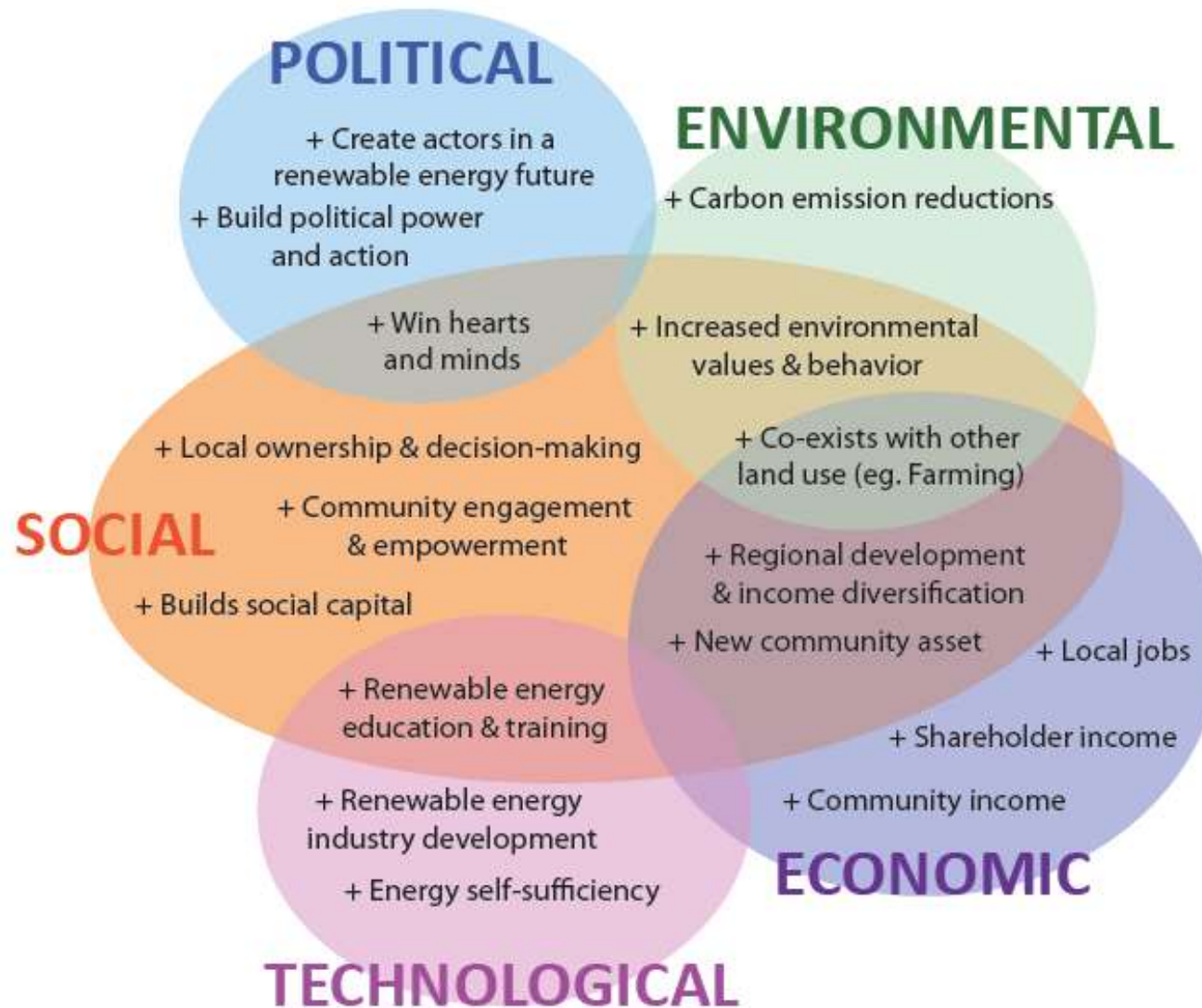# Who's with you?

Building community and political support for your project

Jarra Hicks (Community Power Agency) & Taegen Edwards (Solar Citizens)

with Leigh Ewbank (Yes2Renewables), Louise Bench (Pingala)

& Jane Stabb (Environment Victoria)

Benefits of community energy

community power

POLITICAL

+ Create actors in a renewable energy future
+ Build political power and action

ENVIRONMENTAL

+ Carbon emission reductions

+ Win hearts and minds

+ Increased environmental values & behavior

SOCIAL

+ Local ownership & decision-making

+ Community engagement & empowerment

+ Builds social capital

+ Co-exists with other land use (eg. Farming)

+ Regional development & income diversification

+ New community asset

+ Local jobs

+ Renewable energy education & training

+ Shareholder income

+ Renewable energy industry development

+ Community income

+ Energy self-sufficiency

ECONOMIC

TECHNOLOGICAL

J Hicks & N Ison (2012) "Community Energy Generation", in Shepherd, A., Allen, P. and Harper, P. *The Home Energy Handbook*: Powys, Centre for Alternative Energy.

Community support is strongest when:

  - people feel involved, heard and like they have some power

     & influence over the project

 - if they can see the benefits of the project for their

     community, the planet &/or themselves.

4 key factors to build active community support:

    1. Quality, on-time, regular communications

    2. Many, diverse opportunities to be involved & participate

    3. Designing the project to benefit local people & community

    4. Increasing the ties between the project & the community,

      & people within the community

Participation 'footprint'
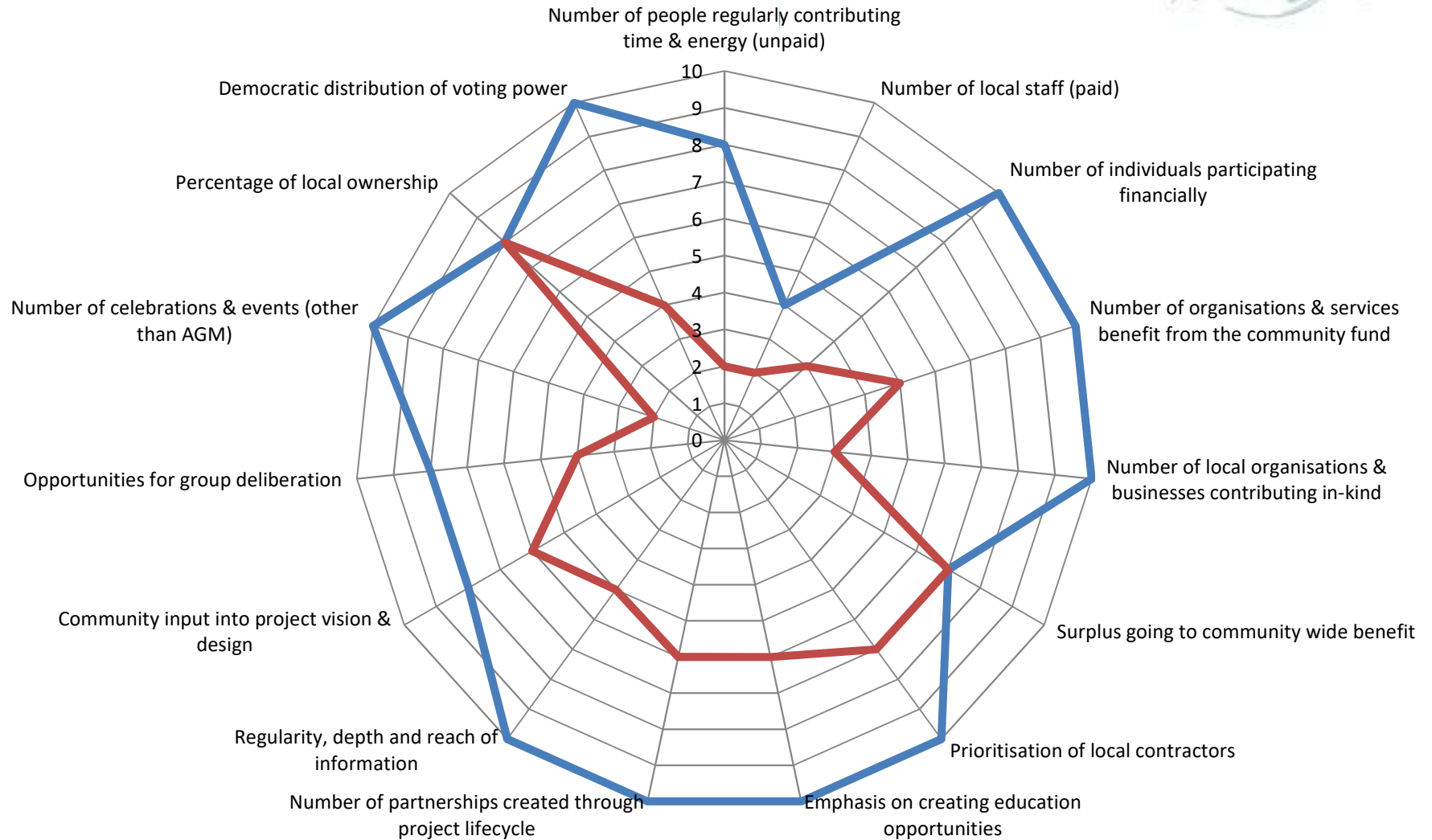
Win hearts and minds – they will become your advocates & investors!

A Community Solar Revolution.

Pingala

The Cooperative & Community
Let form follow function.

Solar Powered Beer.

BUILDING POLITICAL SUPPORT: *4 questions*

1. What does political support for your project look like?

2. How do we get political support and how do we keep it?

1. How do you build power in your community?

1. How do you use that power?

Dubbo solar farm is well on its way

SIMON CHAMBERLAIN

3 Sep 2013, 4 a.m.

Dubbo City Council may... ...Dickerson cuts the ribbon on a five kilowatt panel collection with the help of Soleir executive director Roha...

WHAT DOES POLITICAL SUPPORT LOOK LIKE?

community power agency

Government defends renewable energy target after Tony Abbott's renewed criticism

By political reporter Henry Belot

Posted 30 Jan 2017, 10:44am

Coalition ministers have been forced to defend the Government's renewable energy target from criticism by former prime minister Tony Abbott, who has repeated his call for it to be scrapped.

In a speech to a Young Liberals conference in South Australia on the weekend, Mr Abbott accused the Turnbull Government of taking the public for "mugs" and losing touch with traditional Liberal voters.

(From left) Chairman Wide Bay Water Leith Boully with Steve McRae (CEO Ingenero), Minister for Energy and Water Supply Mark McArdle and local member Ted Sorensen at the opening of the Fraser Coast Community Solar Farm.

Alistair Brightman

What's your STRATEGY?

- What change do you want?

- Who can give you what you want?
(Target/decision-maker: Must be a real person with a name)

- What do they need to hear? *(Message)*

- How can we tell them? Who influences that person? *(Strategy, Messenger/constituencies and tactics)*
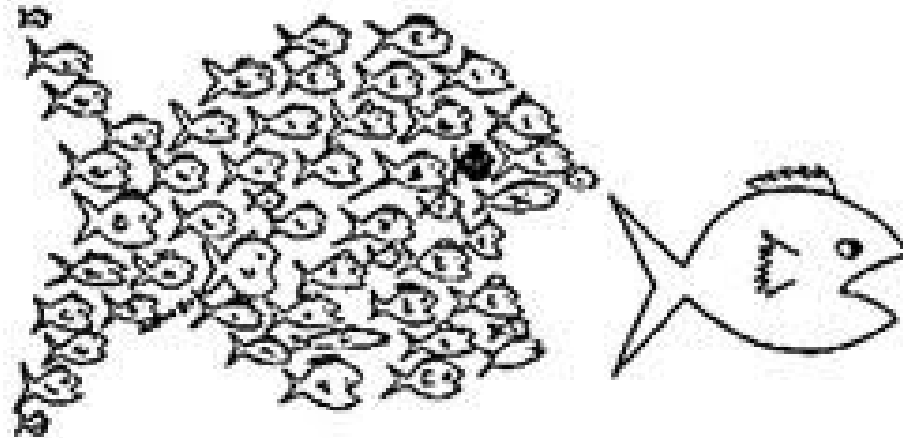
How do we get political support?

UsE That Power

Build Power

How do we build power?

ORGANIZE!

How do we USE power?

BUILDING POLITICAL SUPPORT: *4 CONCLUSIONS*

1. What political support looks like depends on where you're at and what you want

2. Getting political support requires *building power* and *using that power*

1. There are many lessons and tools from community organising practice to help you successfully build power

1. Using your power is an ongoing process to win concrete changes and hold politicians accountable over time
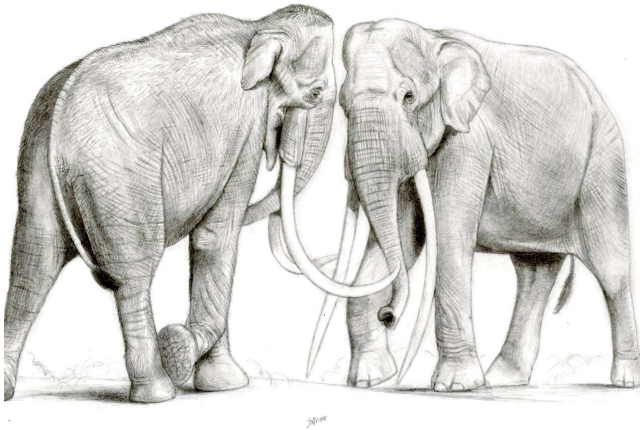
Friends of the Earth:
Building Community Power

YES2RENEWABLES
Friends of the Earth Australia

A little about me…

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Who is the 'Vegemite man'?

Leigh Ewbank, the "Vegemite man" expelled from the No Tas Wind Farm Group's meeting.

PROBLEM: Remove barriers for wind farms…

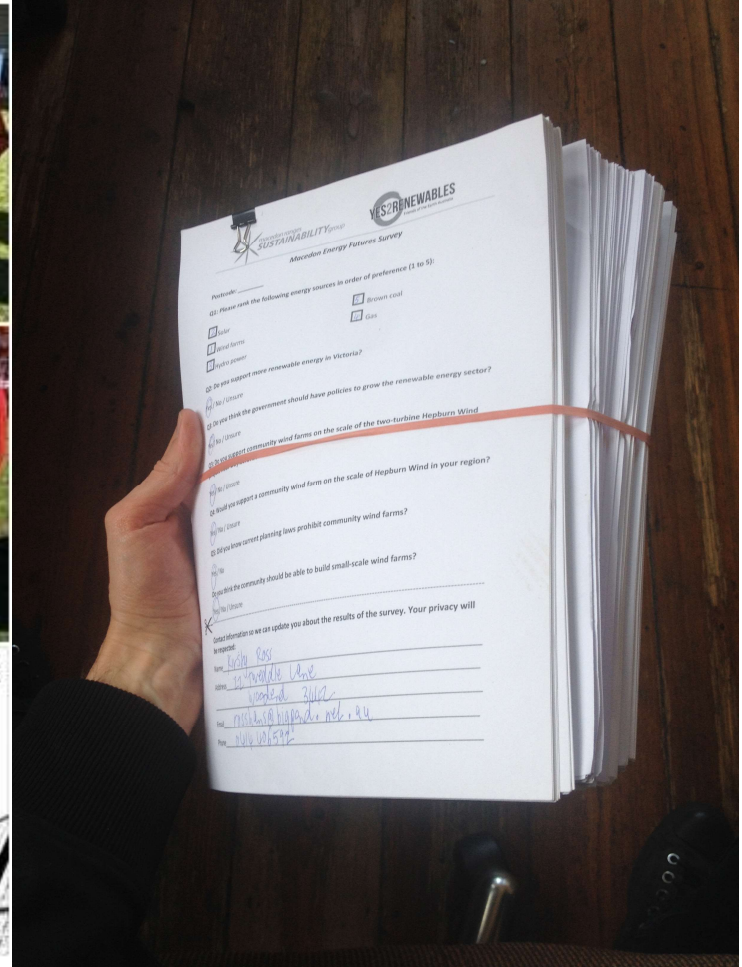Ted Baillieu's anti-wind farm laws divide Macedon

SIDONIA WIND FARM

DAYLESFORD

WOODEND

Communities *can* have wind farms
Communities *can't* have wind farms

SOLUTION: Remove barriers for wind farms…

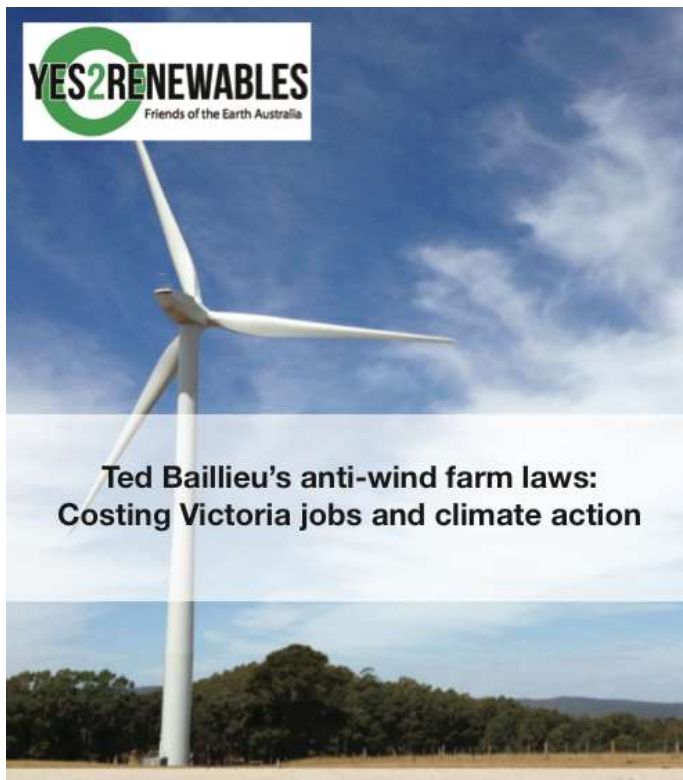# ACTION...

ACTION...

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ACTION…

OUTCOME...

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WIND FARMS

Labor vows to 'rip up' laws

By CIMARA PEARCE

THE Victorian Opposition will overturn tough wind farm planning laws introduced by the State Government in 2011 if elected to power next year.

Opposition planning spokesman Brian Tee said if elected, the Labor Party would repeal the setback that prevents developers building turbines within 2km of a house without the owner's written consent.

It would also consider scrapping the "no-go zones" where wind farms are prohibited in areas including along the Great Ocean Road, the Mornington Peninsula, Macedon Ranges,

Wilsons Promontory and the Yarra Ranges.

"We just think it's bad for jobs and bad for regional jobs in particular at a time when the regions are struggling." Mr Tee said.

"We are working through our policy process now but we will rip up the 2km setback laws. We haven't finalised our exact position but I think what we would say about the no-go zones is that they are arbitrary. There is no logic to them, no science to them, they are anti-jobs and they are certainly in our sights too."

Planning Minister Matthew

Guy introduced the changes more than two years ago in a bid to give local landholders more say on wind farm decisions in their community.

Since the rules were introduced, only one new wind farm has been granted approval for a planning permit.

"Labor have a track record in over-riding local councils and communities and approving wind turbines a few hundred metres from people's homes." Mr Guy said.

"Labor must state how close will they approve turbines from local homes and answer why they feel it necessary to rip

planning powers away from local councils."

Infigen Energy welcomed Mr Tee's comments and said it would consider expanding its operations in Victoria if the laws were repealed.

Friends of the Earth's Yes 2 Renewables spokesman Leigh Ewbank also welcomed the commitment from the Opposition.

"Wind farm restrictions have cost regional economies millions, farmers a chance for a stable income, and hundreds of good jobs." Mr Ewbank said.

SUNBURY & MACEDON RANGES

Woodend wind farm tests under way

FEBRUARY 9, 2016 9:57 AM

BY MATT CROSSMAN

The Advocate

Tuesday April 21, 2015

News

Aa Larger / Smaller   Night Mode

Labor commits to community wind farms

By EMMA-JAYNE SCHENK Nov. 13, 2014, 9:45 p.m.

ENVIRONMENT

GIVE ME A BELL…

GET IN TOUCH:

Leigh Ewbank,
0406 316 176 or leigh.ewbank@foe.org.au

WHERE:

FoE Campaigner Space,
312 Smith St, Collingwood
(enter via Perry St and head upstairs)

START-UP FUND:

http://melbourne.foe.org.au/act_on_climate_donate

Who?

- how do you define your community?

- who is involved?

- who has influence/ power?

How are they involved?

community power
agency

Staff
board
volunteers

Local members,
site owners &
neighbours

Local public/ all local
people, businesses &
organisations

Community of interest,
members from further afield

State & Federal government

Bioshpere, ecological community

IAP2:
Spectrum of Public Participation

| Inform | Consult | Involve | Collaborate | Empower |
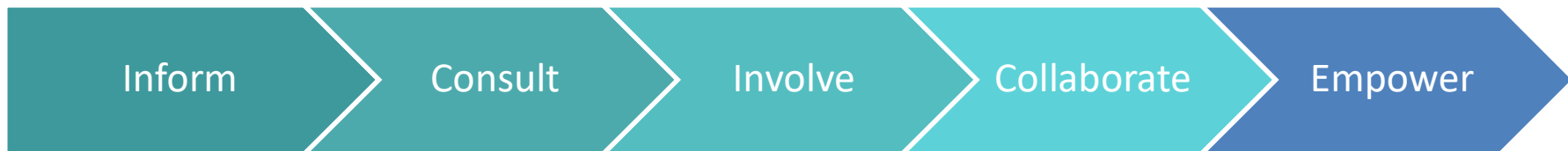
Community participation in Governance

- Formal decision making power

    e.g. voting rights, democratic

- Informal decision-making power

    e.g. feedback at workshops, surveys

- Local ownership

    e.g. % of local members/shareholders

- Deliberative, group decision-making processes
- Evidence of community influence in project design
- Effective reporting & feedback loops

Community participation in Economic Arrangements

- Local investors & returns on investment

- Local Community Benefit Grant Funds

    → Number of local initiatives benefiting form the fund

- People volunteering & gifting

- Organisations/ businesses providing in-kind support

- Local job creation

- Local partnerships

    e.g. with local businesses

Community participation in other ways

- Education & training programs – schools, TAFE, etc.

- Tours of the project

- Campaigns & lobbying

- Supporting other groups

- Participating in events

- Partnerships

Thank you!

Jarra Hicks

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www.c4ce.net.au

IAP2: Spectrum of Public Participation

	Community engagement objective	Promise to community	Community engagement outcomes
Inform	• provide balanced and objective information • assist community in understanding all aspects of the project, including possible problems/issues	• keep the community informed	• secure a good site to install the renewable energy facility • gain planning permission • meet compliance regulations
Consult	• obtain feedback on plans, options and/or decisions	• keep the community informed • listen and acknowledge concerns • provide feedback on how input influenced the decision	• minimise objections • effectively manage complaints • good stakeholder relations • a level of community awareness and trust in the project
Involve	• work directly with the community throughout the process and all stages of the project • ensure concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	• work with the community to ensure concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed • provide feedback on how input influenced the decision	• long-term broad local social acceptance and knowledge of the project • strengthened local relationships and trust • local advocates for renewable energy
Collaborate	• partner with the community in each aspect of planning, development and decision-making, including the development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution	• look to the community for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions • incorporate advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible	• broad community participation, support and awareness • some community ownership • greater community benefit • strong local relationships and trust • timely development and ease of planning approval • some sharing of benefits beyond investors
Empower	• have the community lead the development of the project • place final decision-making in the hands of the community	• implement what the community decides	• benefit-sharing model tailored to the local context • harness the skills and capital of the community • upskill community members to manage the project • largely community owned and controlled

Project stages

community power agency

Stage	Description
Initiation	Form a group; read and research to understand context and options; create a vision; define motivations and objectives; start to give shape to the project.
Social feasibility	Gauge the level of support within the community; perform pre-feasibility studies to scope what is feasible, viable and desirable; define project technology, scale and site; develop an initial business case; create an engagement strategy and associated tools; engage with the community and build support; scope host sites.
Technical	Negotiate with the host site; undertake full technical studies to design the project; establish an organisational structure; investigate what approvals are required; initiate negotiations with local distribution networks and power purchasers; continue to refine and add detail to the business case; continue to build support.
Planning	Check planning zone conditions; find funding for project development; hire a project officer; undertake the planning approval process; negotiate grid connection and power purchase agreement; continue to build support. (NOTE: this is likely to occur concurrently with the Technical stage)
Capital raising	Raise sufficient capital to proceed to the construction phase; if appropriate, sign a connection agreement and power purchase agreement; continue to build support.
Construction	Order equipment (eg. wind turbine, solar panels); contract works; undertake civil works; install equipment and connect the project to the electricity grid; continue communications and community engagement activities.
Operation	Generate and sell electricity; undertake technical monitoring, maintenance and financial administration; continue communications and community engagement activities.
Decommissioning	Decommission or refurbish the technology at the end of its life.

Activity	Engagement and communications tools
Stakeholder research	Stakeholder identification and mapping; one-on-one meetings with local stakeholders and references to identify others; done regularly.
One-way communication	Project website; fact sheets; newsletter; press releases; newspaper ads; regular news columns; information in publications of local organisations.
Two-way communication	Telephone discussions; one-on-one briefings; social media; regular listening posts (e.g. at local clubs/cafés/pubs); informal dinners and get-togethers.
Community education	Public displays (e.g. photomontages, information posters); live renewable energy resource monitoring data displays and/or audio-visual installations; field trips (pre-construction) or open days (post-construction); local employees/volunteers visibly and consistently working on location; stalls at community events and markets; community gatherings such as film nights on relevant topics or dinners.
Community outreach	Meetings with neighbours and nearby residents within an area which is relevant to the local environment and technology type; drop-in information sessions; public launches at different stages of the project's development; site tours; celebratory events that allow the community to experience and learn about the project/technology; volunteer and advocate training to skill people to talk about the project; local capital-raising events; hosting or working with other groups to deliver a festival, ball, fair or art exhibition.
Decision making/ feedback loops	Community workshops and focus groups; polling and surveys; community planning processes for key decisions; consensus-building participatory deliberation and decision-making processes; reporting decisions and rationale back to the community; complaints management and respectful conflict resolution mechanisms; community reference group with key partners/stakeholders.
Working with local groups and representatives	Engage with local council and State and Federal Government representatives; engage and collaborate with local community organisations, environmental and advocacy groups and education institutions (e.g. Indigenous elders, Landcare, bird watching groups, conservation groups, climate action groups, secondary schools, TAFEs).
Benefit sharing	Establish a community grants fund; distribute neighbourhood benefits; subsidise energy costs; give returns to shareholders; fund new, ongoing projects for community and environmental benefit; celebrate achievements.