



# 2023 SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

HEALING AND GROWING TOGETHER



**Highways  
and Byways**

HEALING THE LAND.  
HEALING OURSELVES.  
TOGETHER.

# OUR 2023 PROGRAM

## HEALING AND GROWING TOGETHER



Each year *Highways and Byways - Healing the Land, Healing Ourselves, Together* provides small grants to community organisations for projects that address disadvantage and exclusion within towns and communities, especially in rural and regional Australia. This year, our program theme is 'Healing and Growing Together'.

This is in recognition of the environmental and social challenges that rural and regional communities have endured over the last few years. Drought, bushfires and floods have ravaged parts of the country, resulting in the loss of life and property, significant impacts on species and the destruction of vast tracts of land and habitat. The Covid19 pandemic has also affected our very way of living. Long periods of isolation and restrictions on movement, education and trade has affected all segments of the population, but none more so than vulnerable communities, including people living in poverty, older persons, persons with disabilities, youth, and Indigenous people[1].

We were therefore keen to support projects that encourage environmental and ecological restoration and rehabilitation, and projects that bring communities back together, to reconnect and to reduce isolation and loneliness. We wanted to support opportunities for people to collaborate and form new partnerships, where they could develop new skills and obtain new knowledge that would allow them to manage their land and environs sustainably into the future. We wanted to encourage

and support the emergence of new leaders. We also wanted to foster Indigenous identity and cultural connections, through collaboration and connection, between people and with Country.

Twenty projects will receive small grants from Highways and Byways this year. Competition for funding was fierce, and we received many more applications than we could fund. But we are excited by the projects selected. As you will read in the following pages, these projects stretch the depth and breadth of the nation and represent a diverse range of activity that will not only care for land, waters and country, but also for the people who inhabit them.

Our grants would not be possible without the support of our donors – and we thank them for their continued generosity.

*IMAGE FRONT: Members of the Country Women's Association in Tasmania Online Branch undertook a planting day to grow produce for local food banks (2022 small grant recipient).*

*IMAGE TOP: Container of Dreams in NSW held a workshop to teach community members the skills to build wildlife nesting boxes (2022 small grant recipient).*

[1] United Nations:  
[www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/everyone-included-covid-19.html](http://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/everyone-included-covid-19.html)

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# GRANTS BY LOCATION

## GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION ACROSS AUSTRALIA



# GRANT RECIPIENTS & PROJECTS

## 1. MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH ART

Creative Country Association Inc  
Murgon, QLD (Waka Waka Country)  
\$3,111

Creative Country Association will deliver *Mental Health Through Art*, an active program of cultural development to enhance individual well-being and encourage community cohesion, in a region currently confronting one of the highest annual suicide rates in Australia.

Monthly art classes will be held at the Ancient Songbird Centre, a new art gallery recently opened in Murgon by Creative Country Association. The classes will be open to and welcoming of all local residents, including farmers and youth from the nearby Cherbourg Aboriginal community. Classes will be led by visual artist Angela Pude.



## 2. WILDHORSE WELLNESS PROJECT

Wildhorse FM  
Yarraman, QLD (Waka Waka Country)  
\$4,000

Wild Horse FM is a community radio station airing in the Yarraman, Blackbutt, Cooyar and Maidenwell regions of southeast Queensland. The *Wildhorse Wellness Project* will address issues of community loneliness, isolation and mental health through a wellness program embedded into the day-to-day broadcasting of the network. It will include a range of activities centred around five wellness themes:

- Getting healthy - for example, a community morning walk to music and playing 'get up' and boogie music throughout the day.
- Learning – podcasts to expand knowledge and specific learning content like a gardening show.
- Showing kindness – five-second "shout outs" to let loved ones know others are thinking of them and feel-good sessions celebrating the community.
- Connecting more – a coffee and chat session at local parks or cafes, and supporting community meetings and events with a positive/upbeat presence.
- Taking notice – mindfulness cues throughout the day.

These and other wellness activities will be informed by Bunyarra Wellbeing Co, a mental health counselling, coaching and consultancy service operating in regional and remote Queensland.

## 3. GROWING THE FUTURE: SUSTAINABLE VEGETABLE GARDEN LEARNING RESOURCE

Roman Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba  
(St Mary's School Goondiwindi)  
Goondiwindi, QLD (Bigambul Country)  
\$2,120

St Mary's High School in Goondiwindi, Queensland will develop a sustainable garden and gardening program. Students will be involved in all facets of garden management, including planning, planting, maintenance, and eventual harvesting of garden produce. They will be supported by teachers, parents, and members of the wider community.

The program will provide students with an opportunity to gain new knowledge and skills in agriculture, biology, ecology, budgeting and environmental science, and a wider appreciation of the nutritional and health benefits of fresh produce. It will also teach them valuable skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and teamwork. Produce grown in the garden will be donated to local community groups and used in the school's Tuck Shop.

#### 4. NATIVE BEEHIVE MAKING WORKSHOP

Container of Dreams

Drake, NSW (Bundjalung Country)

\$3,865

Container of Dreams will hold a one-day workshop for residents of Drake and the surrounding districts of NSW to construct insulated hives for native stingless bees. Native stingless bees have a long history as pollinators in Australia, however, they confront a range of threats to their ongoing viability including drought, fire, climate change and loss of plant diversity. The *Native Beehive Making Workshop* will raise awareness about Australian native stingless bee species and inspire action that encourages them to thrive in a region that was significantly impacted by the 2019-2020 bushfires. The workshop will provide participants with the technical skills to create and manage a hive, as well as the use of tools and equipment, and a social opportunity for people experiencing social isolation. Each participant will construct one beehive to take home and install across the region.

#### 5. HEALING THE LAND

Coraki CWA Preschool

Coraki, NSW (Bundjalung Country)

\$4,000

Coraki CWA Preschool in Coraki NSW will establish a bushtucker garden to reintroduce flora and fauna into its playground after its premises were inundated by flood waters in 2022. Children, educators, families, and the wider community will work cooperatively to plan and construct the garden, with all work occurring when the children are present so that they can be fully engaged

throughout the process. Once established, the garden will remain accessible to the public who will be encouraged to work alongside the children and educators in its ongoing care. The project aims to re-establish community relationships impacted by not only the Covid19 pandemic but the 2022 floods, which widely affected the township. The preschool acknowledges the importance of bringing the community together for a collaborative and healing initiative at this time.

#### 6. CONNECTING WARREN INDIGENOUS FAMILIES TO THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL & CULTURAL HERITAGE

RiverSmart Australia

Warren, NSW (Wayliwan Country)

\$3,330

RiverSmart Australia will host tours of the Macquarie Marshes/Maliyanga Ngurra for Indigenous families from the Warren region of NSW. The Macquarie Marshes are one of the largest inland wetlands in south-eastern Australia and a major waterbird breeding area. The Marshes also hold significant cultural values for the local Wayliwan people. Warren and the surrounding regions are highly disadvantaged, with significant levels of domestic violence, disenfranchised youth, limited career opportunities and social support. Activities that give people a sense of pride, belonging and knowledge of culture are considered important to addressing these issues. The tours will also provide an opportunity for recent graduates of a TAFE NSW Indigenous tour guiding course to showcase their skills. This may, in turn, encourage other members of the community to pursue similar roles.



IMAGE: Members of Drake Village Women's Shed and Backtrack Youth Works created a sensory garden in Drake in NSW (2022 small grant recipient).

## 7. WARRABINGA WIRADJURI INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY EXPO

Warrabinga Native Title Claimants  
Aboriginal Corporation  
Mudgee, NSW (Wiradjuri Country)  
\$4,000

Warrabinga Native Title Claimants Aboriginal Corporation will stage an *Indigenous Cultural Sustainability Expo* in Mudgee, NSW to promote awareness of Indigenous culture and land management practices. The Expo will feature speakers on cultural environmental and sustainability practices; demonstrations on bush tucker cooking and cultural practices such as weaving, art, language, toolmaking, dance, and didgeridoo; and activities for children, including painting and games.

The Expo aims to encourage yarning, reconnection and well-being following the Covid19 pandemic, and the uptake of Indigenous environmental practices to sustain the land for future generations. It will also provide an economic boost to the region's business and tourism sector, while also building the region's brand as a destination to learn about and experience Indigenous culture.

## 8. BUILDING A REGENERATIVE CULTURE IN THE CENTRAL WEST

Wambuul Permaculture  
Bathurst, NSW (Wiradjuri Country)  
\$2,700

Throughout 2022 Wambuul Permaculture delivered a course in sustainable permaculture. Its program, which was led by accredited permaculture teachers examined sustainable/regenerative food production, landscapes and community design. As a result of this program, there now exists a network of permaculture practitioners in the central-west of NSW.

The *Building a Regenerative Culture in the Central West* project will build on this momentum, creating spaces for the community to continue to come together in a less formal setting to share experiences and further their learning. Three events, held quarterly, will provide updates on the permaculture curriculum and information sharing from across the region. Keynote speakers will include permaculture expert and educator Rowe Morrow, and Cathie Hale, an award-winning environmental activist and local permaculture market gardener. Graduates of the 2022 course will also share their permaculture designs.

## 9. WOMEN'S HEALING

Pejar Local Aboriginal Land Council  
Goulburn, NSW (Gundungurra Country)  
\$4,000

Pejar Local Aboriginal Land Council will deliver a two-day workshop for Indigenous women focused on women's issues and healing. Many in this community have had recent experiences of 'sorry business' (the grief that comes with the loss of life and a loved one). The workshop aims to improve the well-being and mental health of participants, through shared experiences, shared grief, and connection with culture. It will also provide an avenue of support for the participants and a new community of Indigenous women with whom they can connect culturally. Activities will include yarning circles, art, and weaving.

The workshop will be held in Goulburn, a known meeting place for many different Indigenous groups, and will be inclusive of women from Mulwaree, Wollondilly, Wiradjuri, Gundungarra, Dharrook (Dharug), Tharawal (Dharawal), Tarlo, Lachlan, Pajong, Parramarragoo, Cookmal, Burra Burra and Ngunawal groups.



## 10. TREE IDENTIFICATION & SEED COLLECTING

Brungle/Tumut Local Aboriginal Land Council

Tumut, NSW (Wiradjuri Country)

**\$4,000**

Brungle/Tumut Local Aboriginal Land will provide an opportunity for the local Indigenous community to connect to Country through workshops to identify and record trees and species of cultural significance, and to collect seeds for propagation.

The *Tree Identification and Seed Collecting* project has been developed at the request of the local Indigenous community, who are eager to improve their knowledge of culturally significant trees and seeds.

Trees and seeds can provide valuable insight into Indigenous history, including where and how Indigenous people lived and used local resources. Some seeds can also hold special or spiritual significance. Knowledge of culturally significant trees is also important to ensure the future protection of these trees, and the propagation of native flora can support local revegetation efforts.

## 11. FOSTERING COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS & SKILLS AROUND GRASSLAND RESTORATION IN THE BARANDUDA-WODONGA AREA

Baranduda Landcare

Baranduda, VIC (Jaitmatang Country)

**\$4,000**

Baranduda Landcare, Kiewa Catchment Landcare Group and Wodonga Urban Landcare Network will come together to promote the restoration of native grasslands in the Baranduda and Wodonga areas of north-east Victoria. They will facilitate two events:

- a field day where participants will learn about successful and innovative techniques for re-establishing native grasses within revegetation areas; and
- a workshop at the Our Native Garden Nursery (a Landcare-managed nursery) where participants will learn about propagation/ seed collection with a focus on native grasses.

Native grasses are often forgotten in revegetation projects due to difficulty in establishment from weed competition, despite their important role in providing habitat, pollination, and soil organic matter. These events will therefore promote awareness of the importance of native grasses in the ecosystem, encourage people to include them in their plantings and promote connectivity in the wider Landcare community through a cross-network partnership.

## 12. ITJUMATJ WOKA, ITJUMATJ WALA, ITJUMATJ YENBENA

Trust for Nature

Wangaratta, VIC (Bangerang Country)

**\$4,000**

Itjumatj woka, itjumatj wala, itjumatj yenbena means 'healthy country, healthy water, healthy people' in the language of the Bangerang people. A recent cultural mapping exercise undertaken by the Bangerang people across the Wangaratta area identified culturally significant trees, many of which are suffering from lack of care, including lack of pruning, absence of cultural burning, historical soil compaction and nutrient enrichment from past grazing activities.

Trust for Nature will work with Bangerang traditional owners to maintain these culturally significant trees. The project will take a holistic approach to healing the land, addressing issues of soil health, tree health and water management, providing opportunities for Bangerang people to connect to Country in a meaningful way and to develop practical caring for Country skills, particularly about significant tree management and associated soil and water health.

## 13. ST KILIAN'S PARISH COMMUNITY GARDEN

St Kilian's Parish

Bendigo, VIC (Dja Dja

Wurrung/Taungurung Country)

**\$3,270**

St Kilian's Parish is in the process of becoming an Earthcare Parish Community and will establish a community garden within the church grounds.

The *St Kilian's Community Garden* project will enhance opportunities for social interaction amongst parish members and groups associated with the parish while at the same time providing a low-cost, safe venue where people can cooperate and learn new skills related to food production (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous and inclusive of Indian, Karen and Filipino parishioners).

The garden will also serve as an educative resource for students at St Kilian's Primary School, DOXA School (an alternative Catholic education school for teenagers at risk) and L'Arche (a community of people with and without intellectual disabilities), and will be a gathering place for parishioners before and after Mass and funeral services.

#### **14. SWARM MONITORING PROJECT**

Woodend Bee Friendly Society  
Woodend, VIC  
(Woiworung/Djadjawurung Country)  
**\$3,000**

Woodend Bee Friendly Society (WBFS) will undertake a research initiative to identify the extent to which swarms of the European honeybee (an exotic species) are posing an ecological and nuisance hazard through their occupation of tree hollows and cavities which would otherwise be used by native animals and birds.

Approximately 150 'bait boxes' constructed by the local Men's Shed will be distributed across defined and mapped areas of the Macedon Ranges region. The boxes will be monitored weekly over a four-month period by members of the WBFS. While the positive impacts of pollination are widely known, the deleterious effects of bee swarms on native fauna habitats and the ecology of the natural landscape are largely unknown. This study aims to gain some insight into the extent of the problem and inform the development of future ecological management strategies by environmental authorities.

#### **15. ART, WELLBEING, HEALING ROOM**

Kirrae Health Service Inc  
Purnim, VIC (Gunditjimara Country)  
**\$4,000**

Kirrae Health Service will convert a disused office space into an art, well-being and healing room where it will provide a supported art therapy program to its Indigenous clients experiencing mental health, substance abuse and other social or personal issues.

For many in this region, Covid19 and lockdowns exacerbated issues of social isolation, unemployment, family dysfunction, violence, school refusal, anxiety, depression, self-harm, and agoraphobia, with some community members still reluctant to leave their homes for fear of the virus or shame. Participants will be encouraged to share their stories through art, which is known to promote wellbeing, and encourage a reconnection with one's culture, with others, and with the wider community.

#### **16. SEYMOUR WETLAND & CONSERVATION AREA RESTORATION PROJECT**

Seymour Community Action Group Inc  
Bicheno, TAS (Paredarerme Country)  
**\$4,000**

Seymour Community Action Group Inc (SCAGI) will develop a management plan for an area of 54ha which

was recently incorporated into the Seymour Conservation Area.

This area was once industrialised land that has been revegetated over many years by SCAGI. It now comprises coastal heath, freshwater wetlands and coastal grassland. It is part of the coastal ecosystem and creates a corridor which creates a link to the foreshore from the hinterland. The management plan will give the community a framework and pathway to manage and protect the area in the long-term.

SCAGI will also engage the local community through working bees and workshops to collect seeds and propagate tube stock to be re-introduced on-site, and will undertake weeding to enable natural regrowth and protect self-seeded young plants.

#### **17. PIESSE PARK ACTIVITY TRAIL**

Katanning's Piesse Park Community Inc  
Katanning, WA  
(Wiilman/Goreng/Kaniyang Country)  
**\$3,070**

Piesse Park Community Inc will undertake revegetation works and develop an activity trail across Piesse Park in Katanning, Western Australia.

Piesse Park is a public reserve that features several freshwater lakes, walkways and cycleways, a nature playground, and various public amenities. An eco-centre provides year-round environmental education programs. It is also an area of significance to the local Noongar community. The new activity trail will extend a wildlife corridor across the Park and feature activities marked out along a pathway, bordered by native plantings, logs and rocks.

#### **18. COLLABORATIVE ART WORKSHOP FOR YOUTH**

Kulungah Myah Family Centre Inc  
Kardinya, WA (Wajuk Country)  
**\$1,650**

Kulungah Myah Community Centre will deliver a youth-focused art workshop led by Aboriginal artist Julianne Wade.

This collaborative activity aims to promote an awareness and appreciation of the culture of the local Noongar people, with a particular emphasis on Indigenous approaches to environmental care. The program has a strong social aspect, helping to generate belonging, connection, awareness, and understanding amongst youth within the local community, which are all necessary elements to supporting mental health and wellbeing post-COVID. It also has a strong educational focus and aims to inspire participants to view nature with respect and wonder, and to develop a sense of personal responsibility towards environmental protection.

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**19. CARE FOR CREATION - LISTENING TO FIRST NATIONS & CELTIC VOICES (A WELLSRING AND IONA LISTENING PILGRIMAGE)**

Wellspring Community Inc  
Alice Springs, NT (Arrernte Country)  
**\$3,950**

“Care for Creation - Listening to First Nations and Celtic voices” is a component of a wider national pilgrimage by the Wellspring Community (an Australia-wide ecumenical community working to promote spirituality, social justice, care for the earth and a just relationship between Indigenous Australians and later comers) and its Scottish counterpart, the Iona Community.

The Pilgrimage will provide listening spaces and places for conversations about the spiritual roots of caring for creation. These conversations will include locals, First Nations people, local Christian and contemplative communities, the leaders of the Iona and Wellspring communities and other visitors. Events in Alice Springs during October 2023 will involve time will be spent on Country with Arrernte Elders to engage with their art and Country, and with the local communities who are dealing with the complexities of living in Central Australia at this time.

**20. WADEYE MENS SHED LANDCARE PROJECT**

Thamarrurr Development Corporation  
Wadeye, NT (Murrinh-patha Country)  
**\$4,000**

Thamarrurr Development Corporation will deliver a project to involve disengaged Indigenous youth, who have been assigned to the Thamarrurr Men’s Shed by the courts, in Landcare activities. The program will be delivered through the Wadeye Men’s Shed, in Wadeye in the Northern Territory.

In many communities of this region, there are high rates of disengagement amongst young people who may not be attending school or participating in other activities. This can lead to feelings of isolation, disconnection, and a lack of purpose, and can often play out in anti-social behaviour.

The project provides an opportunity for young people to be mentored by senior men and activity supervisors who can act as positive role models and provide guidance and support. This can be especially important for young people who may not have positive role models in their lives. It will provide a safe and supportive environment for young people to build new skills and develop a sense of accomplishment, foster their sense of belonging and purpose, and encourage their reconnection with their community, culture and country.



IMAGE: Participants of a BioBlitz of the Lake Pedder perimeter in Tasmania convened by Lake Pedder Restoration Inc (2022 small grant recipient).



# HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS

HEALING THE LAND, HEALING OURSELVES, TOGETHER

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*IMAGE: Macintyre Ag Alliance held an Agriculture Summit in Goondiwindi in Queensland (2022 small grant recipient).*