team at Australian Communities Foundation has helped Koda deepen client relationships and provide an accessible community of likeminded people clients can give alongside.

"What ACF offers is accessible philanthropy with the administrative burden taken care of so that our clients

"What ACF offers is accessible philanthropy with the administrative burden taken care of so that our clients can focus on what's important, which is giving the money away effectively."

Chris Wilson,
Partner, Koda Capital



can focus on what's important, which is giving the money away effectively," Chris says.

"I'm convinced that community foundations like ACF are going to be the engine room of growth when it comes to structured giving in Australia and more and more advice firms like Koda are going to understand and appreciate the critical role community foundations can play in a client's wealth planning."

"For many of our clients, the philanthropy conversation is where they derive the most satisfaction and joy when it comes to their wealth planning."



Support for Professional Advisers

Australian Communities Foundation can work with you to provide the structure, services and community to support your clients' giving. We also offer solutions for you and your team to upskill in structured giving. Contact us for a conversation about taking your service offering to the next level. Call us on 03 9412 0412 or email info@communityfoundation.org.au

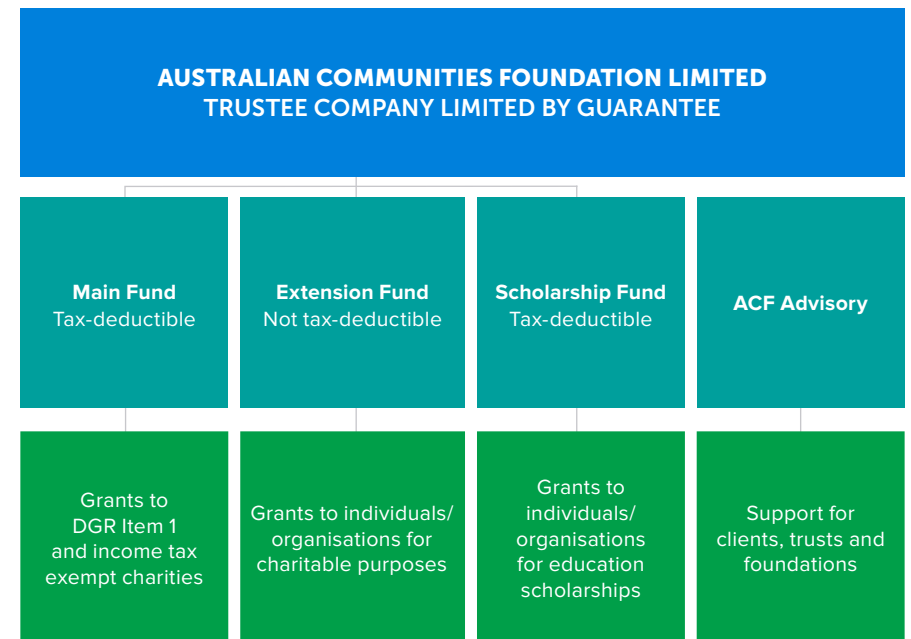


Financials



Structure

Australian Communities Foundation operates three charitable trust funds, providing flexibility to suit individual giving preferences and areas of interest. We also offer fee-for-service support to clients, including private ancillary funds and charitable trusts, through our ACF Advisory services.



← Social and affordable housing apartment building funded through ACF impact investment, Conscious Social Housing Fund.



Performance 2022/23

Financial summary

REVENUE		OUTGOINGS	
Donations	55,247,124	Grants paid & committed	37,423,851
Investment	12,345,451	Portability transfers	1,102,786
Advisory revenue	1,055,134	Operating costs	3,880,807
Other revenue	390,934	Other disbursements	606,260
Total	69,038,643	Total	43,013,704

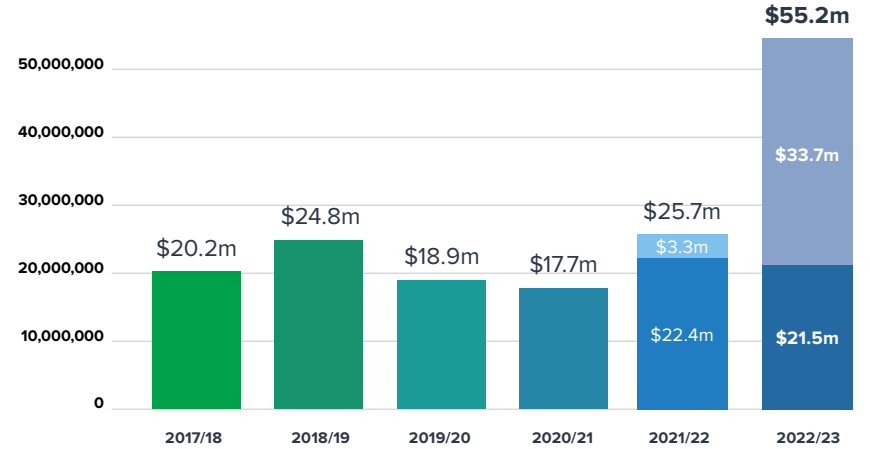
BREAKDOWN OF OPERATING COSTS

Salary & staff-related costs	2,415,559
Administration & professional costs	1,465,248
Total	3,880,807

CORPUS	2023	2022
ACF Ltd	1,334,003	1,123,970
Main Fund	101,782,540	90,543,003
Extension	48,076,155	33,530,214
Scholarship	443,203	388,082
Total	151,635,901	125,585,269

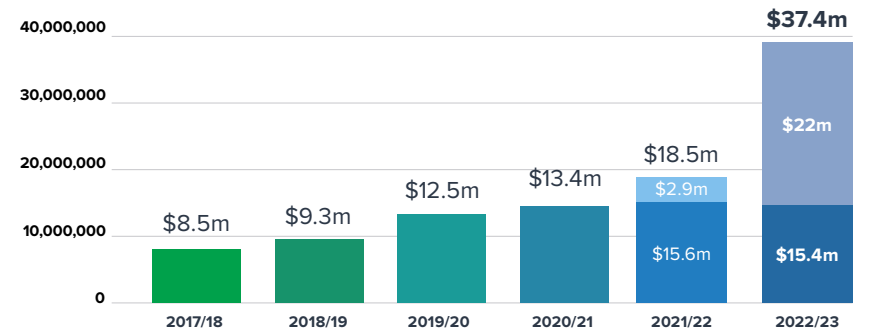
Donations

Donations received into funds totalled **\$55.2 million** – up from \$25.7 million last year.



Grants

Our community committed to a record **\$37.4 million** in grants across the year – approximately 25% of our corpus.



* Lighter shade denotes flow-through donation and granting activity.





Investments

At Australian Communities Foundation, we put our values at the centre of everything we do, including how we invest pooled philanthropic assets. That's why 100 per cent of our investment portfolio is responsibly invested.

This approach has many benefits, including:

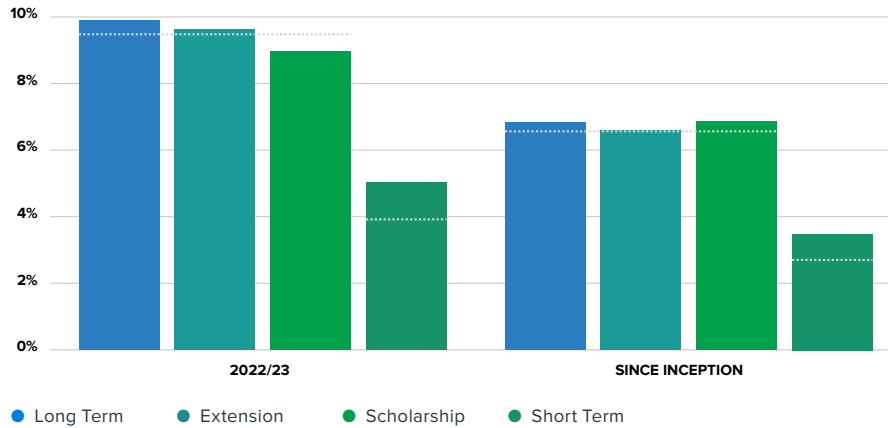
- contributing to a stronger, fairer and more sustainable world;
- providing both financial and social/ environmental return on investment; and
- achieving greater strategic alignment across investments and grants.

With the support of our investment advisers Brightlight, we actively seek out investments with a strong financial return and a positive social or environmental impact.

As the first Australian philanthropic foundation to become a signatory to the UN Principles for Responsible Investment,

we're proud to increase the impact of your giving by ensuring your philanthropic assets are 100 per cent responsibly invested. We've also been named a Responsible Investment Leader by the Responsible Investment Association Australasia two years in a row.

After a volatile year, it is pleasing to report that the portfolio returned ~10% for the 2023 year, which also exceeded our strategic benchmark for the year. ACF is proud that it has averaged 6.7% financial return per annum since inception. Our investment strategy has ensured that we not only achieve financial returns over the long-term, but also leverage our assets to maximise community impact.



Long Term, Extension and Scholarship Benchmark = CPI + 3.9% | Short Term Benchmark = Bank bill + 1%



Impact Investing

As part of our ethical approach to investing, the Foundation actively contributes to positive social and environmental outcomes through impact investments aligned with our Impact Areas.

Side by Side Social Impact Bond

Impact: Inequality / First Nations

Investing in educational programs to improve the engagement and learning outcomes of young students.

Infradebt Ethical Fund

Impact: Environment

Investing in new solar and wind energy infrastructure.

Conscious Social Housing Fund

Impact: Inequality

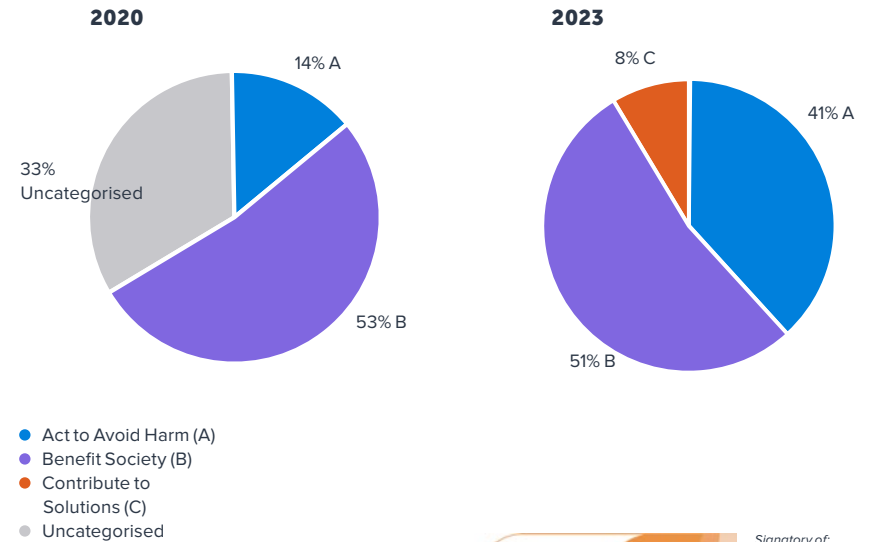
Investing in social and affordable housing for Victorians in need.

For Purpose Impact Partners

Impact: Inequality

Investing in specialist disability accommodation, social housing, mental health, aged care and Vocational Education and Training.

We measure the impact of our portfolio by assessing whether our investments Act to Avoid Harm (A), Benefit Society (B) or Contribute to Solutions (C). See below for an overview of how our portfolio has transitioned since 2020 to deliver greater impact.





Our Strategy

Progress on our strategy 2022/23

→ Activating a nation of givers

One of our key roles at Australian Communities Foundation is to introduce individuals, families, corporates and other groups to the joys of giving. In 2022/23, we welcomed 150+ givers through 70 new funds and foundations.

We're continuing to help grow giving in Australia by making philanthropy easy and accessible.

See Our Community (pg. 32) to learn about the people who give through Australian Communities Foundation.

→ Investing for impact

In 2022/23, we were named a Responsible Investment Leader by the Responsible Investment Association Australasia for the second year in a row.

Investment Partners to help finance specialist disability accommodation, social housing, mental health services and aged care.

Furthering our commitment to impact investing, we announced our fifth impact investment this year with For Purpose

See Financials (pg. 58) for more details on investments.

→ Supporting, enabling and amplifying impact

Over the past 12 months, we have designed a range of exciting solutions for clients through ACF Advisory, including structures and support for corporate organisations.

response to floods and Covid-19. Since 2021, the partnership has committed over \$36.5 million through grant rounds overseen by ACF.

Our partnership with Paul Ramsay Foundation saw the distribution of \$22 million to communities through three national grant rounds (Strengthening Early Years, Specialist DFV Programs and Just Futures) and targeted funding in

Our Private Foundation packages also continue to be a popular option with a 60 per cent growth in clients this year.

See pg. 30 for a summary of ACF Advisory in 2022/23.

→ Building our culture, capability and sustainability

This year saw the Foundation complete and implement its first organisation-wide People and Culture Plan, with our human resources capability brought in house for the first time.

Action Plan. This work is being led by a cross-team working group in close consultation with our First Nations Advisory Group. Our team also participated in cultural education training with Gunditjmara man and former ACF Director Rueben Berg.

The Foundation continues to meet its aspirations to increase diversity, equity and inclusion at both staff and Board level. Over the past 12 months, this has included a particular focus on formalising our long-standing commitment to supporting First Nations justice through the development of a Reconciliation

Our annual staff survey through external provider, Great Place to Work, found that 100 per cent of our team thinks the Foundation is a great place to work and is proud to work here.

→ Advancing social, cultural and environmental justice

In 2022/23, we continued to make a difference across our five key focus areas.

This year also saw the establishment of our First Nations Advisory Group to oversee grants from the Impact Fund and advise on other elements of the Foundation's work in supporting First Nations communities.

We saw significant growth for our two largest focus areas with \$18.8 million going towards Tackling Inequality (84% increase on last year) and \$12.6 million to Supporting First Nations Communities (380% increase). Our support for democracy initiatives and the arts were up from last year as well.

As part of our work in this area, the Foundation also joined an alliance of over thirty of Australia's leading funders to pledge a combined \$17 million in support of First Nations efforts towards a Voice to Parliament.

Across the year, our calendar of events and Learning Circles attracted over 600 attendees, who came together to hear from organisations leading work across our focus areas.

See Our Impact (pg. 10) to learn more about our giving in 2022/23.





Our People



Governance

Australian Communities Foundation is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. Operations are overseen by a voluntary Board of Directors who dedicate part of their work to specialised committees to ensure the organisation holds itself to the highest standards.

The ACF Board consists of four committees, which meet quarterly: the Finance, Risk, Audit & IT Committee; the Investment Committee; the Philanthropy & Impact Committee; and the Nominations Committee.

ACF co-founders Hayden Raysmith AM and Marion Webster AM continue to provide guidance as Patrons of the organisation. The ACF Board and team appreciate their ongoing support and dedication to community philanthropy.

In the past year, the Board farewelled Rueben Berg, Cath Smith and Sue Woodward AM, and welcomed two new members: Gia Cari and Caroline Vu.



"I believe philanthropy plays a hugely important role in our society to deliver fairer and more equitable outcomes to all Australians."


– Glen Noonan, ACF Director and Diabetes Victoria CEO

← The Australian Communities Foundation team at a strategy planning day in November 2023.



2022/23

Our Board



Eric Beecher
Chair



Rueben Berg
Retired July 2023



Penny Burke



Gia Cari
Joined June 2023



Chris Croker



Sue Dahn



Adam Milgrom



Glen Noonan



David Ritter



Cath Smith
Retired February 2023



Malinda Wink



Sue Woodward AM
Retired November 2022



Caroline Vu
Joined June 2023

For information on our Directors, visit communityfoundation.org.au/about/our-board



2022/23

Our Committees

Finance, Risk, Audit & IT Committee

- Glen Noonan (Chair)
- Penny Burke
- Chris Croker
- Sue Dahn
- David Ritter
- Steve Bradby (adviser)

Investment Committee

- Sue Dahn (Chair)
- Cath Smith
- Chris Croker
- Adam Milgrom
- Malinda Wink

Philanthropy & Impact Committee

- Cath Smith (Chair)
- Malinda Wink (Chair)
- Rueben Berg
- Penny Burke
- Sue Woodward
- Regina Hill (adviser)

Nominations Committee

- Penny Burke (Chair)
- Eric Beecher
- Rueben Berg
- David Ritter
- Sue Woodward AM



2022/23

Our Team



Maree Sidey
Chief Executive Officer

Philanthropy



Georgia Mathews
Director of Philanthropy



Gabby Lam
Philanthropy Lead



Laura Mannix
Philanthropy Lead



Charlene Yum
Grants Manager



Tishiko King
First Nations
Program Manager



Claudia Lang
Senior Grants
Coordinator



Madhulika Rajawat
Grants Support Officer

Finance and Operations



Daniel Brugaletta
Chief Financial &
Operations Officer



Jennifer Liu
Finance & Operations
Lead



Ignacio Falcon
Data & Business
Insights Manager



Madeleine Shea
Executive Assistant
& Office Manager



Laura Barallon
Management
Accountant

Community



Carly Severino
Director of Community



Nicole Richards
Head of Communications
& Marketing



Thomas Lopez
Relationship Manager



Dom O'Donnell
Communications
Manager



Raz Babic
Senior Donor Services
Coordinator



Bronte Teddy
Communications
& Events Coordinator



Ava Gilmore
Donor Services
& Grants Coordinator

Engagement



Olivia Clark-Moffatt
Director of Engagement
& Advisory



Aaron McNeilly
Engagement
Manager





2022/23

Our Supporters

Patrons

Hayden Raysmith AM Marion Webster AM

Bequests 22/23

Anne Bourke Betty and Michael Phillips

In-kind supporters

Hall and Wilcox Herbert Smith Freehills

Event partners

Alcohol and Drug Foundation Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform

Andrew and Renata Flinders University

Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law UNSW Give2Asia

Greenpeace Australia

Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network Human Technology Institute UTS

Australian International Development Network Ktisis Capital
Sweltering Cities

Community Foundations Australia Tripple

Economic Justice Australia Unharm
University of Queensland



A Special Thank You

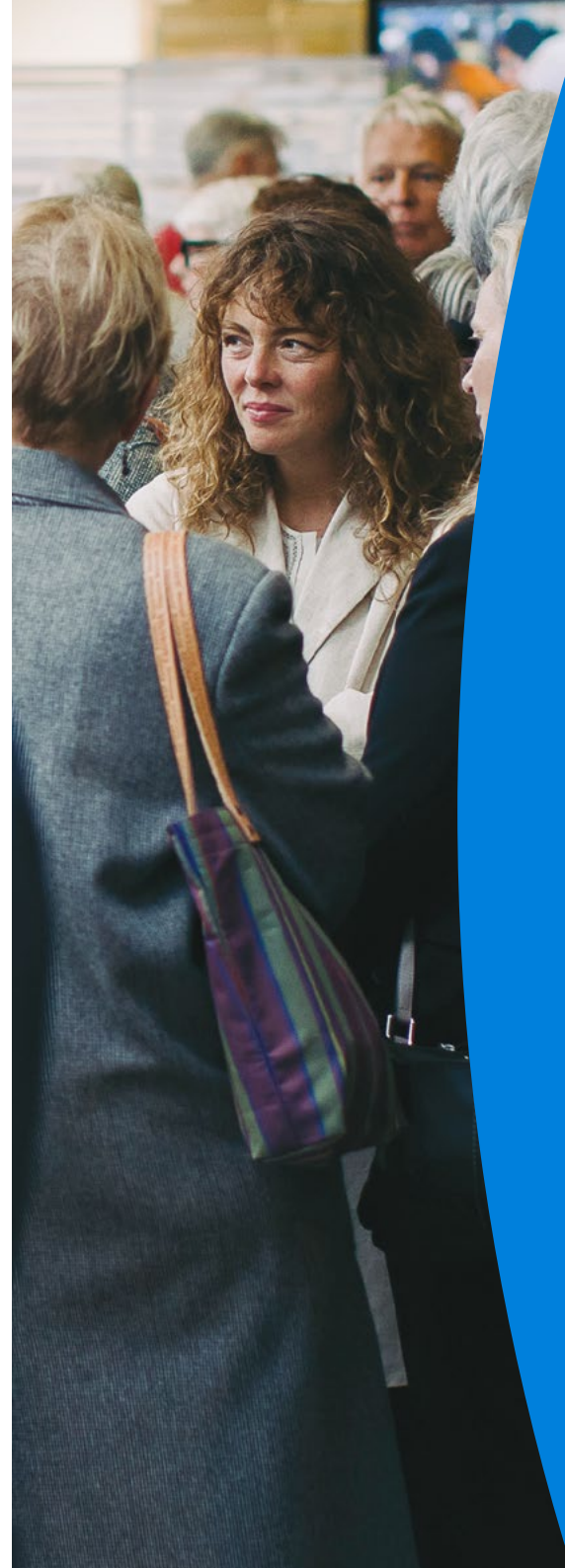
Australian Communities Foundation is especially grateful for the support of our ACF Friends – a special group of supporters of the work we do towards a fairer and more sustainable Australia.

The ongoing support of this group has enabled us to build our capacity and invest in new strategic projects, such as the launch of Australia’s first formal philanthropic hub, the Community of Giving, in 2018.

As a token of our appreciation for our Friends, we offer unique opportunities for this group to get together and engage with community partners, including exclusive invitations from arts and culture organisations. Friends are also the first to hear about new developments at ACF.

There are a number of ways you can become an ACF Friend – whether that’s committing to leaving a bequest to ACF, donating money for our strategic work, referring people to ACF, volunteering on the ACF Board or a committee, or providing other in-kind support.

To learn more about ACF Friends, contact our team on **03 9412 0412** or email info@communityfoundation.org.au





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