



# MARLINJA MICROGRID – A CASE STUDY IN COMMUNITY ENERGY

# COMMUNITY ENERGY PLANNING

WHEN A COMMUNITY INVITES ORIGINAL POWER TO WORK WITH THEM ON FINDING AN ENERGY SOLUTION TO LOCAL CHALLENGES, WE USE A COMMUNITY ENERGY PLANNING PROCESS TO DECIDE EVERYTHING FROM THE DESIGN OF THE SYSTEM TO HOW IT CAN MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS.

- Access to reliable, affordable power underpins all other community wellbeing outcomes
- The planning and delivery of services and infrastructure in First Nations and remote communities can be a complex and costly exercise. Better outcomes are achieved when service delivery is carefully tailored to meet the needs of residents.
- Original Power's Community Energy Planning Model (CEP) is a process of working with community residents, other service agencies and electrical contractors to improve a community's energy services, typically resulting in the installation of a renewable energy system.

ORIGINAL POWER USED THE CEP IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MARLINJA COMMUNITY IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY TO PLAN AND PREPARE FOR THE TRANSITION AWAY FROM DIESEL GENERATION, TO SOLAR AND BATTERIES.





ARE YOU READY TO START YOUR OWN COMMUNITY ENERGY PROJECT?

THERE ARE SOME OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER IN YOUR COMMUNITY ENERGY PLAN..

- **Who will make the decisions?** Has your project got the right stakeholders involved to make a decision to proceed?
- **What resources will be needed?** Funding for system design, contractors, equipment, land access and legal support will be needed, as well as capacity to negotiate and plan.
- **What technical and project management support will be needed?** Will the community need to fund a project manager?
- **Who will manage the project?** A community reference group or company, existing organisation, or a private company?
- **How will the project be funded?** Apply for a loan? Apply for private investment or government funding? Apply for a grant? Other?
- **What benefits does the community want from the project?** Reduce power prices? Create jobs? Provide a community income stream? Other?
- **Will connection be assured?** Unless your project is a standalone system, connection agreements are a fundamental prerequisite for accessing or building clean energy. Eg. grid connection and Power Purchase Agreement conditions.
- **Have you checked ownership of power assets?** This includes things like poles and wires in the community, or existing power generators to understand the rules for connecting your energy project to these assets.

# IT TOOK FOUR YEARS FROM IDEA AND ENERGY PLANNING TO BUILD STAGE. SO WHAT WILL THE END RESULT BE AT MARLINJA?

- IN APRIL 2024 THE MARLINJA MICROGRID WILL BECOME THE FIRST 100% INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY-OWNED, GRID CONNECTED COMMUNITY SOLAR MICROGRID ANYWHERE IN THE NT – OR AUSTRALIA!
- FOR THE FIRST TIME, HOUSEHOLDS WILL RECEIVE DIRECT FINANCIAL CREDIT ON THEIR PRE-PAID METERS PROPORTIONAL TO WHAT THEY PRODUCE AT THE MICROGRID EACH DAY. THIS INNOVATIVE BENEFIT SHARING MODEL COULD PROVIDE A BLUEPRINT FOR MANY OTHER INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES ON PRE-PAID METERS TO ACCESS RENEWABLE ENERGY BENEFITS IN FUTURE
- WE HAVE HELPED BUILD REGULATORY PROCESSES TO MAKE PROJECT ASSESSMENT EASIER WITH THE REGULATORY AND RETAILER THROUGH ONGOING WORKING GROUPS.
- MARLINJA RESIDENTS PARTICIPATED IN SOLAR TRAINING ON THE COMMUNITY CENTRE SOLAR INSTALLATION AND ON A LARGE SOLAR FARM IN WAGGA WAGGA IN ANTICIPATION OF INSTALLATION OF THEIR OWN COMMUNITY MICROGRID.





# JOIN THE FIRST NATIONS CLEAN ENERGY NETWORK!

