

# ECONOMIC BENEFITS



## Regional exports

Every year, Australians spend \$12.8 billion on household electricity bills. Most of that goes to power companies, many overseas-based. By securing local ownership of energy assets, electricity becomes a regional export industry, meaning we can keep that money in the regional economy<sup>15</sup>.



## Local jobs

When renewable energy projects are community-driven or owned, they employ more locals. One recent report projected renewables could employ an additional 44,000 people within five years. Community energy ensures that this investment will translate into local jobs to underpin a new generation of prosperity<sup>17</sup>.



## Cheap power

Renewable power is the cheapest power. By generating electricity ourselves, regional communities can access this low-cost power. Yackandandah Health Service is saving \$1 million over 25 years through its rooftop solar. The CSIRO argues renewables could save every Australian household \$414 a year<sup>14</sup>.



## Skills and training

A wave of renewables development means massive opportunities for apprentices, trainees and skilled employment. Moreover, empowering the local community to own and develop projects enables stronger connections to local training providers and lasting investment in local workforce capability.



## Farm income

Renewable energy represents a huge income diversification for landowners. In the wind industry alone, currently operating wind farms will pay an estimated \$27 million a year to farmers through lease payments. Grazing and cropping can co-exist with renewables, ensuring minimal loss of farmland<sup>18</sup>.



## Income for councils

Community energy projects create new income streams for local councils through rates or other schemes. For instance, Ararat Rural City Council receives around \$375,000 annually from three wind farms. This means lower rates for everyone<sup>16</sup>.



## Community development

Many community energy projects allocate a portion of revenues to finance local projects like facility upgrades and events. There are 51 such funds in the wind industry alone across Australia, which have delivered \$9.1 million into local communities<sup>19</sup>.