

North West Transmission Developments

Community Benefits Sharing Program
June 2023



TasNetworks

Powering a
Bright Future

Developing a Community Benefits Sharing Program for North West Tasmania

During 2022, TasNetworks undertook a co-design process with the local community and stakeholders to develop, refine and finalise a proposed community benefits sharing program (benefits program) for the North West Transmission Developments (NWTd). This included engagement to collect feedback on program eligibility, funding, governance, and administration.

This document provides detail about the process to develop the benefits program, the approved eligibility rules of the benefits program, and how it will be implemented.

Using a co-design approach

Co-design processes involve community members, stakeholders and decision-makers working together collaboratively to develop an outcome that reflects the values, perspectives and needs of all parties. A co-design process was used to develop the benefits program for the NWTd project to ensure that the benefits the program will deliver are the ones that the local community most value.

A key aspect of the process was the formation of a Youth Panel. Young people are the community members who will be living with the project infrastructure for the longest, but they are very often absent from community engagement processes. Incorporating a Youth Panel within the process guaranteed the involvement of young people in the co-design of a benefits program.

The Youth Panel was asked to draft a community benefits sharing framework to ensure the values, concerns and priorities of the local community, and in particular young people in North West Tasmania, were reflected in the benefits the program will deliver.

The co-design process also involved local community members and stakeholders who were invited to share their feedback about the Youth Panel's draft framework. Opportunities to provide feedback included community BBQ events, focus groups, stakeholder workshops, an online survey and the NWTd Stakeholder Liaison Group. This collective feedback was considered by the Youth Panel before it delivered its final recommendations.

Governance of the benefits program

The final element of the co-design process was the involvement of local stakeholders in the development of the governance arrangements for the program's implementation. Stakeholders with experience of, and an interest in, community grant programs shared their insights into the governance elements that are needed to effectively administer a benefits program. This included:

- How the program could be administered
- Who should assess and identify successful applications under the program
- The best ways to arrange funding to get maximum benefits.

This guidance was used to draft a range of governance options which were tested with stakeholders before they were finalised.

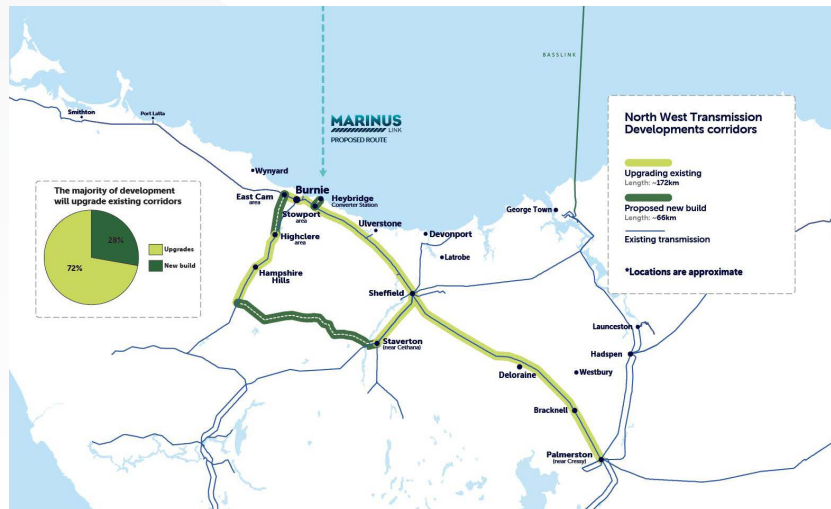
Utilising this iterative, co-design approach for both the development of the benefits program and how it will be implemented, ensures the program will deliver the benefits the North West community value and addresses local concerns, interests, and priorities.

The outcome

In March 2023, the TasNetworks Board endorsed the benefits program and, subject to final project approval, approved a \$10M (maximum) allocation to fund the program throughout the NWTd construction period.

About the NWTD

The proposed North West Transmission Developments (NWTD) include 240 kilometres of new and upgraded overhead transmission lines that will link Cressy, Burnie, Sheffield, Staverton, Hampshire, and East Cam strengthening the transmission backbone in Tasmania.



About the Youth Panel

The Youth Panel was made up of 18–25-year-olds from across North West Tasmania. The panel met seven times from March to November 2022 and were tasked with co-designing the draft framework of the benefits program. The professionally facilitated process included online and in-person meetings, guest speakers and a site visit to locations that will be impacted by the NWTD.

The Youth Panel process provided participants with the opportunity to build career and life skills, create networks with other young people and be a part of a professional, community focused process. By its final meeting, the Youth Panel had developed and agreed on a framework of eligibility rules for the benefits program that addressed three main areas:

- What projects and/or activities should be awarded funding under the program
- Who should be awarded funding under the program
- How the community benefits program should be delivered.



“I really liked meeting other like-minded youth and the process of all getting together and talking about something that’s actually important and being involved in the process of making a positive change in our communities.”

Enya, Youth Panel Member

NWTD Community Benefits Sharing Program

Based on the co-design process, the following framework for the benefits program was approved by the TasNetworks Board in March 2023.

Eligibility requirements

To be eligible for the benefits program, initiatives must:

- 1. Have a positive impact on the community, in at least one of the following six focus areas, by:**
 - a. supporting emotional, mental, and/or physical health
 - b. preserving, benefiting and/or enhancing the environment
 - c. providing community infrastructure, and/or accessibility to community services, including transport
 - d. delivering community arts initiatives, including events
 - e. providing skills, training, and/or education
 - f. encouraging a sense of community.
- 2. Deliver demonstrable benefits to an 'identified community' within the six local government areas affected by the NWTD.**

Some examples of an 'identified community' include: a defined geographic location, or a specified demographic group, or a minority or marginalised group.

If required, priority will be given to initiatives benefitting identified communities who experience a greater impact from the NWTD. These may include those with a line of sight of the project, those impacted during project construction and/or those impacted by greenfield development.

- 3. Demonstrate one or more of the following core values:**
 - a. inclusion – supporting participation by, and delivering benefit for, the broadest, most diverse group of people possible
 - b. accessibility – addressing participation barriers, such as physical access, language and literacy amongst others
 - c. lasting impact – generating ongoing benefits that continue after the initiative has been delivered
 - d. environmental sustainability – delivery of the initiative to have regard for and address its environmental impact.

Larger initiatives, as outlined below, must demonstrate all four of these values.

- 4. Be Australian owned or, if not, registered in Australia, noting that priority will be given to Tasmanian owned initiatives, particularly those within the six local government areas affected by the NWTD.**
- 5. Demonstrate community support if initiatives are for commercial purposes.**

An example of 'commercial purposes' that may be eligible are social enterprises or community organisations that generate funds through trade but where the profits are given back to the community through the services they deliver. Initiatives that fall within this category will only be eligible to apply for tier one funding.

Applications for religious purposes, political purposes or individual gain are ineligible for the benefits program.

“This [co-design] approach ensured that the Youth Panel members felt valued and heard and that their perspectives were incorporated into the benefits program.”

Sophie, Youth Panel Member

Funding tiers

The benefits program will provide four tiers of funding under which applicants can apply for funding. These are as follows:

Tier one initiatives

Tier one initiatives are those seeking funding of less than \$5,000 (excluding GST).

This tier is focused on initiatives that are proposed to encourage a sense of community, particularly amongst young people.

The focus of this 'micro-funding' tier is also to encourage innovation and support the testing of new ideas and/or community initiatives. Applications to develop and test 'start-up' concepts would be considered under this tier.

Successful tier one initiatives must demonstrate at least one of the four core values of the benefits program. Successful tier one initiatives will be ineligible to receive repeat tier one funding but may be eligible to apply for other funding tiers to further develop proven concepts.

Tier two initiatives

Tier two initiatives are those seeking funding between \$5,000 and \$50,000 (excluding GST).

The focus of tier two funding is on the delivery of local initiatives/single site/location initiatives, and the further development and testing of innovative initiatives to address community disadvantage. Initiatives that empower young people and those that are proposed to encourage a sense of community are also its focus.

Successful tier two initiatives must demonstrate at least two of the four core values of the benefits program.

Tier three initiatives

Tier three initiatives are those seeking funding between \$50,000 and \$250,000 (excluding GST).

The focus of tier three funding is on initiatives that deliver community benefits in multiple locations within the six impacted local government areas and/or those with a staged delivery approach that require a longer timeframe over multiple years. Generally, funding is expected to be staged and subject to the delivery of initiatives meeting agreed milestones and/or key performance indicators.

Successful tier three initiatives must demonstrate each of the four core values of the benefits program.

Tier four initiatives

Tier four initiatives are those seeking funding beyond \$250,000, up to or exceeding \$500,000 (excluding GST).

The focus of tier four initiatives is to address significant systemic issues affecting identified communities within the six local government areas impacted by the NWT. Generally, funding is expected to be staged and subject to the delivery of initiatives meeting agreed milestones and/or key performance indicators.

Under this tier, initiatives with matched co-funding from other providers, whether government or private benefactors, are encouraged. Initiatives will need to demonstrate their efficacy/have demonstrated proof of concept to be considered for tier four funding.

Successful tier four initiatives must demonstrate each of the four core values of the benefits program.

Application timeframes

There will be two funding application rounds per year commencing 2026:

- **Round one (first half of the year)** – tier one and tier two applications will be fully assessed for funding.

Proposed initiatives under tier three and tier four will undergo an initial review, see details below, to confirm their eligibility for consideration in round two and the application requirements that will apply. However, should any tier three or four proposals be eligible and fully developed they can be assessed in round one.

- **Round two (second half of the year)** – new tier one and two applications and previously confirmed tier three and four applications will be fully assessed for funding.

Each application round will be open for six weeks, during which time potential applicants can seek guidance from TasNetworks about their application and required content.

Indicative timing	Activity
March/April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier one and tier two applications are open for submission via Smartygrants platform • Tier three and tier four proposed initiatives are open for initial review
April/May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent community assessment panel will assess all tier one and tier two initiatives and select successful initiatives for funding • Independent community assessment panel provides its recommendations report to TasNetworks • TasNetworks undertakes all administrative tasks to allow for funding to be released • Independent community assessment panel will conduct interviews with tier three and four applicants to pitch their proposal and discuss their proposed initiatives
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful tier one and tier two applicants notified and funding conditions, monitoring and reporting requirements confirmed with them • Unsuccessful applications notified • Tier three and tier four applicants notified of outcomes of initial eligibility review and the key content that will be required in their round two applications as well as any ongoing co-design requirements
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding released to successful tier one and tier two applicants
July/August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications open for submission via Smartygrants platform to all four tiers
August/September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent community assessment panel will assess and select successful initiatives for funding • Independent community assessment panel provides its recommendations report to TasNetworks • TasNetworks undertakes all administrative tasks to allow for funding to be released
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful applicants notified and funding conditions, monitoring and reporting requirements confirmed • Unsuccessful applications notified
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding released to successful applicants

Roles and responsibilities

TasNetworks will be responsible for the administration and governance of the benefits program.

An independent community assessment panel will be responsible for reviewing and selecting successful initiatives for funding. Panel members will be drawn from the six local government areas in North West Tasmania that will be impacted by the NWT D project.

“The process and outcome are a fine example of a way for a major project to engage a broad and diverse community and work towards a positive future.”

Community Stakeholder, North West Tasmania

Financial commitment

The benefits program will provide a total of \$10M for initiatives providing benefits to communities in the six local government areas affected by the NWT D.

The benefits program will commence alongside the construction of the NWT D. On that basis, the benefits program is expected to operate between 2026 and 2030, or until such time as the financial investment has been expended.

Evaluation process

A formal evaluation of the efficacy of the benefits program and the assessment and panel processes will be undertaken following the first year of the program to allow for program improvements and refinements.

This evaluation will be undertaken by TasNetworks in concert with the members of the independent community assessment panel and invited subject matter expert participants with relevant qualifications and experiences.



Next steps

A detailed development of the governance and administrative arrangements for the benefits program is currently being undertaken. This will include refining the details of the:

- Independent Community Assessment Panel, such as who will be eligible to sit on the panel and how panel members will be recruited, how panel members will work together and how frequently they will meet, and the processes the panel will use to assess and select successful applications for the benefits program
- Application process, such as how applications will be submitted, the information that applicants will need to provide so that their application can be properly assessed, and the timings for application submissions, assessments and notifications
- Supporting administration arrangements, including identifying the processes that will be necessary so that TasNetworks can manage the program, support the independent community assessment panel and fund successful initiatives

This development will involve further engagement to ensure the benefits program is delivered in a way that aligns to stakeholder and community expectations while meeting TasNetworks' probity obligations.

"From the outset, the development of the benefits program reflected TasNetworks' genuine commitment to work with and listen to the community. For many within the community it was their first opportunity to participate in a co-design process and their feedback reaffirmed the positivity and power of the experience."

Community Stakeholder, North West Tasmania

More information

We encourage you to visit **our website** and connect with us on social media to stay up-to-date with the project and the development of the NWT Community Benefits Sharing Program.



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Contact us



tasnetworks.com.au/nwtd



NWTD@tasnetworks.com.au



1300 127 777



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