

Speaker Series ”

CONNECTING COMMUNITY AND COUNCILS

Scaling Home energy upgrade programs

Brought to you by



Merri-bek
City Council



Acknowledgement of country

We would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands we all meet on today. Climate-KIC works on the lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. We would also like to pay respect to the Elders both past and present, acknowledging them as the traditional custodians of knowledge for this land.

Why are we here?

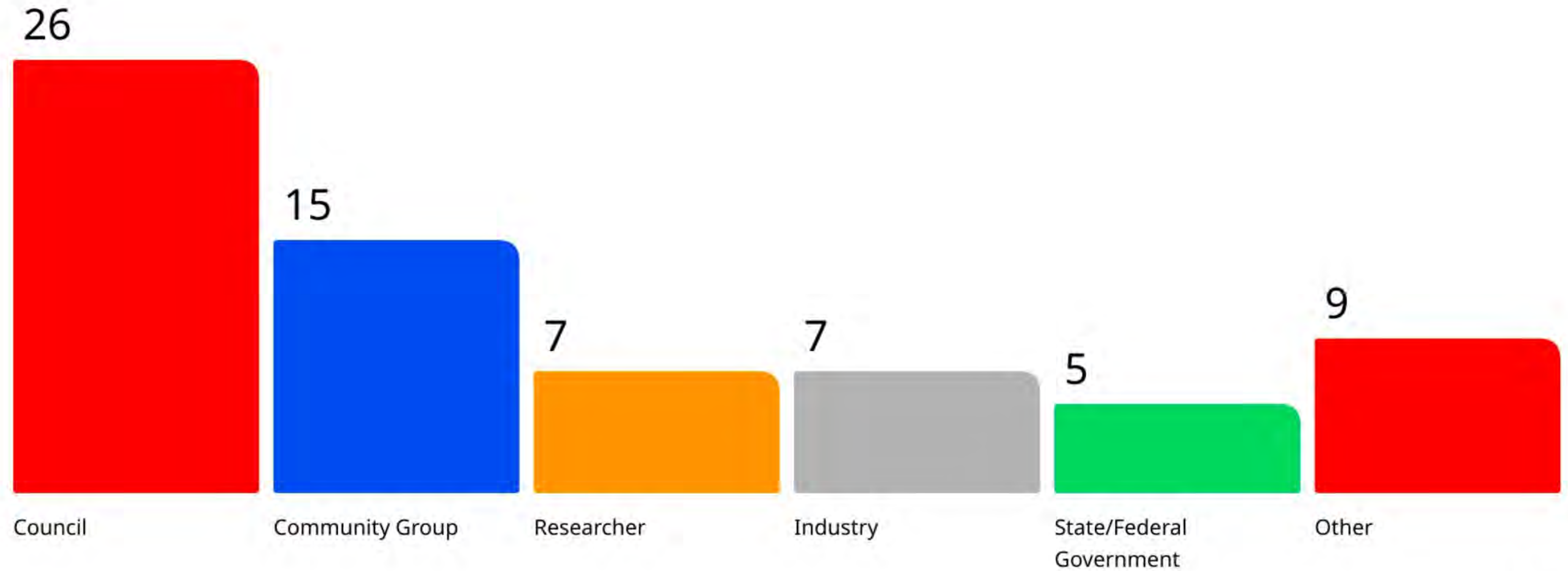
To understand how local partnerships - between councils and community - can deliver more effective home energy upgrade projects across the country.



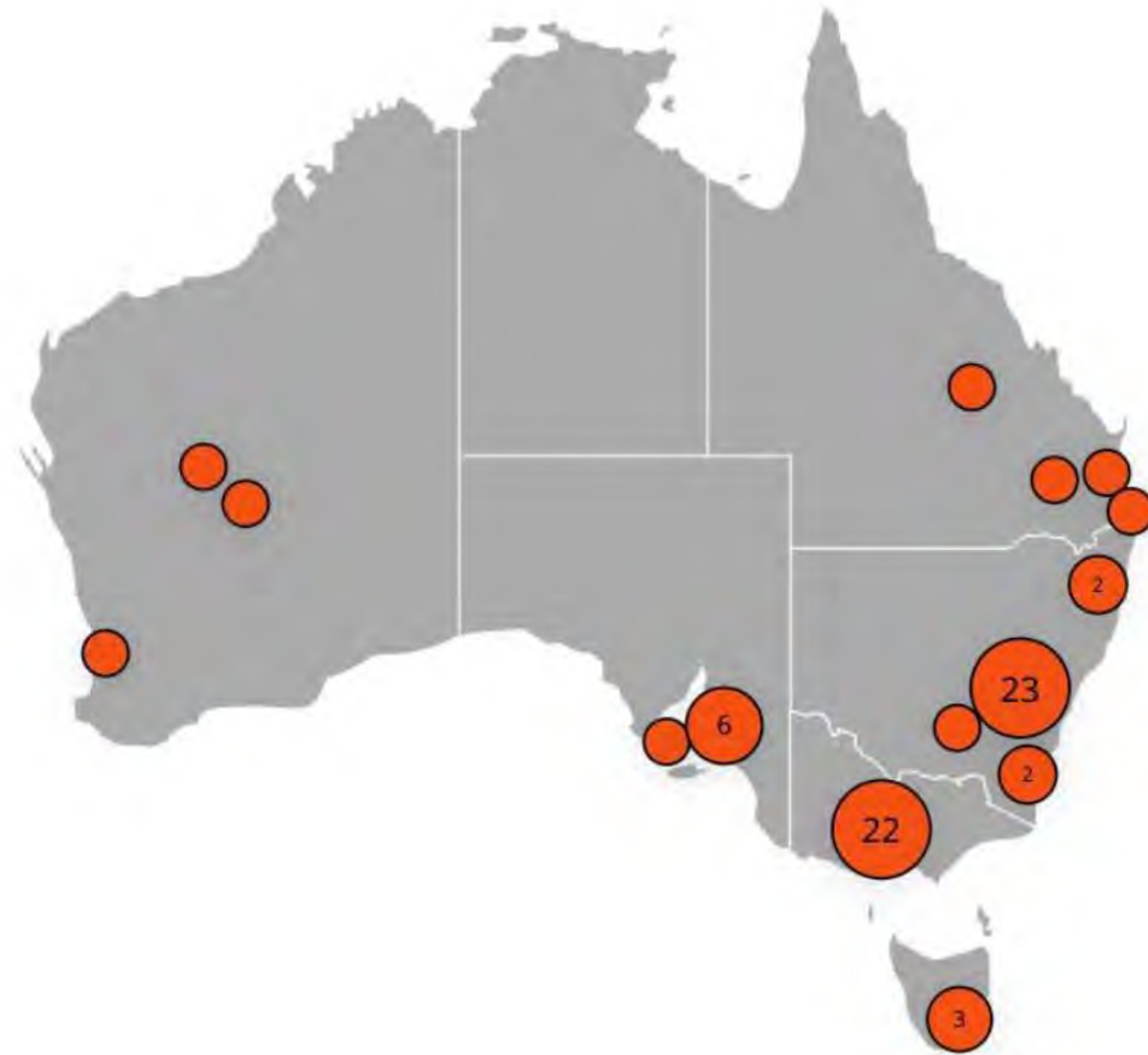
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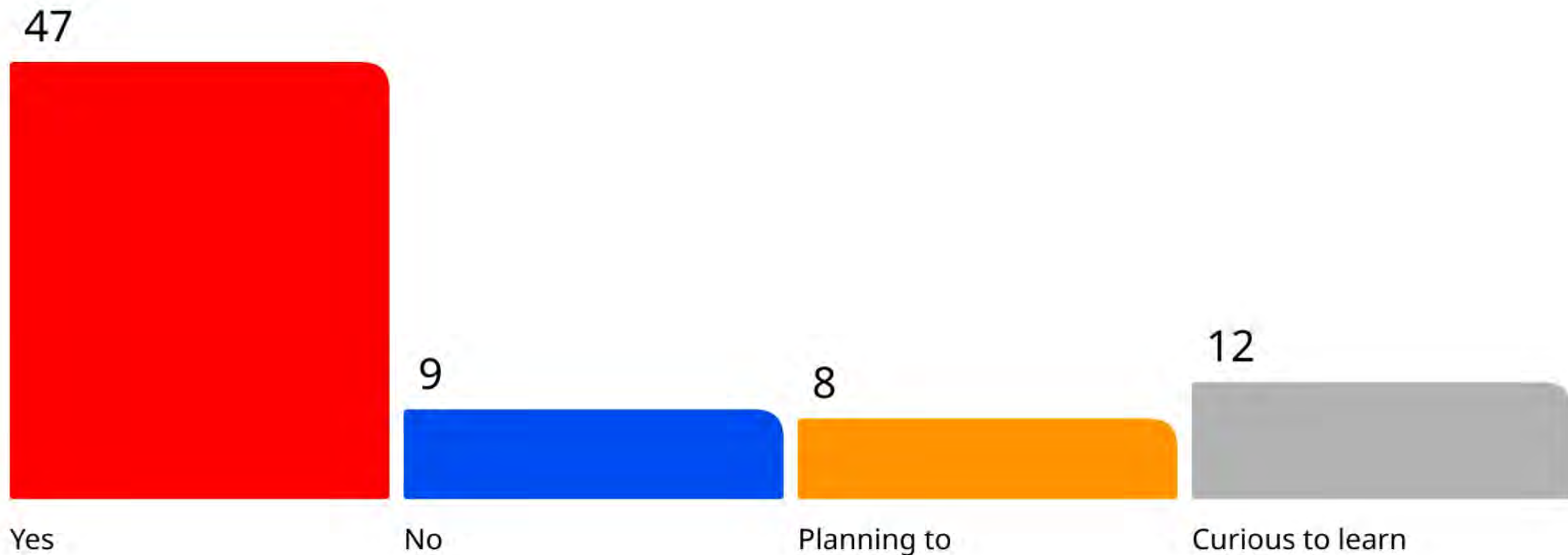
Which group are you from?



Which state or territory are you joining from?



Have you worked in a collaboration between a council and a community group?



Dr Paris Hadfield





CLIMATEKIC
Australia

**RACE for
2030**
RELIABLE
AFFORDABLE
CLEAN
ENERGY

Council-Community Partnership Models

Dr Paris Hadfield
Monash Sustainable Development Institute

With thanks to Jaime Comber, Belinda Whelan,
Donna Luckman, Kristen McDonald, Ed Langham

EUAH Speaker Series

September 2025



What does an upgrade program look like?



Helps households
understand why and
how to upgrade their
homes



Provides
trustworthy advice
on quality products
and suppliers



Makes home energy
upgrades more
affordable



Makes the
installation process
easier for households

What role do councils and community groups play?



Vet and partner
with product
suppliers

Negotiate product
discounts and
warranties



Recommend home
energy upgrade
products

Provide trusted,
independent advice



Help households
access or directly
provide subsidies
and finance



**Facilitate and
troubleshoot**
installations for
households

How do councils and community orgs work together?



**Advocacy & enabling
environment**

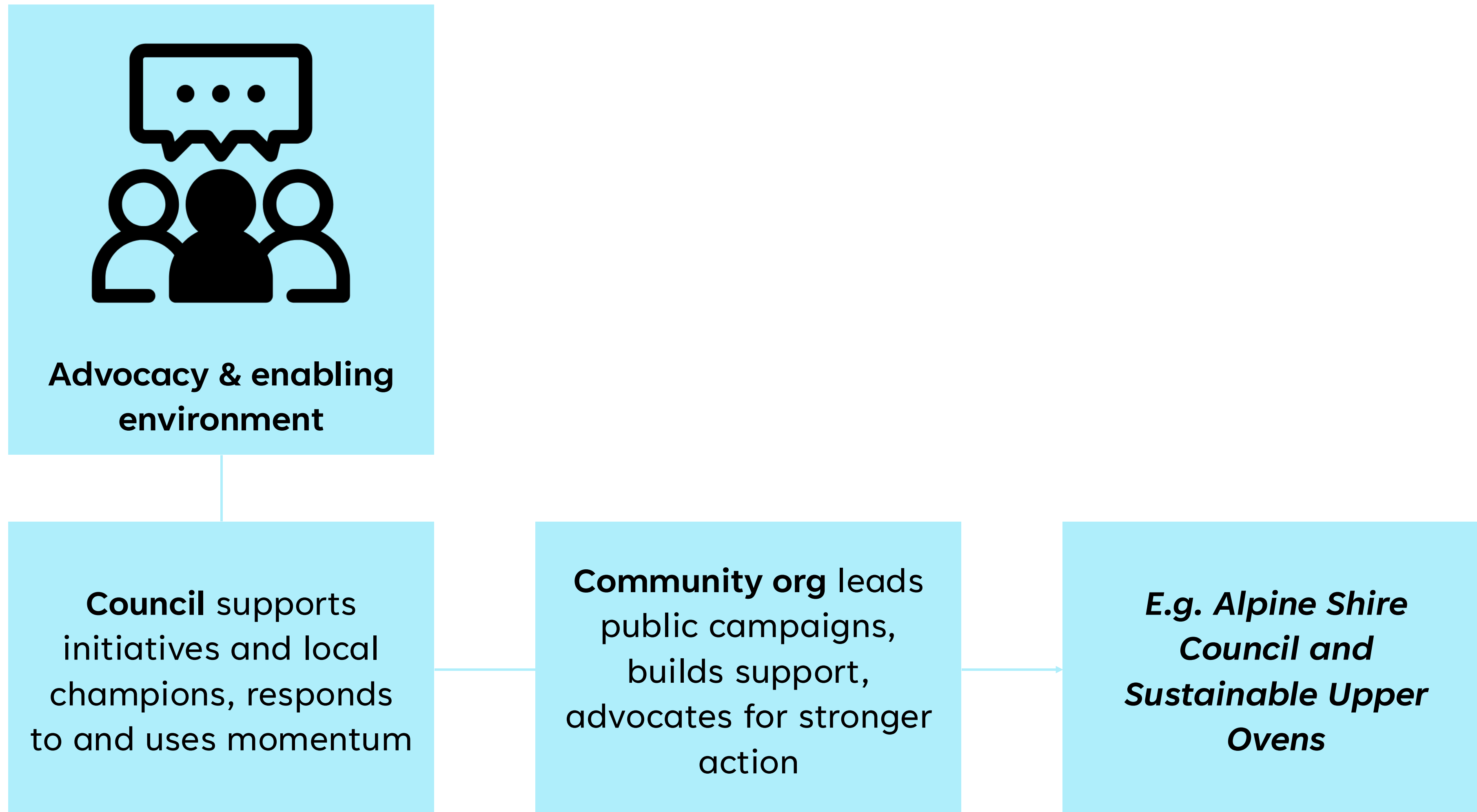


Grant funding

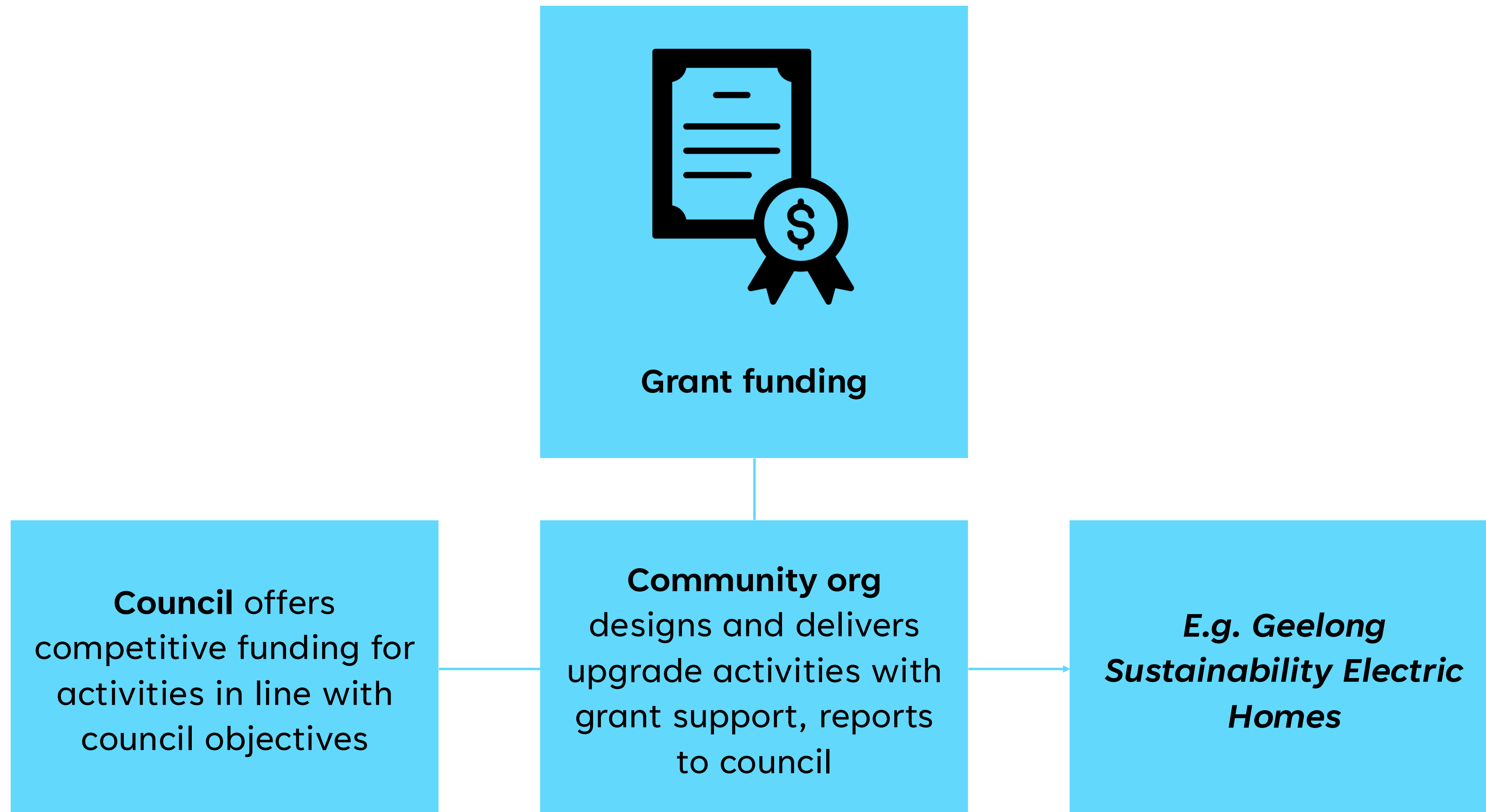


Service provision

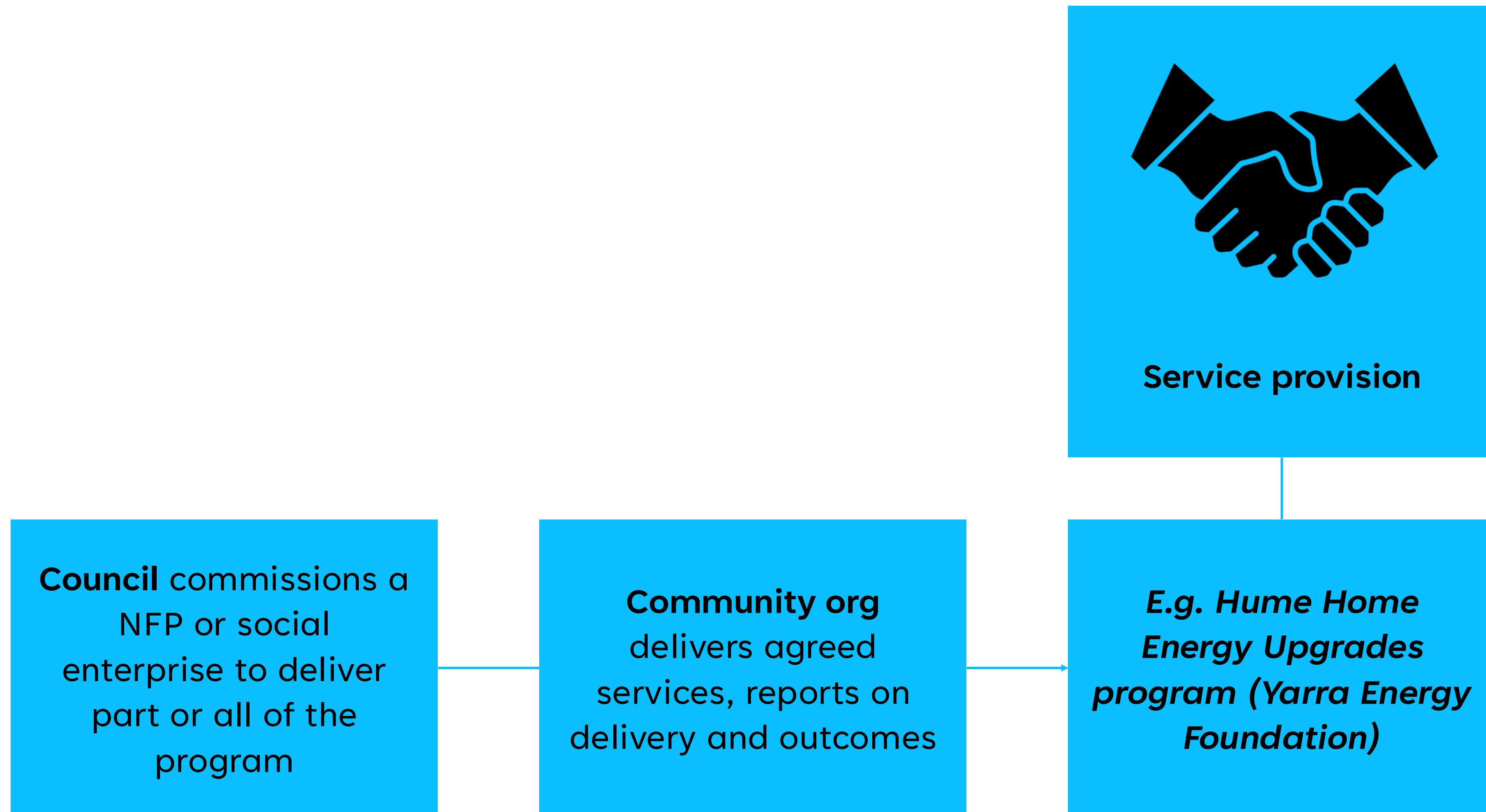
How do councils and community orgs work together?



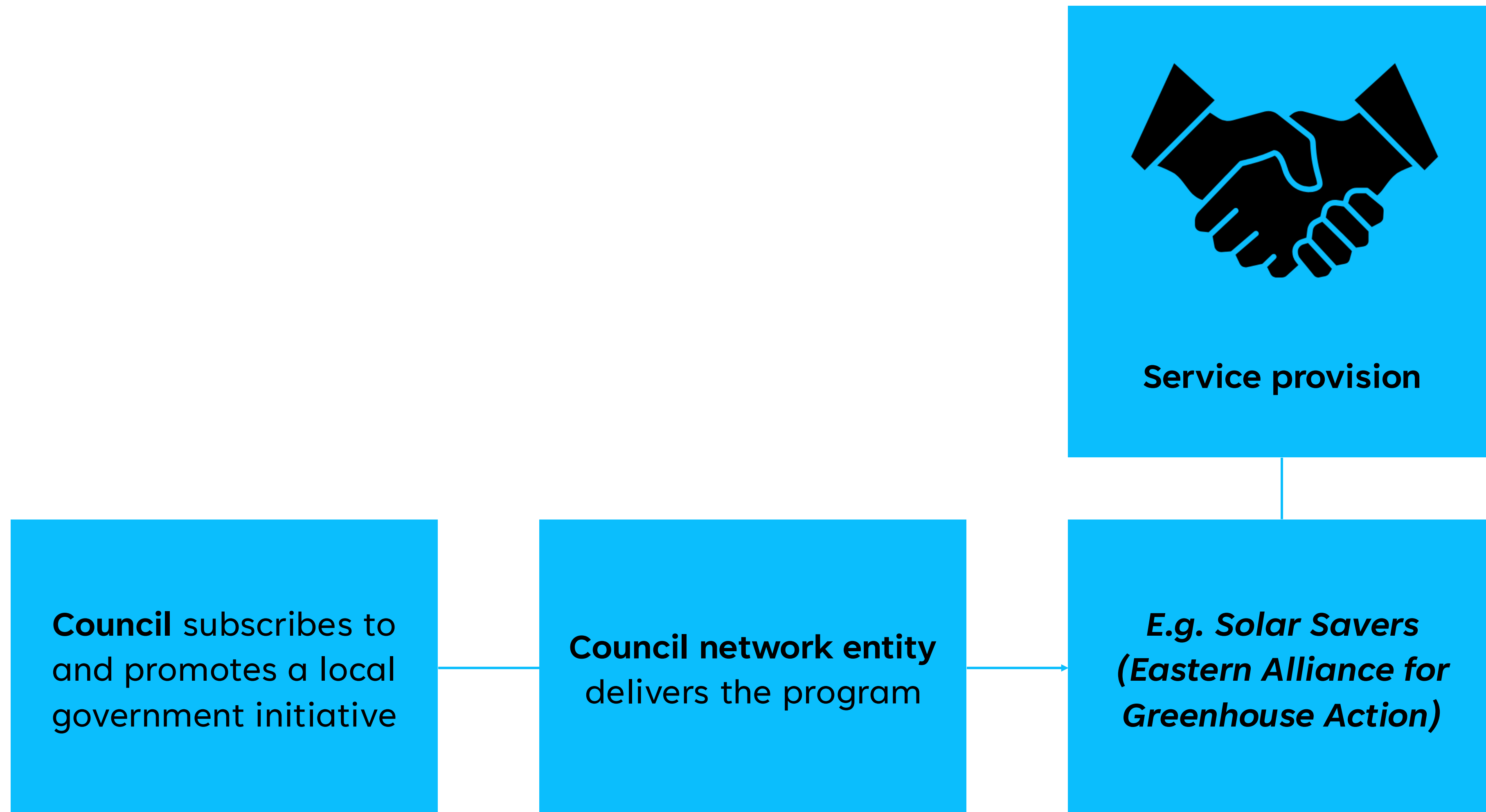
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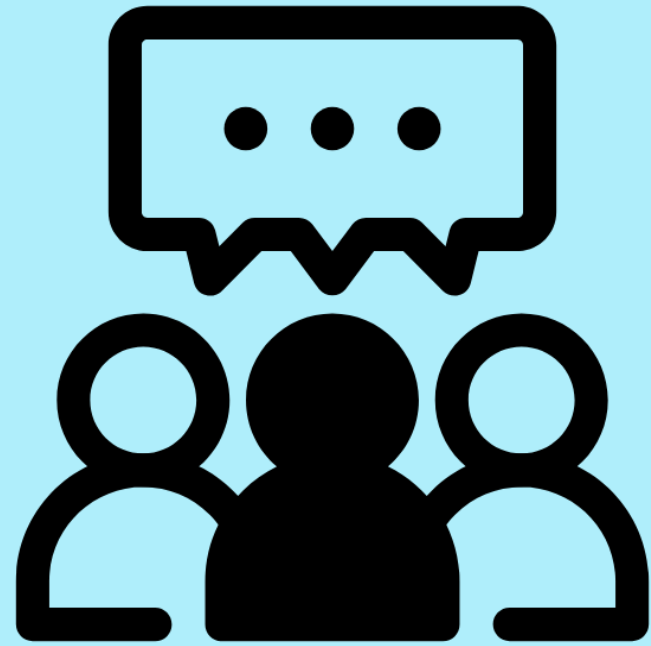
How do councils and community orgs work together?



How do councils and community orgs work together?



Council-Community Partnership Models



**Advocacy & enabling
environment**



Grant funding



Service provision

Who is presenting?



Lexi Crouch

Climate Change and
Sustainability Program Lead
City of Newcastle



Sion Zivetz

Sustainability and Climate
Change Officer
Noosa Shire Council



Colin Lambie

Treasurer and Chair
Zero Emissions Noosa Inc.

City of Newcastle



Empowering Newcastle

Lexi Crouch
Climate Change & Sustainability Program Lead

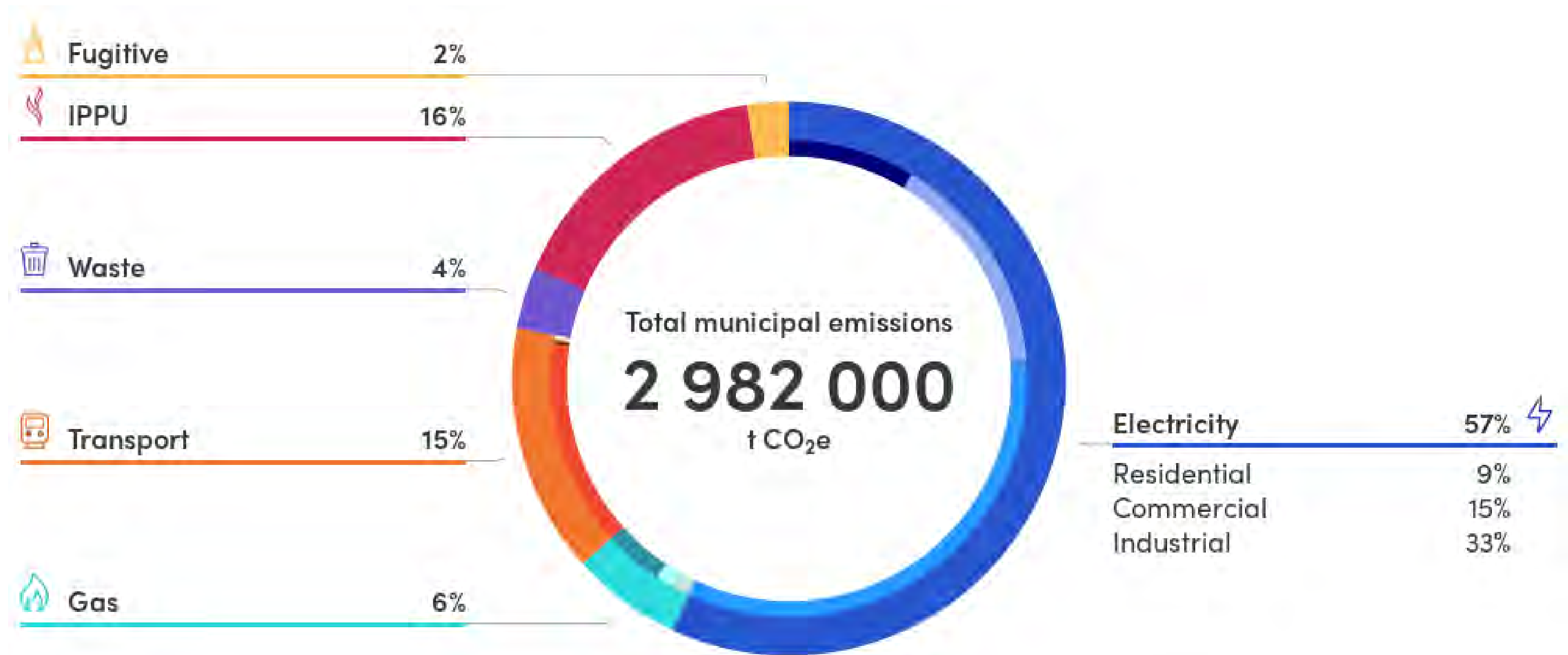
Working together for a net zero future.



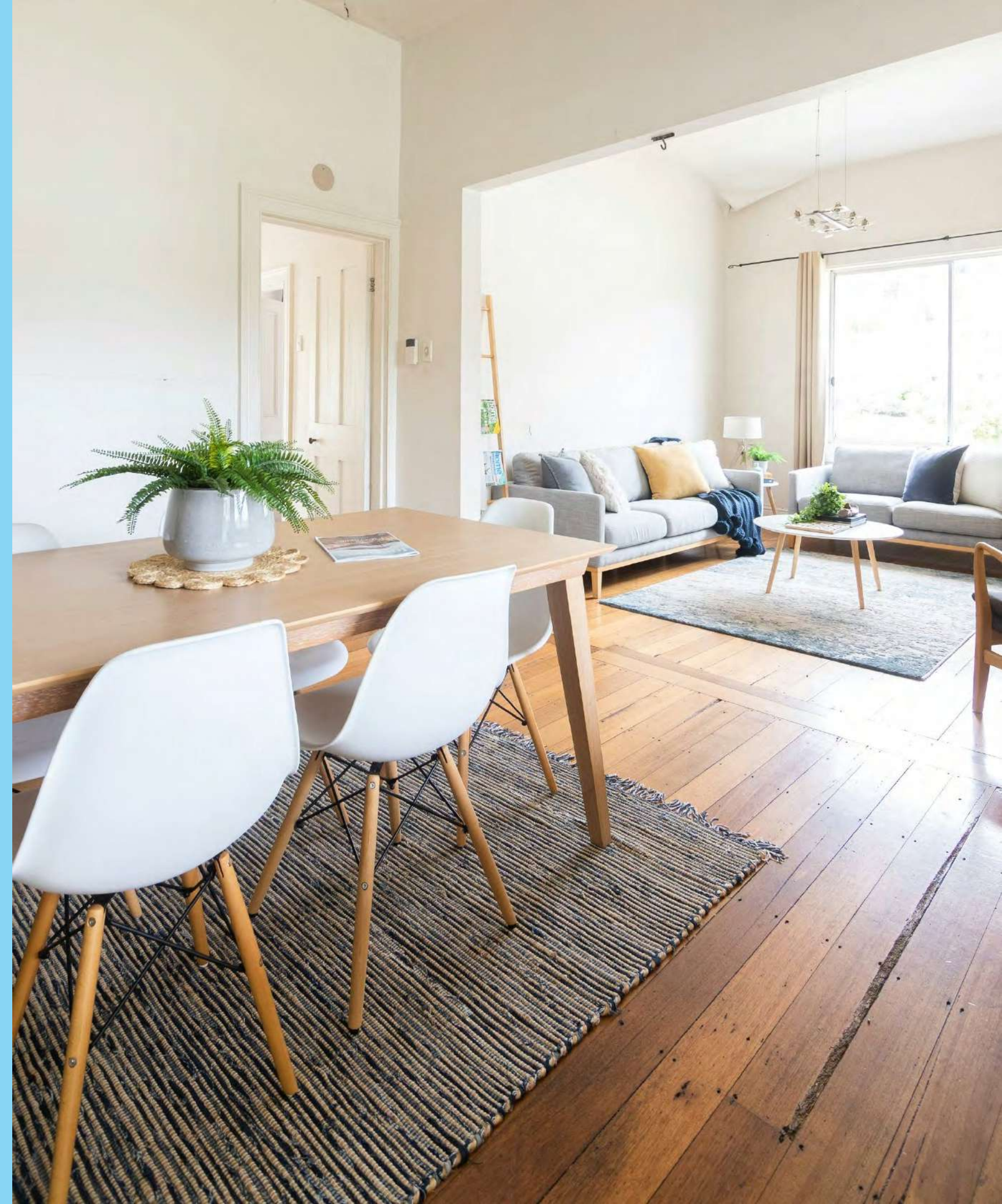
**City of
Newcastle**



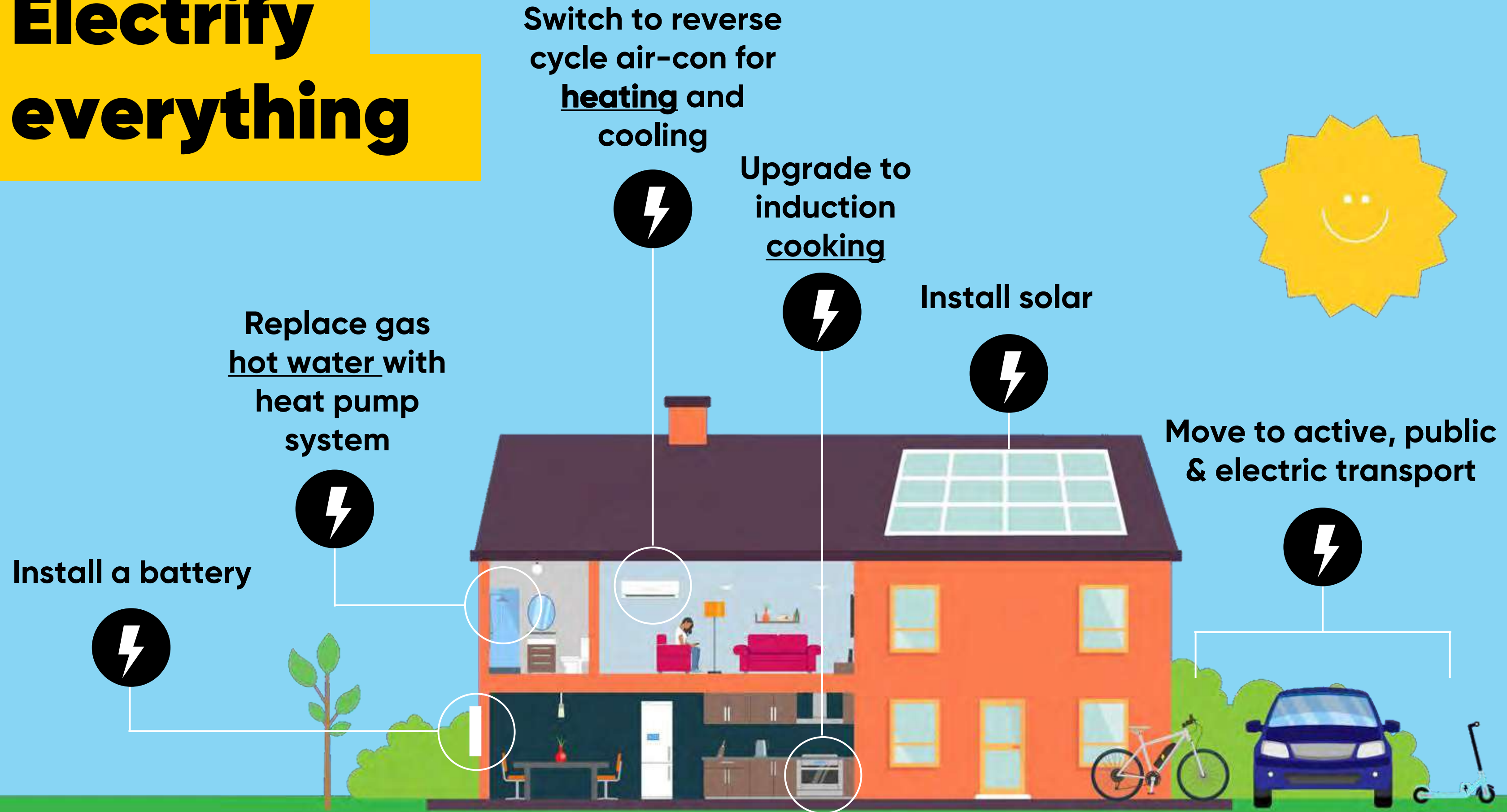
Newcastle LGA emissions profile



20% of Newcastle's
emissions emanate
from **six decisions**
made at the
dinner table



Electrify everything



**The average Australian
spends 9 minutes a year
thinking about energy**

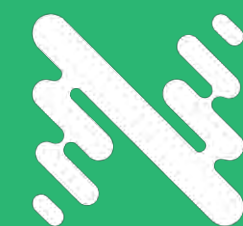
**88% of people trust
recommendations
from people they
know over all other
forms of advertising**



Empowering Climate Champions

Community net zero training program

The future is us.



City of
Newcastle



Empowering Climate Champions



**6-week program
March to April
2025**



**In person at
Council Chambers**



**Thursdays
6pm – 8pm**



**By application
only**



**Free to
participate**



**Rewiring
Australia**

**Supported
by**



**City of
Newcastle**

United Nations accredited course

Part of the **global collaborative effort** to provide quality training towards the achievement of the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.**

Alumni receive **internationally recognised accreditation** and an **official United Nations certificate.**



Program outline

Week 1: Community led climate action

Week 2: The heart of the movement: energy equity

Week 3: Clean Energy Castles: Creating efficient electric homes

Week 4: Power to the people: solar, batteries, EVs, VPPs & community energy

Week 5: Inspire & lead effective change

Week 6: Celebrate, reflect & share

Facilitators



Detailed outline

Date	Session Overview	Topics (subject to change)	Speakers
Session 1 Thursday 6 March 2025 (6pm – 8pm)	Community led climate action Understand Newcastle's climate challenges and develop actionable solutions. Learn from successful community-led energy projects to inspire your own initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What the science says• What communities are doing about it• What can we do at a local level? Diving into the data.• Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Newcastle• CIFAL Newcastle• Rewiring Australia
Session 2 Thursday 13 March 2025 (6pm – 8pm)	The heart of the movement: energy equity Explore energy equity and discover how to overcome obstacles to accessing affordable, reliable clean energy for everyone in our community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The problem: diving into the data• Removing the barriers to accessing efficient, reliable and affordable energy• Importance of playing to our strengths and using our skills• The power of networks• Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Newcastle• Solar Citizens
Session 3 Thursday 20 March 2025 (6pm – 8pm)	Clean energy castles: creating efficient electric homes Equip yourself with practical knowledge on reading energy bills, choosing efficient appliances, and Green Power so you can help neighbours reduce their energy bills and create healthier, more comfortable homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to read an energy bill + Green Power• Energy efficiency• Electrifying homes: hot water, heating, cooling, and cooking• Government programs, incentives and rebates• Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Renew• NSW Government• City of Newcastle

Date	Session Overview	Topics (subject to change)	Speakers
Session 4 Thursday 27 March 2025 (6pm – 8pm)	Power to the people: solar, batteries, electric vehicles & beyond Learn what you need to know about solar, batteries, electric vehicles, virtual power plants and community energy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding the clean energy tech: solar, batteries, EVs and virtual power plants• Deep dive into community energy• Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Renew• Australian Electric Vehicle Association• Community Power Agency
Session 5 Thursday 3 April 2025 (6pm – 8pm)	Inspire and lead effective change Discover what motivates people to act. Learn the art of impactful storytelling and how to have effective climate conversations. Gain insights into marketing for your project, as well as how to mobilise and lead community groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What really makes people change their behaviour?• How to have effective conversations about climate• Storytelling• Community organising and project management• Media and communications• Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Climate Council• Behaviour Works Australia, Monash University
Session 6 Thursday 10 April 2025 (6pm – 8pm)	Celebrate, reflect and share Across the 6-weeks you'll bring together all your insights to design a project to tackle a local climate challenge. This is the chance to celebrate your progress, reflect on the journey, and share your vision to bring us closer to a net zero Newcastle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activity: Pitch – sharing our project plans• Activity: Reflecting on our journey together, postcards to your future self• Mapping the path forward (next steps)• Celebrating together: certificates and photos	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Newcastle

Community Climate Action Handbook



City of
Newcastle

Electrification

- Solar for apartments grant applications (x3)
- Draught proofing kits for renters
- Electrify Broadmeadow
- Transportable solar solution for strata properties
- Improve energy efficiency of strata building
- Demand Response Management app
- Community electrification expo
- Flipping the switch in Fletcher
- Promote green loans
- Mayfield Future-Ready
- Educate residents
- Electrification project - ZapCat
- E-bike commuter community group
- Barrier benefit research on EV uptake
- Transport emissions reduction strategy
- Solar panel education: The solar car project
- Expanding EV chargers

Transport

Community-owned energy

- Fundraising for school solar
- Virtual power plants
- Microgrid project (community grid)
- Community-owned renewable energy generation
- Community solar park
- Shared battery for strata

30 Projects

- Circular solar project
- Create a Newcastle Community Energy Hub
- Supporting corporates with scope 3 accounting
- Renewable energy transition children's book
- White paper on LEP improvements
- Business organics composting program
- Reduce eco-anxiety

Beyond

What came next?

Climate Champions Network

Grant funding opportunities

Program evaluation

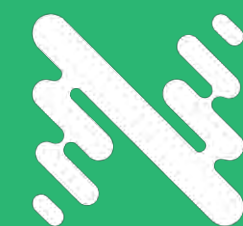
The future is us.



City of
Newcastle

Outcomes

- ♥ 96% satisfaction rate
- 📖 96% learnt something new
- 🔧 95% will use the information acquired
- 👥 89% made new connections
- 💬 32%↑ confidence talking about climate change
- 🚢 50%↑ confidence leading community climate projects
- 🕊 15%↑ hope for the future

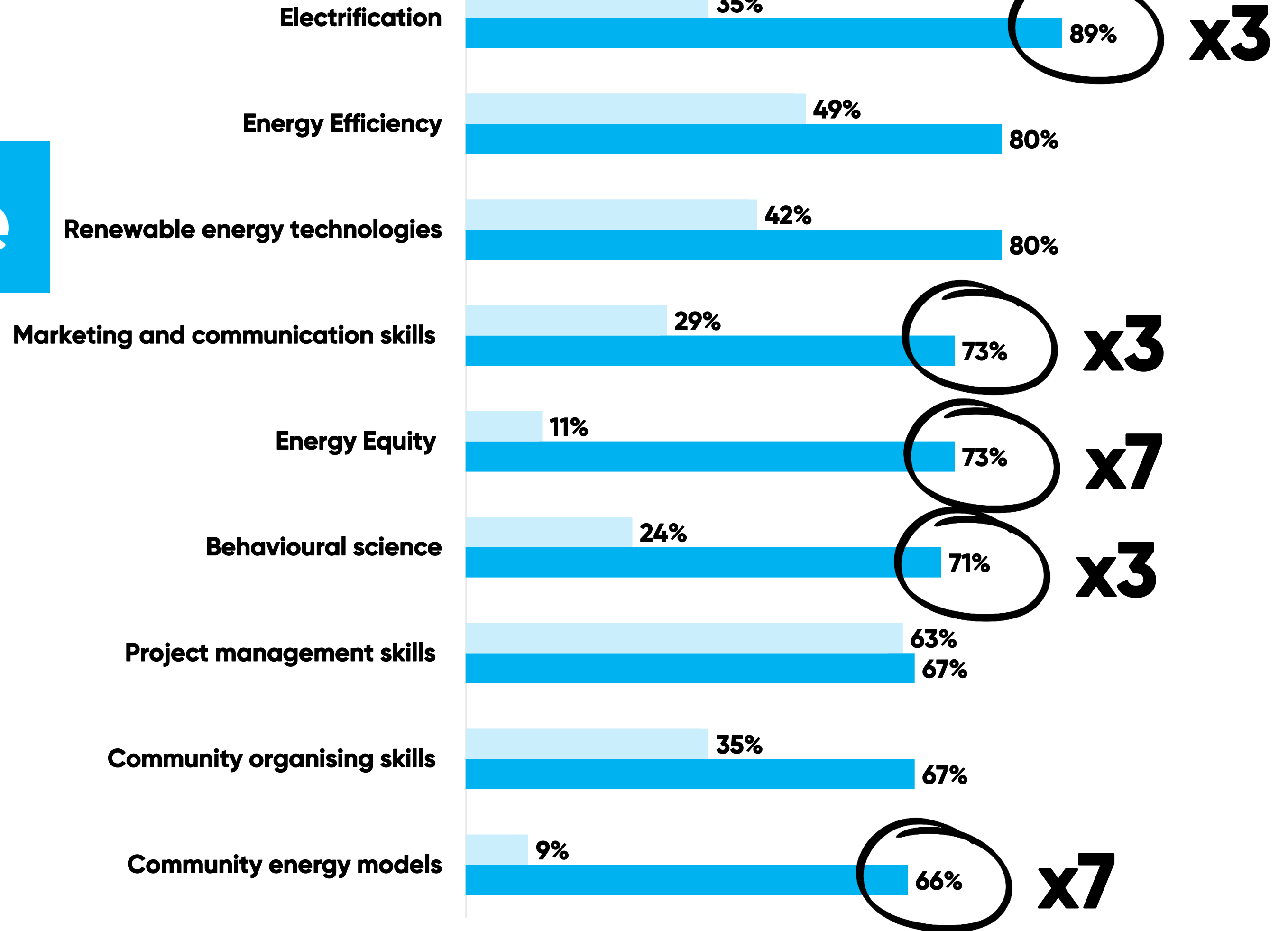


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Newcastle

Level of knowledge

■ Before ■ After

% high + very high



4-month survey

Community engagement spectrum

Interest

61 applicants

Attendance

51 graduates (84%)

Participation

184 conversations with neighbours (361% amplification)

Behaviour change

12 installations completed (24% installation rate)

Contribution

30 project plans + 4 volunteered at events

Committed involvement

19 consistently attend network meetings

Advocacy and leadership

5 delivering projects + 2 'Local Legends' + 2 political advocacy

Stewardship

2 Electrify Neighbourhoods launched + 3 grant funded





**Noosa Shire Council &
Zero Emissions Noosa Inc.**



NOOSA
Council

Noosa Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of the Noosa area, the Kabi Kabi people, and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.



Grants and Alliance Funding

Partnership agreement for 3 years (2023-2026)

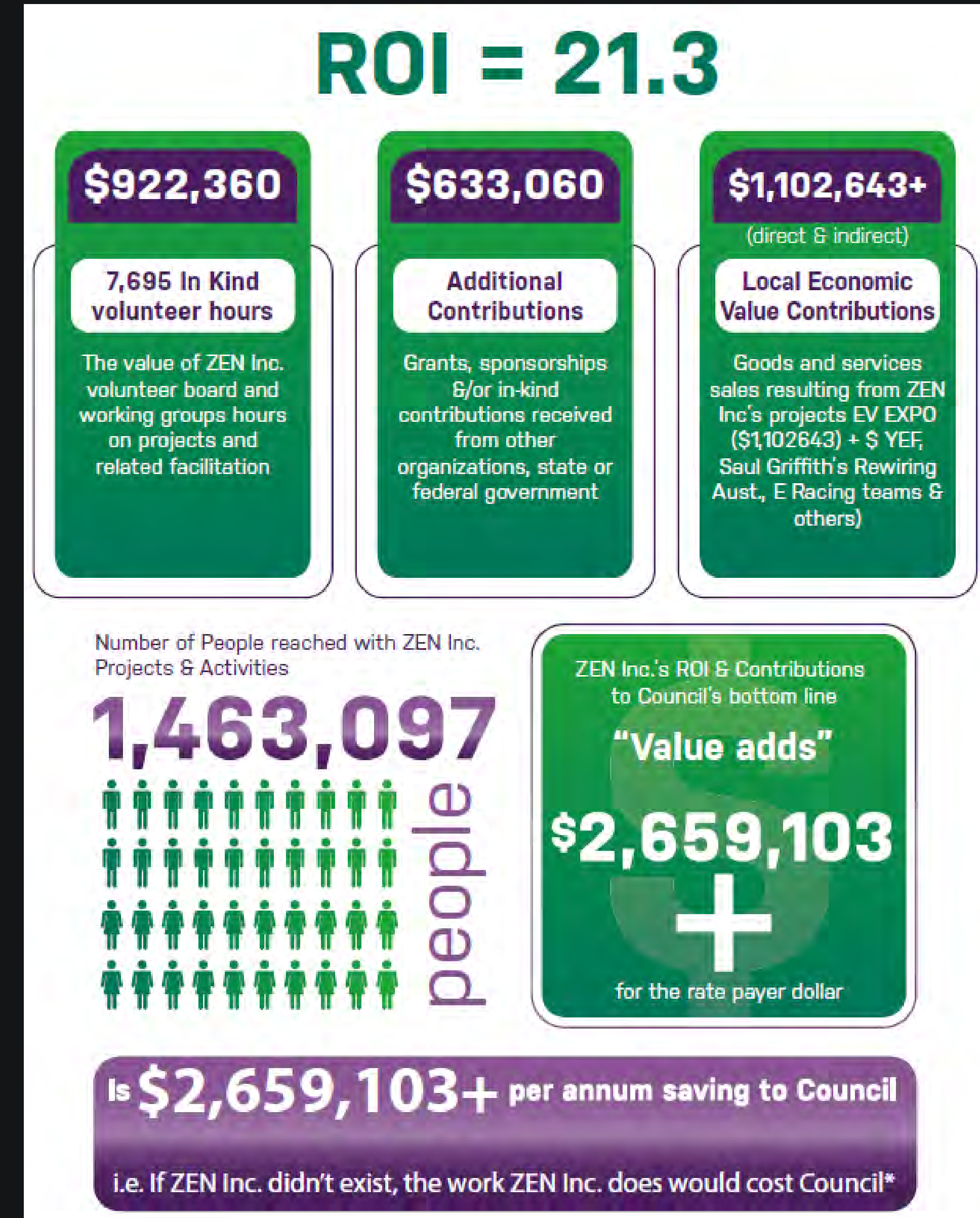
- Provided for ZEN Inc. to support to deliver programs in line with the Climate Change Response Plan (CCRP)
- Provides for ZEN Inc. to hire admin and support staff
- Funded by general rates and reported to Council annually

ZEN develops an annual strategic plan that aligns with Council's Climate Change Response Plan

- Strategic plan is reviewed and supported by Sustainability and Climate team
- Annual report is delivered to Council to highlight achievements

Climate Change Grants Program project examples

- Electrify Noosa
- Solar for Strata
- Car Free Day 2025
- EV Expo support
- Energy efficiency for low-income homes





Theme 2: Energy efficiency and renewable energy

- 2.1 Transition Noosa Council and Noosa Shire to 100% renewable energy and ensure the transition is inclusive of low income and vulnerable residents and businesses, including strata tenants
- 2.2 Pursue energy efficiency and renewable energy measures within Council and for Council owned buildings
- 2.3 Develop a climate aware and empowered community for reducing climate risks and emissions



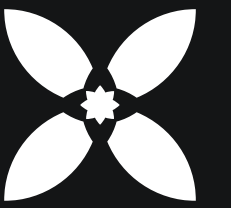
Theme 3: Clean low emissions industries

- 3.1 Through targeted initiatives, create an environment that supports business development, innovation and investment shift to clean, green low emission industries and technology
- 3.2 Work with industry, business associations and government agencies to facilitate emissions reduction and environmental sustainability for local businesses



Theme 4: Sustainable Transport

- 4.1 Accelerate public and active transport infrastructure investment and community usage through the implementation of Council's Transport Strategy and Walking and Cycling Plan.
- 4.2 Transition Council and the community to sustainable transport use and zero-emissions vehicles



Noosa Council Climate Change Response Plan

Community Outreach and Education

Community outreach and education

- Electrify everything forums
- De-mystifying home batteries
- EV and Electrify Everything Expo
- Car free Noosa program

Advocacy, research and projects

- Rewiring Noosa report
- EUA study opportunity
- Community battery
- Race to zero schools program
- Solar for business



2025 Noosa EV & Electrify Everything Expo



- Funding & support from Noosa Shire Council
- 6,000 visitors
- 65 Exhibitors
- 34 different EVs
- EV cars, trucks, bikes, scooters, motorbikes, etc
- Solar, batteries
- Electric Viking
- Matt Golinski induction cooking Demo
- Entertainment
- Closed street with cafes, etc



Solar on Low Income Homes



- Grant provided by Noosa Shire Council
- Funding enough to provide approx. 3kW solar PV systems on 10 low income homes
- Hard part of this project was finding recipients !



Go Car Free Day

- Funding from Noosa Shire Council
- Promoted use of active or public transport
- Prizes: ebike tour, passes on Noosa Ferry
- Major prize \$500
- Pledge required to win



A close-up photograph of a palm frond, likely from a coconut palm, featuring striking orange and red variegation on its leaflets. The frond is positioned diagonally across the frame, with the colorful section in the center. The background is dark and filled with other palm fronds, some of which are a deep green. The lighting highlights the texture of the leaves and the vibrant colors of the variegation.

Thank You

The Panel



Lexi Crouch

Climate Change and
Sustainability Program Lead
City of Newcastle



Sion Zivetz

Sustainability and Climate
Change Officer
Noosa Shire Council



Colin Lambie

Treasurer and Chair
Zero Emissions Noosa Inc.

What is one key takeaway?

Collaboration is key

Passionate people in communities are essential to getting those with only "9 minutes" to engage

Inspired by what can be achieved.

engage and partner with community groups early

Partnerships take time and effort to nurture and maintain

Build community champions to amplify your impact.

We need to develop a good proposition to take to our joint councils

Find out the right lever

What is one key takeaway?

It's dangerous to be discussing renewable energy as zero emission.

Role of community champions

the savings to council by using community groups

Council and community collaboration needs to be encouraged

Passionate people are the secret sauce for effective collaboration

climate champions with UN accredited training (and getting a handbook from Lexi)

Supporting community champions

Community champions are key

What is one key takeaway?

How positive good Councils can be!

Some ideas and options to share with our Council at mtg in a couple of weeks

You don't need heaps of resources to inspire change

the importance of establishing clear relationships and responsibilities with community orgs

We are not alone! There is no point in reinventing the electric wheel

Leadership need to drive program creation

Need great leaders at council to drive these partnerships

Direct communication is critical

What is one key takeaway?

Collaboration

Collaboration and communication!

opportunities for funding community led groups, and collaborating across LG boundaries (for small LGs)

Link up with industry associations for product expertise

Training for people to recommend electrification

Lots of councils are being proactive. Ours is not (sad face) Good there are lots of groups doing this.

Understand who isn't being reached

People are the key to change

What is one key takeaway?

Good people can change things

The combination of councils and community organisations is a powerful way of getting the message out and getting things done

Power of trusted connections and community members

Councils viewing community orgs as useful additions to their capability

So helpful to share learnings and successes, let's not start from scratch !

Appetite for energy efficiency audits vs renewables

The huge range of programs and outcomes that can be achieved at the community/council levels, and the willingness to share 'what works'

Collaboration is key. Champions required at Council & Community groups.

Thank you

Contact: euah@climate-kic.org.au



RACE for
2030

**RELIABLE
AFFORDABLE
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