

Melbourne Renewable Energy Hub



An energy transition and renewable energy platform 100% owned by  EQUIS

Community Benefit Fund What We Heard Report

May 2026



Contents

1. Project overview	3
1.1 Project benefits	3
1.2 Purpose of this report	3
<hr/>	
2. Community Benefit Fund	4
2.1 Fund background	4
2.2 Fund design	4
<hr/>	
3. How we developed the initial themes	4
<hr/>	
4. How we engaged	5
4.1 Engagement at a glance	5
<hr/>	
5. Who we heard from	6
<hr/>	
6. What we heard	6
6.1 Key findings	6
6.2 Priority areas	7
6.3 What areas of social need should we support?	8
6.4 How should the Fund operate?	8
6.5 What type of initiatives or programs could we fund?	9
<hr/>	
7. Funding approach	10
<hr/>	
8. Next steps	11
<hr/>	
9. Get in touch	11

1. Project overview

SEC and GreenPoint Energy have partnered to deliver the Melbourne Renewable Energy Hub (the Hub), one of Australia's largest battery energy storage systems, located in Plumpton in Melbourne's west.

The Hub supports Victoria's renewable energy transition by storing surplus energy when it is abundant and releasing it back into the grid when demand is high. This helps stabilise the electricity system and reduce pressure on peak power prices.

Construction of the Hub was completed in late 2025, with the facility officially entering operations in December 2025.

It provides 600 megawatts of capacity and 1.6 gigawatt hours of storage - enough capacity to power 200,000 homes during the evening peak period.

Melton and surrounding communities are playing a key role in this transition by hosting the Hub. As a long-term project in the region, it is important that local communities share in its benefits.

To support this, SEC and GreenPoint Energy have established a Melbourne Renewable Energy Hub Community Benefit Fund (the Fund) valued at \$2.5 million over the life of the project - equivalent to \$100,000 per year for 25 years - to invest in initiatives that reflect local priorities and strengthen the community.

1.1 Project benefits



Capacity to power 200,000 homes during the evening peak period



More than 1,200 people worked on the project, including over 70 apprentices, trainees and cadets



\$4.78 million spent on goods and services supplied by social enterprises and First Nations-owned businesses



A \$2.5 million Community Benefit Fund offering \$100,000 every year for 25 years

1.2 Purpose of this report

In late 2025, SEC and GreenPoint Energy ran a targeted engagement program to gather community and local stakeholder feedback on how the Fund might operate - and what it could fund. The findings of this consultation program are summarised in this report. Feedback received through consultation has helped shape the design of the Fund and how it will be delivered.

We will continue to engage with the community as work to finalise the Fund continues, with the aim that the final program will be released in mid-2026.

This report provides:

- a summary of community benefit engagement activities undertaken by SEC and GreenPoint Energy to seek community input on the Fund;
- key insights from the consultation, including preferred areas for funding;
- next steps for the delivery of the Fund.

2. Community Benefit Fund

2.1 Fund background

In November and December 2025, SEC and GreenPoint Energy launched a six-week community consultation program to help inform the design and delivery of the Fund.

We gathered feedback on the Fund's purpose and how investment could deliver the greatest benefit. Community members were invited to share views on the Fund's design, priority focus areas and how funding could be managed in a way that best supports local projects and initiatives in Melton and surrounding areas.

SEC and GreenPoint Energy would like to thank everyone who shared their time, ideas and feedback. Your insights have been crucial in shaping our approach to delivering the Fund.

2.2 Fund design

The Fund will be designed to support local initiatives and deliver lasting value to the community during the operational life of the project. Through the Fund, we will invest \$100,000 per year for 25 years.

The Fund will offer targeted benefits to support Melton, Plumpton and surrounding communities and fund local projects, initiatives and services that serve these local communities. To be effective, it must be accessible, practical, aligned with local priorities and administered with clear governance processes.

3. How we developed the initial themes

Before launching the Fund consultation, SEC and GreenPoint Energy had been engaging with the Melton community about the project more broadly.

Through conversations with local organisations, service providers and council representatives, youth disengagement and employment opportunities were identified as ongoing local challenges.

To build on this early engagement, we also reviewed publicly available data about community needs in Melton and surrounding areas.

This initial work helped identify four draft priority funding areas to test with the community:



Youth skills and pathways



Community safety and positive community participation



Family wellbeing and social support



Sustainability and climate action

4. How we engaged

In late 2025, we invited Melton and surrounding communities to help us design and refine how the Fund could support local projects and priorities. This engagement aimed to specifically test our four priority funding areas with the community.

Consultation was open for six weeks between 13 November and 18 December 2025.

Community members had the opportunity to meet the project team, ask questions and share ideas about how the Fund could create meaningful impact in the region.

Melton is a diverse and multicultural community, so we chose a range of accessible locations and engagement tools - including community markets, supermarkets, a co-design workshop and an online survey - to ensure input included a broad range of voices, including families, young people, community organisations and local leaders.

4.1 Engagement at a glance

9

Community organisations joined a co-design session held in Melton



10 surveys completed



150+ factsheet and roadmap downloads from our project website



Print ads ran across three newspapers

Over

65

comments and ideas were collected during our information pop-ups



Social media advertising promoting our engagement recorded



150 factsheets distributed in the region

5. Who we heard from

Although participation numbers were modest, they were consistent with engagement levels seen in other recent projects in this community. The conversations held through pop-ups, the stakeholder workshop, and survey responses offered valuable insight into local priorities.

Feedback across these engagement activities showed clear and consistent themes, which are reflected in the summary of what we heard in the following sections.

Throughout the consultation period, we provided a range of face-to-face opportunities for people to share their views on the Fund.

Feedback was received from a range of community members and organisations across Melton and surrounding areas, including:

- Residents from Melton and surrounding communities
- Community groups and clubs including:
 - Sporting clubs
 - Local not-for-profit organisations
 - Volunteer organisations
 - Community and educational organisations
- Representatives from Melton City Council contributed to feedback as part of broader engagement
- Community and local business advocates

6. What we heard

6.1 Key findings

To draw a picture of where the the Community Benefit Sharing will ultimately go, we analysed consistent themes we heard across our engagement activities, including community pop-ups, the co-design workshop and survey responses.

Funding should focus on long-term impact

A majority of contributors believe that concentrating funding on one or two long-term 'legacy' initiatives will deliver greater impact than distributing small amounts across many projects.

Transparency and oversight are important

While transparency was considered essential, contributors generally preferred a streamlined governance model rather than a community-led allocation body.

Priority areas identified

Feedback consistently prioritised two areas of need: **youth skills and pathways**, and **community safety and active participation**.

6.2 Priority areas

Supporting young people - through skills, education and employment pathways - emerged as one of the community's strongest and most consistent priorities. Other contributions highlighted the importance of mentoring, training and transition-to-work opportunities, particularly for young people facing barriers.

“There is a strong need for more opportunities that help young people feel supported and connected, particularly those who are disenfranchised or experiencing hardship within the school environment.”

Community safety and positive community participation were also strongly supported. Contributors emphasised the importance of fostering stronger social connections, promoting inclusion and creating opportunities for people to feel safe and engaged in their community.

“I would like to see a community that is better connected, feels safe, works alongside each other, and feels valued and supported within their community.”

Contributors also voiced a need for practical sustainability and climate resilience initiatives that create real, on-the-ground benefits – such as programs that help households save energy, build local know-how and bring the community together to take climate action.

“Investing in renewable energy projects for low-income families, like solar grants.”

Community members made it clear that real impact should come from investing in long-term, partnership-driven initiatives delivered by trusted local organisations already doing the work on the ground.

Contributors expressed strong preference for benefit funding to be directed where it would create *lasting change* – including through partnerships with organisations that already have deep community relationships, proven capability and a track record of delivering for Melton.

Overall, youth opportunity and community cohesion stood out as clear priorities for long-term investment, with other themes carrying far less weight for long-term funding.

6.3 What areas of social need should we support?

The following tables capture the key themes identified across all engagement channels.

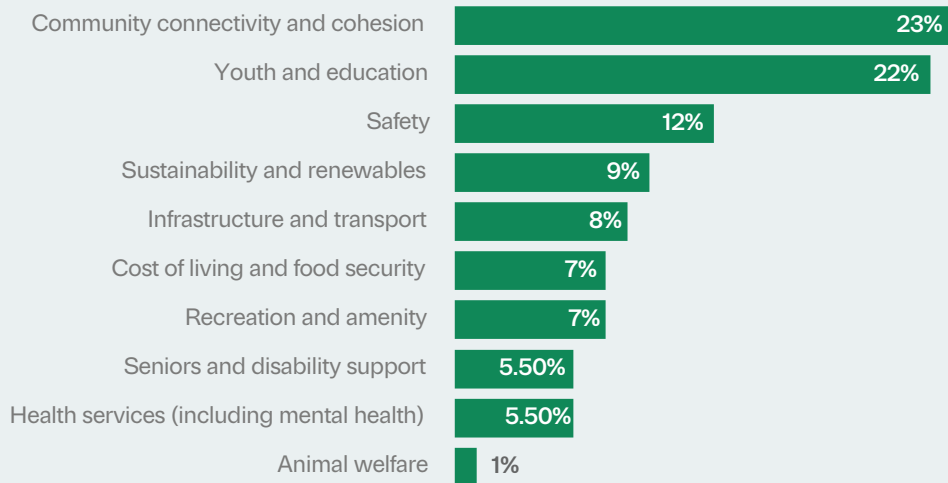


Figure 1: Key preferences for what to fund from community pop-ups and a co-design workshop

6.4 How should the Fund operate?

Feedback suggests strong support for a primary partnership initiative, backed by an application-based community grants stream that provides smaller amounts for targeted, standalone projects. While it was noted that infrastructure upgrades were preferred by some, further consultation suggested that they receive lower weighting as they are less suited to delivery through trusted local partners.

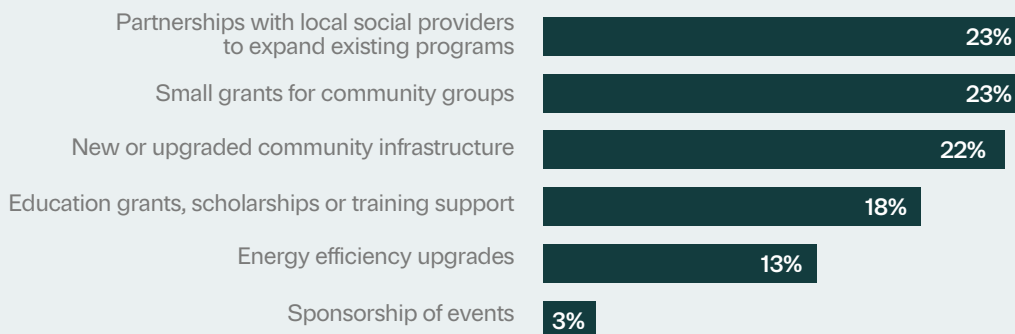





Figure 2: Feedback collected from survey results

6.5 What type of initiatives or programs could we fund?

We asked the community for ideas on what the Fund should support, and people consistently favoured initiatives delivered by local groups already doing the work. The suggestions below reflect community ideas and will inform the final design of the Fund.

Key themes and priorities	Suggestions of what we could fund
<p>Youth, education and inclusion</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth centres • Mentorship and outreach programs for at-risk young people • Support for vulnerable groups such as youth, elderly, women and people with disabilities • Collaborating with local schools and universities to provide education and skill development in the region
<p>Community connectivity and social support</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of mental health services • Homelessness and housing assistance • Domestic violence support services • Community safety programs • Community not-for-profit organisations • Cost of living relief services
<p>Environment and sustainability</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change education programs • Solar grants • Neighbourhood batteries • EV charging equipment

7. Funding approach

Based on what we heard, SEC and GreenPoint Energy propose to take forward a two-stream funding model to deliver long-term impact.

\$2.5 million Community Benefit fund over 25 years
(\$100,000 per annum)

1 | Partnership initiative stream - MREH Youth Futures Program

\$75,000 per annum

A long-term partnership with one or more trusted local organisations delivering programs aligned with the community's top priority: supporting young people through education, skills development and mentorship.

Through consultation, we heard that young people need consistent, ongoing support - not one-off activities. This primary stream will focus on stable program/s that provide real pathways and long-term outcomes for local young people.

This approach supports a long-term benefit model and gives local organisations the stability they need to continue their work.

2 | Safe and Sustainable Community Grants Program

\$25,000 per annum

An annual competitive grants program open to local not-for-profit organisations and community clubs. This stream will support initiatives that strengthen community connection, participation and sustainability.

We heard that local groups are already doing important work and need practical support to continue delivering programs. The grants stream will provide flexible funding to help local organisations respond to emerging needs and deliver projects that build a stronger, more connected community.

Together, these two streams reflect the clear message we heard from community consultation - focus on long-term impact while continuing to support local initiatives.

By combining a dedicated youth partnership with an annual community grants program, the Fund can deliver both stability and flexibility - creating sustained benefit while remaining responsive to local needs.

8. Next steps

Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, ideas and feedback to help shape the Fund.

This feedback will guide the final design of the Fund as it moves into delivery.

In the first half of 2026, we will share further information about our first annual community grants round and how to apply. This will include information on:

- Key dates
- Fund guidelines, including criteria, eligibility, and support during the application process
- Fund administration details, including the finalised grant eligibility and application process
- The process and timing for awarding the first round of funding in late 2026.
- We'll also share more detail about the MREH Youth Futures program as it is developed.

Both the Partnership initiative and Community grants streams will be regularly reviewed to assess their effectiveness and community impact. SEC and GreenPoint Energy will share updates on the outcomes of the Fund to show how it is delivering benefits aligned with community priorities.

We look forward to continuing to work with the community as the Fund moves into delivery.

9. Get in touch

If you would like to provide further feedback, we would love to hear from you.

✉ projects@greenpointenergy.com.au

☎ 1800 161 249

🌐 **For more information:**
Visit our website: engage.greenpointenergy.com.au/mreh



An energy transition and renewable energy platform 100% owned by  EQUIS