

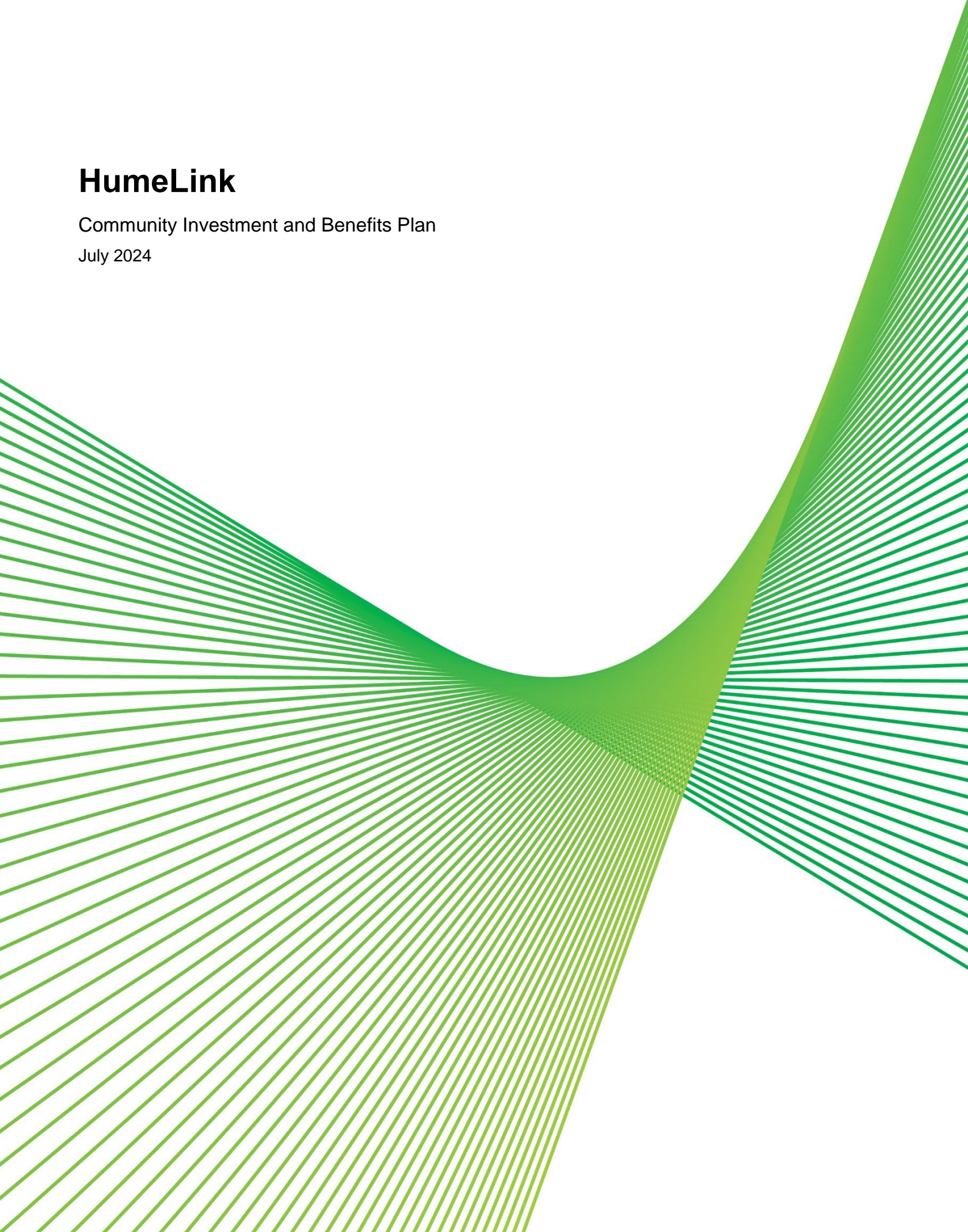


People. Power. Possibilities.

HumeLink

Community Investment and Benefits Plan

July 2024



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Acknowledgement of Country

Transgrid and HumeLink acknowledge the Traditional Custodians and owners of the Wiradjuri, Ngunawal, Ngarigo and Gundungurra lands on which our project is proposed.

We pay our respects to their elders, past, present, and emerging, and recognise their continuing connections to the lands and waters.

1. HumeLink Community Investment and Benefits Plan

1.1. Introduction

The Australian energy landscape is transitioning to a greater mix of low-emission renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar. To support this transition and connect Australian communities and businesses to these lower cost energy sources, the national electricity grid needs to be developed and strengthened.

Transgrid will play a critical role in this development, to ensure the secure operation of the NSW electricity network as part of a more robust and sustainable energy market, and its vision is to 'lead the transition to a clean energy future'. Transgrid currently operates and manages the high voltage electricity transmission network in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, connecting generators, distributors, and major end-users.

1.2. HumeLink project

HumeLink is a new 500kV transmission line, a project of national significance, which will connect Wagga Wagga, Bannaby, as shown in Figure 1. The HumeLink project will reinforce the backbone of the east coast's transmission network, delivering cheaper, more reliable, and more sustainable electricity. It will increase the amount of renewable energy that can be delivered to consumers across the National Electricity Market (NEM), helping to facilitate the transition to a low emissions future.

The HumeLink project comprises about 365km of proposed new transmission lines and structures and new or upgraded infrastructure at three substation locations to enable the connection of renewable energy sources into the electricity grid.

HumeLink is a Critical State Significant Infrastructure project which has been identified as a priority by the Australian Energy Market Operator and the Australian and NSW governments. It will provide better access to cheaper renewable energy generators, and help reduce electricity prices for consumers, while meeting increasing demand for electricity.

HumeLink is subject to determination by the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) under the National Electricity Rules. All expenditures on HumeLink must demonstrate prudence and efficiency throughout the delivery process.

Figure 1 HumeLink Project Area



1.3. Purpose

The purpose of the HumeLink Community Investment and Benefits Plan (CIBP) is to guide Transgrid's community investment work within the HumeLink Project footprint, to address identified impacts, and to deliver social outcomes and benefits, for local communities.

This CIBP outlines how Transgrid will engage and work with communities and stakeholders to identify community needs and develop investment opportunities that can benefit the community.

1.4. Transgrid Social Licence framework







Transgrid places the voice of the community at the centre of our decision making. We strive to build positive and lasting relationships with our local communities, and create tangible benefits for energy consumers, local communities, and the environment as part of our commitment to building a sustainable clean energy future.

Transgrid's Social Licence framework outlines:

- Our approach to building and maintaining Social Licence across its projects and operations activities.
- the elements of expenditure that can be categorised as Social Licence investment.
- the project level delivery tools and plans contributing to achieving Social Licence
- a decision-making process for the identification, evaluation, scoping, planning, cost/benefit appraisal (where possible) and delivery of prudent and efficient Social Licence investment opportunities
- the Social Licence investment governance, monitoring, and evaluation process.

Figure 2 Transgrid Social Licence framework

Objective Demonstrate social licence, measured as broad community and stakeholder acceptance of Transgrid and its major projects

Element	Engagement			Delivery				
	 Community and Stakeholders	 Landowners	 Indigenous Community	 Local social and economic outcomes	 Aboriginal Participation & Development	 Community Investment & Benefits		
Approach	Listen to and take into account the needs, aspirations, and concerns of our stakeholders	Involve stakeholders in a constructive and transparent manner on the need for energy infrastructure, impacts and benefits	Have robust and transparent route selection processes which consider community feedback in decision making	Ensure compensation for landowners is fair, equitable and transparent	Incorporate Indigenous communities' aspirations and cultural heritage aspects in our planning and execution	Impacted communities receive demonstrable employment and economic opportunities through project delivery	Incorporate Indigenous communities' aspirations and cultural heritage aspects in our planning and execution	Ensure impacted communities receive substantial benefits that adequately address social legacy expectations
Project level delivery	Community, Government and Stakeholder Engagement Plan Social Impact Assessment	Community Consultative Groups Place Manager Engagement TAC Engagement Landowner engagement AEMC, AEIC, AER and DCCEEW Engagement	Route selection process Community Consultative Groups Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or REF engagement	Place Manager and Land Access Officer Engagement Access through consent to enter Property Management Plan Strategic Benefit Payments Social legacy options analysis and CBA Investigating near neighbour payments	Yura Ngura Indigenous Advisory support Reconciliation Action Plan Cultural Heritage assessment Social procurement - Open and select tender commissioning (RFP/EOIs) for community benefit Strategic Partnerships and Major Project cross-sectoral initiatives (advocacy, policy, volunteering, sponsorships) for systems change	Local Workforce Participation and Development Plan Local Industry Participation Plan Strategic Partnerships and Major Project cross-sectoral initiatives (advocacy, policy, volunteering, sponsorships) for systems change Social procurement – Open and select tender commissioning (RFP/EOIs) for community benefit	Aboriginal Participation Plan Aboriginal Procurement Plan Strategic Partnerships and Major Project cross sectoral initiatives (advocacy, policy,volunteering, sponsorships) for systems change Social procurement – Open and select tender commissioning (RFP/EOIs) for community benefit	Ensure impacted communities receive substantial benefits that adequately address social legacy expectations Project Community Investment and Benefit Strategy Social Impact Assessments, community workshops and feedback on identify themes and opportunities to support. Project Delivery Partner Community Investment and Benefits Plans Strategic Partnerships from a Major Projects portfolio perspective sectoral initiatives (advocacy, policy, volunteering, sponsorships) for systems change TG Community Partnership Grants + Delivery Partner grants Open/select tender commissioning (RFP/EOIs) for community benefit initiatives that are aligned to identified social impact themes

Ongoing engagement with our stakeholders, monitoring, evaluation and reporting to ensure the optimal outcomes for consumers and communities.

By securing and maintaining Social Licence, Transgrid is best able to achieve the following objectives:

- deliver critical transmission projects for electricity consumers of NSW, creating shared value for regional communities and minimising risk of delay or community opposition.
- optimise the delivery of positive social and economic outcomes (social value) beyond mitigating or reducing any adverse impacts to communities and regions (or potential impacts) introduced through our activities.
- build lasting relationships and nurture trust with our stakeholders.

2. Community and stakeholder engagement

The engagement approach taken with the CIBP aligns with best practice engagement and aims to support building and maintaining Social License through building relationships and trust through communicating transparently and consistently, involving community in decision making and solutions, and responding with meaningful actions.

2.1. Project stakeholders

The HumeLink Project Area covers the local government areas of – Upper Lachlan Shire, Yass Valley, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Snowy Valleys and Wagga Wagga City, including the postcodes of 2650, 2651, 2663, 2730, 2720, 2653, 2590, 2722, 2582, 2618, 2584, 2579, 2581, 2580, and 2583.

Table 1 lists the community and stakeholder groups from the HumeLink Project Area that Transgrid will work with throughout the life of the project to deliver on this CIBP.

Table 1 Community and stakeholder groups

Stakeholders	Description
Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brungle Tumut LALC • Wagga Wagga LALC • Onerwal LALC (Yass) • Pejar LALC (Goulburn) • Wagonga LALC (Narooma)
Community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Consultative Groups • Delivery Stakeholder Reference Groups
Not for profit community organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups who provide support to communities and deliver social outcomes
State/Federal Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe McGirr (Independent), Wagga Wagga • Kristy McBain (Lab), Eden-Monaro • Wendy Tuckerman (Lib), Goulburn • Stephanie Cooke (Nat), Cootamundra • Justin Clancy (Lib) - Albury
NSW Government & Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional NSW Riverina and Major Infrastructure Developers • NSW Department of Education & Training

Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wagga Wagga City Council • Snowy Valleys Council • Upper Lachlan Shire Council • Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council • Yass Valley Council
Academic Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles Sturt University
Regional Development Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDA Riverina CEO, Wagga Wagga
Industry Capability Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICN CEO, Riverina and Southern Inland
Registered Training Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAFE
Non-Government Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Australia Institute

2.2. Engagement in the region

Since March 2021, Transgrid has undertaken extensive consultation with stakeholders and the community regarding HumeLink. Engagement activities across the project area have varied in style and format to ensure individual needs and circumstances of the local community are met and areas of interest are identified. Engaging early with the local community and continuing throughout project planning ensures the approach to engagement is effective and addresses community concerns. As a result, Transgrid has established strong local relationships across the project area and understand their concerns and areas of interest.

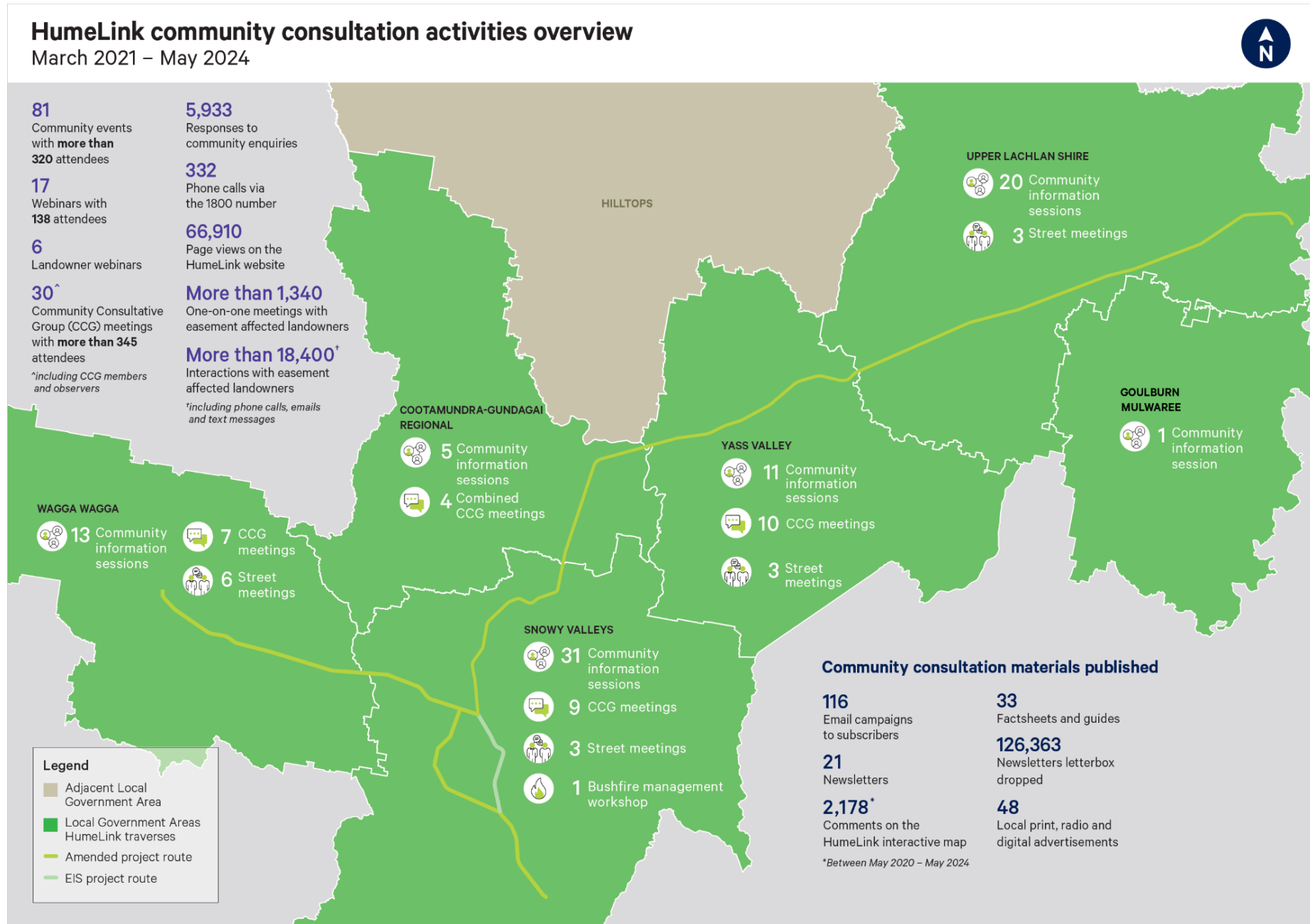
Throughout early planning, community investment has been a key theme of conversations between Transgrid, the local community and interested stakeholders. Between October 2022 and May 2023, community investment was discussed at community events in Gunning, Tumberumba, Taralga, Bannaby, Adelong, Batlow and Tumut, and at online community webinars targeting interested community members who were unable to attend in-person events.

Community Consultative Groups (CCGs) were established to provide a forum for community members, stakeholders and local councils to seek information from Transgrid and inform project planning. Between February 2022 and May 2023, community investment was explored at Community Consultative Group (CCG) meetings in Snowy Valleys, Wagga Wagga and Gundagai.

The approach to community investment and the themes identified in the CIBP have been shaped in response to the engagement Transgrid has undertaken. In addition to engaging the local community, landowners and stakeholders, local elected members and the five Local Councils have been engaged to confirm the CIBP themes. Transgrid's relationship with local organisations, including Regional Development Australia Riverina have also been pivotal in defining the approach to community investment and ensuring it meets the needs of the region.

The approach to community investment has continued to be refined since the appointment of the HumeLink East and West Delivery Partners who have provided further research and insight.

Figure 3 HumeLink consultation activities between March 2021 - May 2024



3. Strategic Areas of Focus

To determine the areas of focus for HumeLink’s Community Investment and Benefits activities, Transgrid consolidated insights from community and stakeholder engagement during project planning in 2022 – 2023. Including key stakeholder meetings, Community Information Sessions and Community Consultative Group meetings. Further insights were obtained from local government, impacted landowners, organisations, stakeholders, local business and HumeLink project proponents. The information gathered identified five common themes, to create an evidence base in establishing HumeLink CIBP focus areas.

Development of the Strategic Areas of Focus has also been informed by the extensive program of community and stakeholder engagement detailed in Section 2.

The Strategic Areas of Focus comprise the following and are described in detail in Table 2:

- Community connection
- Local education and skills development
- Local industry development
- Care for Country
- Transgrid social legacy initiatives

Table 2 CIBP Strategic Areas of Focus

Objective	Overview	Impact/Outcomes
Community Connection	<p><i>Community connection</i> includes the desire for members of the community to feel they are connected to one another. This theme seeks to support initiatives which address social isolation, mental health and improved regional telecommunication.</p> <p>Community connection may also offer Transgrid and Delivery Partner employee engagement and volunteering opportunities for community initiatives, events and potential disaster recovery efforts within the Project LGAs.</p> <p>This focus area seeks to address potential community impacts as defined in the HumeLink EIS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social inclusion and community connectedness • Enabling regional telecommunications • Improved economic productivity. • Improved community mental health • Grant CPP funding for community organisations • Providing support to longer term initiatives that could be supported by multiple Transgrid projects that impact the same community area.
Local education and skills development	<p><i>Education and skills development</i> to include investment in the transmission workforce development aspects (jobs, skills and training) as well as career pathways to the broader construction skills and other skills in need by the community potentially supporting to the project (maintenance, catering, cleaning etc)</p> <p>This focus area seeks to share those opportunities as widely as possible and align with plans for local workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased local workforce. • Increased employment opportunities • Job readiness and employment for people in regions living in entrenched disadvantage in the project area LGAs Increased skilling and employment opportunities for the local community. • Providing support to longer term initiatives that could be supported by multiple Transgrid projects that impact the same community area.

	<p>participation and development, local supply chain participation and development and Aboriginal participation and procurement.</p> <p>Encourage and support local education, employment or training opportunities in the local area that create positive cultural, economic and/or social outcomes for the community.</p> <p>Engage government, other major project developers and community organisations to develop skill and employment programs, including investment in regional workforce development programs (jobs, skills, and training). E.g., Transgrid participation at Regional NSW Riverina Major Projects Roundtable meetings.</p> <p>This focus area seeks to address potential community impacts as defined in the HumeLink EIS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retention of local people in the Project region. • Strengthening employment outcomes through cross-sectoral collaboration. • Social return on investment
<p>Local Industry development</p>	<p><i>Local industry development</i> will involve collaboration with HumeLink delivery partners on strategies which aim to identify and support the capacity and capability of local and regional businesses.</p> <p>This applies to acquisition of goods and services and the hiring of workers when social outcomes are targeted through the purchase of goods and services.</p> <p>To promote and support the local community and the local economy in a way that is socially sustainable.</p> <p>Purchasing or hiring from social enterprises/non-profit organisations which exist to employ marginalised or disadvantaged groups, such as the long-term unemployed, disengaged youth, single parents, migrants and refugees, and workers in transition (social procurement).</p> <p>This focus area seeks to address potential community impacts as defined in the HumeLink EIS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build local business capability to participate in Project tendering processes e.g., facilitating contract awards to small businesses through Transgrid's MoU with Industry Capability Network (ICN). • Creation of employment for disadvantaged people in the region through social and sustainable procurement. • Social return on investment
<p>Care for Country</p>	<p><i>Care for Country</i> encompasses both Transgrid's commitment to reconciliation with our First Nations partners' the importance of their enduring connection to Country within the Project LGAs. This strategy also seeks to identify and assess opportunities in the Project LGAs to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal participation and meeting procurement targets • Support for local community and participation in programs.

	<p>support and engage with local community groups to restore and offset vegetation loss from the HumeLink project.</p> <p>This focus area seeks to address potential community impacts as defined in the HumeLink EIS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting and improving the condition of our natural resources, soils, water and biodiversity. • Cultural heritage awareness and increased community volunteering on environmental projects. • Restoration of native vegetation from Project impacts
<p>Transgrid social legacy initiatives</p>	<p><i>Transgrid social legacy initiatives</i> aims to develop opportunities to promote community benefit beyond the life cycle of HumeLink project.</p> <p>This may involve addressing community needs and concerns by unlocking opportunities for the community through the project, such as the adaptive reuse of worker accommodation and Project assets post construction e.g. Facilitating community ownership and management of facilities/services to address community needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with delivery partners and local government to develop opportunities for longer term community benefits, post construction. • Creating a lasting social legacy • Enabling long term community prosperity. • Strengthening social license outcomes and corporate reputation • Social return on investment.

4. Investment selection process and assessment criteria

Transgrid recognises that the level of assessment and information to support proposed social licence investments should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the investments under consideration. The level should reflect the standard required to demonstrate prudence and efficiency, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Accordingly, the framework outlined in Section 4.1 provides a rigorous, multi-step identification and assessment process for significant, high value, priority and/or or high-risk social licence investment initiatives.

Expenditure may fall into one or more of the following categories, are exempted from the process outlined in Section 4.1:

- On-costs, such as publishing and printing of communications materials, room hire and catering for regional engagement sessions.
- Costs associated with a direct regulatory obligation – easement compensation and strategic benefit payments.
- Sponsorships, memberships, grants or similar.
- Other low value, low risk expenditure items.

For such spends, detailed justification and assessment is not warranted or efficient. Instead, a two-fold test should be applied:

Prudence test - supply evidence of the initiative being used on other major projects by Transgrid or Australian TNSPs, together with clear information demonstrating the relationship to the project.

Efficiency test – provide and substantiate benchmark rates from other projects and/or Australian jurisdictions. Compare supplier quote to benchmark rate and justify any material departure.





4.1. Community Investment identification and assessment process

Each initiative proposal will be developed and assessed in four steps:

- Engaging and consulting with the relevant stakeholders, screening and evaluating the different opportunities
- Drafting the opportunity proposal document,
- Assessment committee review, assessment, and endorsement,
- Management review and endorsement of the proposed initiative document.

Figure 4 below outlines the key actions associated with each step.

Figure 4 Community Investment Assessment Process

Steps	Activities
 <p>Consultation, screening and evaluation of potential opportunities</p>	<p>A. Engage and consult with the relevant internal and external stakeholders</p> <p>B. Identify the need and the expected outcomes</p> <p>C. Evaluate the different opportunities and streams</p> <p>D. Engage with potential partners</p>
 <p>Drafting the opportunity proposal (business case)</p>	<p>A. Draft the initiative proposal document using the screening questions/check list (using the <i>Smarty Grants</i> platform)</p> <p>B. Describe the Return on Investment (to the consumer and the community)</p> <p>C. Provide any additional information relevant to the initiative proposal including program inputs, activities, outputs as part of the Social Impact Reporting process</p>
 <p>Assessment committee review and endorsement</p>	<p>A. Review and evaluate the different aspects of the proposal</p> <p>B. Endorse the proposal document and/or recommend changes/edits to the proposal document</p>
 <p>Management review and endorsement</p>	<p>A. Review the initiative proposal document, the Assessment Committee recommendation and approve the proposal or request</p> <p>B. Socialise the endorsed opportunity through the Transgrid Advisory Council</p>

4.2. Proposal screening questions

The following screening questions should be investigated and addressed in the initiative proposal document, as relevant. These questions will assist in providing the reviewers and approvers of the initiative proposal with the necessary information to evaluate and approve the proposed initiative.

- Describe the initiative and/or partnership scope, drivers to recommend the initiative and expected impacts/outcomes?
- Initiative or partnership scope should include a description of the stakeholders consulted and their input, as/if applicable.
- Are there any community partners or funding support organisations assisting in achieving the initiative goals?

- Recommended implementing partner proposal and background, as/if applicable.
- Existing or planned similar initiatives (government and public) and description of potential synergies, if/as applicable.
- Details of any alternative funding option considered, used or to be pursued (e.g. government grants or concessional finance), if/as applicable.
- Drivers and objectives - should be linked to an impact introduced by the project or a community need and/or aspiration.
- How is the proposed initiative linked to the delivery of a specific transmission project?
- Will the proposed initiative or partnership provide a lasting, measurable, and tangible benefit to the community in which Transgrid operates? How will it be sustained, if applicable?
- Which community investment focus area(s) will it impact?
- Which of the Area of Influence (AoI) communities will the initiative impact?
- Is it aligned with relevant Transgrid policies and strategies?
- Description of the initiative's monitoring, evaluation, and reporting process/expectations
- Description of Transgrid's role in the execution of the proposed initiative/project? What resources are required from Transgrid? What are the timeline considerations for securing the internal approvals and impact/risk of delayed approvals, as/if relevant? What is the exit or sustainability strategy? Is a risk assessment required for the proposed initiative?
- Description of the required budget and expected execution timeline for the proposed initiative.
- Description of the cost benefit analysis, the Return on Investment (to Transgrid, the community and consumers) and demonstrates mutually beneficial outcomes, as/if applicable.
- Expected economic and/or social and/or environmentally sustainable outcomes for the AoI community in which it is to occur and expected outcomes for Transgrid and consumers.
- Will this initiative provide promotional and other reputation building opportunities for Transgrid before, throughout and after the execution phase?

4.3. Evaluation of multiple opportunities





If multiple investment opportunities are identified, within a limited budget, the matrix below would be used to provide a preliminary assessment and to prioritize which investment opportunities to pursue. The four criteria have equal weighting.

Table 3 Evaluation matrix

Potential opportunity	Community Needs	Initiative Delivery	Cost and Benefits	Sustainability	Total Scoring	Overall Ranking
Initiative A	e.g. Council strategic plan. CCG,	e.g. Geographical spread across project area	e.g. Reduced cost to government	e.g. Handover of project asset for community benefit/management	X	X
Initiative B						
Initiative C						

Each of the opportunity evaluation decision criteria have a weighting of 10 points.

Figure 5 – Opportunity evaluation decision criteria

Address a community need		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the project adequately address the community’s needs and aspirations? • Will the initiative increase the availability of needed resources to the community? • Will the initiative benefit a broad cross-section of the community? • Has the beneficiary received community development support from us in the past?
Sustainability		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the community keep the initiative running by itself once the assistance has gone? • Is the initiative sustainability or exit strategy practical?
Initiative Delivery		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the initiative require specialised technical expertise to both start and maintain? • Was a competent, experienced third party identified to implement?
Cost and benefit		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the cost of the initiative commensurate with the anticipated benefit from the project? • Will the community/beneficiary be able and willing to contribute to the project (normally through an in-kind contribution)?

4.4. HumeLink Social Impact Reporting

HumeLink’s Social Impact Reporting system has been customised to monitor and evaluate its community investments within monthly periods. The overall goal of the community investment social Impact Reporting is to demonstrate and evaluate progress of community initiatives. This reporting system will also capture and consolidate social performance across implementation and development of HumeLink’s Aboriginal Participation, Local Industry Participation, and Workforce Development plans which are aimed at increasing community benefits.

The community investment social Impact monitoring and reporting will employ a best practice Logical Framework approach to assess the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of each of the proposed initiatives against approved program objectives.

All data will be consistently captured by the Project team using the Project’s Social Impact Reporting dashboard, evidenced by statistical, qualitative and illustrative data.

An example Logical Framework for a sample initiative is included below (**Table 4**).

Table 4 –Logical Framework example: Community Connection –Rural Mental Health Program (sample)

Issues / Objectives	Activities	Risks / Challenges	Inputs	Performance Indicators	Outcomes	Variance	Reasons for variance	Corrective actions	Impact
<p>Address critical community and government concerns for HumeLink host communities.</p> <p>Mitigate risks identified through community consultation and EIS social impact assessments.</p> <p>Build and strengthen community mental health capacity.</p> <p>Build initiatives for communities impacted by HumeLink.</p>	<p><u>Pre-CPA 2 determination:</u></p> <p>Develop social impact reporting metrics to demonstrate program effectiveness.</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement</p> <p><u>Post determination:</u></p> <p>Community Investment agreement with program partner</p> <p>Establish target locations and community cohorts.</p> <p>Develop implementation plan</p>	<p>Recruitment</p> <p>Program participation.</p> <p>Community outreach in hard-to-reach/remote locations</p>	<p>2 x regional coordinators to operate across HumeLink project area.</p> <p>Community events –</p> <p>Training modules:</p> <p><i>Community Support Skills</i></p> <p><i>Workplace Support</i></p> <p><i>Personal wellbeing face-to-face sessions</i></p> <p><i>Heavy Industry Support Skills</i></p> <p><i>Farmer drought resilience training</i></p> <p><i>(Other training modules to be determined through community engagement)</i></p>	<p># of- community engagement activities</p> <p># of community events delivered</p> <p># of people engaged at advocacy events</p> <p># training programs / events delivered / hours</p> <p># training recipients</p> <p># community partner delivery organisations e.g., allied medical services, non-profit agencies</p> <p># locations</p> <p>#Transgrid / Delivery Partner employees engaged at community events</p>	<p>Positive role models / community participation / social inclusion / volunteering.</p> <p>Increased workforce participation</p> <p>Increased advocacy in support of mental health</p> <p>Socially inclusive communities</p> <p>Suicide prevention.</p> <p>Reduction in alcoholism</p> <p>Cost benefits to Government</p> <p>Regional cross sectoral collaborations</p> <p>Social return on investment (SROI)</p>	n/a	n/a	n/a	<p>Improved community resilience and capacity</p> <p>Reduced health risks / increased community safety</p> <p>Increased social capital / productivity.</p> <p>Positive community, stakeholder sentiment and social licence.</p>

5. Community investment and benefits activities

Transgrid has a number of well-established community investment and benefit programs operating in the HumeLink Project Area and has plans in place to ensure local and regional workforce participation and development.

5.1. Transgrid Community Partnership Program (CPP)

In addition to HumeLink Community Investment & Benefits programs, Transgrid's CPP plays an important role in establishing and maintaining Transgrid's social responsibility objectives. Through the provision of small grant funding for local initiatives, the CPP addresses the need for Transgrid to build relationships and create positive influence within communities it operates. They are also an important opportunity for our teams who live and work in these areas to connect with communities and establish or build positive local relationships.

Applications for the next round of grants funding through the CPP open bi-annually each year, currently in March and September as shown in **Table 5**.

Table 5 Funding applications

Year	First round	Second round
2024	March (completed)	September
2025	March	September
2026	March	September
2027	March	To be determined.

Community Investment support may be provided to eligible applicants, covering general community contributions, donations and sponsorships to assist in building stronger connections with communities and stakeholders for optimal social outcomes. Please refer to Section 4 for the CPP grant assessment process.

5.2. Transgrid Sponsorships

Transgrid supports communities throughout NSW and ACT with financial support via its Sponsorships Program. The focus of Transgrid sponsorships is to promote diversity and inclusion, as shown in **Table 6**, aimed at driving sustainable change through communities and regions throughout NSW and the ACT.

Table 6 Transgrid Sponsorships

Program	Description	Application to HumeLink
UNSW (University of New South Wales) Women in Engineering program	<p>Transgrid has partnered with UNSW to sponsor a scholarship and summer camp as part of the Women in Engineering program.</p> <p>The scholarship is available to a first-year undergraduate studying engineering at UNSW and provides an opportunity for the recipient to participate in a mentoring program and work experience at Transgrid.</p> <p>The camp takes place in January, with students from more than 70 schools in NSW</p>	<p>Opportunities for field-based mentorships on HumeLink aimed to generate employment outcomes.</p> <p>School visits to HumeLink project site and office locations within the project area of influence.</p>

	<p>visiting our sites and interacting with our people during the three-day experience.</p>	
The Clontarf Foundation	<p>The Clontarf Foundation is a charitable organisation that works to improve the education and employment prospects of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men.</p> <p>The program works on building students' self-esteem and confidence to help them complete year 12 in school and encourages them to participate in education, work, and society in a positive way.</p> <p>There are Clontarf academies in all our regional locations, which provide opportunities for our people across the business to support these young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through volunteering and community engagement programs.</p>	<p>Local opportunity for education and employment outcomes for this cohort within the project area.</p> <p>Program delivered at Mount Austin High School; Wagga Wagga situated within the HumeLink project area of influence.</p>
Girls at the Centre program (Smith Family)	<p>The <i>Girls at the Centre</i> program is an empowering initiative delivered by Smith Family that supports girls to maximize their educational experiences and create opportunities for young Australians in need.</p> <p>Specifically designed to counteract high absenteeism and school dropout rates among teenage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls, the program fosters constructive relationships between students, schools, families, and community members.</p> <p><i>Girls at the Centre</i> is a mentoring and support program for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous girls at Mount Austin High School. Their primary goal is to ensure that young women receive the utmost benefit from their education while also building aspirations, forming positive pathways and goals, and developing essential life skills.</p>	<p>Transgrid's support for a pilot program at Mount Austin High School, Wagga Wagga (within the Project area of influence). Pending success of the Pilot this may be extended to Goulburn.</p> <p>Potential local government engagement and workforce development support programs e.g. Learner Driver programs</p>
UTS (University of Technology Sydney) Women in Engineering and IT scholarship and Galuwa sponsorship	<p>These scholarships aim to increase the participation and retention of young women in the field of engineering.</p> <p>Students receive a three-year scholarship and participate in internships throughout their degree.</p> <p>The <i>Galuwa</i> sponsorship is awarded to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young women</p>	To be determined.

5.3. Regional Development Australia (RDA) Riverina Workforce Development Strategic Partnership

In late 2022, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Transgrid and Regional Development Australia (RDA) Riverina to invest in the region and drive workforce development and economic growth initiatives for Riverina communities.

Since 2022 Transgrid's HumeLink and EnergyConnect projects have invested \$1.5 million in a Workforce Development Strategic Partnership with RDA Riverina at Wagga Wagga, to support programs for jobs and skills development in the Murray and Riverina regions. The Partnership aims to leverage research to build upon existing skilling and employment programs across both regions with cross-sectoral program partners to accelerate workforce development by:

- Advocating to enable job creation across a range of industries and sectors.
- Increasing education and training opportunities; particularly school-based career and industry engagement programs to retain young people while supporting socioeconomic development.
- Attracting new workers to the regions, including skilled migration programs which will facilitate employment and social cohesion, and
- Developing specific skills.

The following RDA programs have been supported under this Workforce Development Strategic Partnership:

- **Riverina Knowledge Hub** – supporting advocacy for the region and the benefits of Transgrid's infrastructure and projects in the area.
- **Riverina Liveability Hub** – supporting the RDA's Country Change program, which aims to support efforts to attract people to the Riverina for work, education, and recreation. The program is regularly highlighted as a nation-leading, place-based solution to regional workforce development.
- **Riverina Workforce Hub** – Support for the Jobs Riverina Murray online employment platform. Jobs Riverina Murray was created to establish a platform for local business to advertise their vacancies at no cost and to provide an easily searchable platform for jobseekers in the Riverina and Murray regions.
- **Youth Pathways** – expanding RDA Riverina's successful 'Grow Our Own' program into the Eastern Riverina, the program provides an opportunity for employers to mentor, support, and evaluate prospective employees for 'best fits' with their organisation's ethos. Developing local talent can help promote and raise the profile of your business. Investing in the early training and development of staff is recognised as a key point for retaining employees. This is an effective strategy for rural and regional businesses to get the best staff and to retain them.

6. Local and regional workforce participation and development

Transgrid is committed to investing in local communities, providing tangible and meaningful benefits, including jobs, skills development, support for local businesses, and funding for community and non-profit organisations and facilities to strengthen the Riverina region.

In addition to Transgrid's direct investment in local and regional employment and training covered under this plan, project delivery represents a significant opportunity to boost local economies and capacity through local employment and training opportunities with the HumeLink delivery partners.

Transgrid is developing social impact programs to generate economic prosperity through local and regional workforce participation and development efforts. Transgrid is exploring partnerships to help broaden training opportunities, develop and attract skills, and drive other workforce and economic growth initiatives to maximise benefits for the region in collaboration with the HumeLink delivery partners.

Working strategically with government partners, registered training providers, industry job networks and education providers, and collaborating with other major infrastructure developers in the region, Transgrid strives to create employment pathways with advancement opportunities for people interested in jobs and career opportunities.

Transgrid is committed to supporting further learning, skills development and training as described in **Table 7**.

Table 7 Education, training, and learning

Program	Description	Application to HumeLink
Charles Sturt University (CSU), Wagga Wagga MOU	<p>Charles Sturt and Transgrid have agreed to discuss and develop several projects stemming from the MoU, in collaboration with the Project’s delivery partners.</p> <p>Initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scholarships, cadetships, training, and graduate employment opportunities for students, including First Nations students. • The co-creation of educational programs, including in electrical engineering, virtual reality, and drone training. • Collaborative research projects and programs • Organising joint industry and research activities, such as courses, conferences, seminars, symposia, or lectures 	Further information available. Wagga Wagga situated within the HumeLink project area of influence.
Transgrid CSU Engineering Scholarships	<p>Transgrid has partnered with Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga to develop the Transgrid Civil Engineering fund over a four-year period (2022-2025) to support the university by funding 100 Charles Sturt engineering students through a \$2 million-dollar fund.</p> <p>The fund will also supply each student \$20,000 to put towards the cost of their study.</p> <p>The scholarship funds are distributed annually post-census, over four years, (\$5000 per year) for successful students to use as needed. Funds can be spent at each students’ discretion for costs associated with their study, living expenses, or learning resources.</p>	Wagga Wagga situated within the HumeLink project area of influence. Further information available.

<p>Proposed Transgrid CSU Transmissions and Renewable Energy Training Centre (TRETc)</p>	<p>Transgrid is leading an initiative to develop a TRETc in Wagga Wagga as the State's energy transmission centre. The proposed centre will be a 'staging ground' for employment creation with proximity to the pipeline of major transmission projects and REZs.</p> <p>A Training Centre with temporary accommodation will maximise long term benefits and legacy to the local economy and regional community. The Centre would be used for a minimum of 10 years for transmission and associated training with HumeLink Project and enable a range of career pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-employment training with registered training providers • Cert 1 & 2 Construction through building of the new facility, partnering with a construction company to develop apprenticeships. • Training for manufacture of green steel into towers • Cert II, III and IV transmission training • Civil works, dogging, crane training 	<p>Wagga Wagga situated within the HumeLink project area of influence.</p>
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6.1. Local workforce development collaboration

Transgrid is an active participant on workforce development roundtables convened by Regional NSW Riverina, comprising major infrastructure developers, including CBP Downer (Australian Defence Force), Snowy Hydro 2.0, EnergyConnect, Inland Rail/ARTC and other stakeholders. The forums are convened to discuss local employment, skilling, and housing challenges across the Southern NSW region. The Project team are developing local relationships with local State training agencies to increase opportunities for local workforce development.

6.2. Local and regional industry initiatives

Transgrid recognises significant opportunities to shape the way sustainability is perceived in the community through the local and regional supply chain. This driving force for supplier collaboration, fostering better partnerships and engagement aims to directly benefit the areas in which Transgrid operates.

Local Procurement targets and Australian Procurement targets articulated in the HumeLink delivery partner Local Industry Participation Plans (LIPP) – in addition to targets articulated in the Aboriginal Participation Plans (APP) of 2.5 per cent and a stretch target of 5 percent – should drive a significant positive socioeconomic benefit for the LGAs in the Project Area.

The responsibility of achieving delivery partner LIPP targets will be monitored and managed by Transgrid.

The objectives of the Local Industry Participation Plans are to:

- Optimise the participation of local and regional suppliers and contractors into the project supply chain including indigenous businesses, social enterprise, and female-owned businesses.
- Stimulate capacity building in selected Australian business segments where sustainable activity is expected. Support Australian suppliers and contractors of goods and services to be economically attractive and competitive against imported goods and services for like quality.
- Support the delivery of local industry participation objectives and commitments articulated in the respective project plans (the Australian Industry Participation and the Local Industry Participation).
- Support the delivery of the Australian Industry Participation objectives and commitments outlined in the project specific Australian Industry Participation Plan

7. Aboriginal procurement and participation

For the HumeLink project, the delivery partner is required to ensure at least 2.5 per cent of the HumeLink project spend is dedicated to Aboriginal procurement and participation, and at least 30 percent of the minimum Aboriginal target is spent on the delivery partner's employees (direct and indirect employment and training costs for Aboriginal employees, trainees and apprentices).

The Transgrid Stretch Reconciliation Action plan sets out its activities around 'Relationships, Respect and Opportunities'. In collaboration with the HumeLink delivery partners, new and existing relationships will be developed with Aboriginal business and supply organisations such as Supply Nation, NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce, Industry Capability Network (ICN MoU with Transgrid) Gateway and ERDDIIG (Indigenous Supply Chain Specialists).

Local Aboriginal businesses have also been engaged to deliver Cultural Awareness training to staff and contractors.