

YARRA ENERGY FOUNDATION

Annual Report
— 2023-2024

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From the Chair

On the frontlines building capacity for the energy transition



I am pleased to report that YEF has achieved another highly successful year. From launching our first state-wide neighbourhood battery training course, to developing new projects, and planning for household electrification, our efforts have received wide recognition.

A standout success was YEF developing Victoria's first series of neighbourhood battery training courses. The courses improved industry capacity and enabled more organisations to plan projects and seek funding. The model has been a huge success and can now be deployed in future to address other gaps in industry knowledge and capability.

Our projects are setting new benchmarks — like making EV bays more accessible and streamlining processes for connecting batteries to the distribution networks. Our commitment to innovation and excellence continues to position YEF as a leader in this area, with communities' needs always front of mind.

We are also bolstering our capabilities and support for household electrification, from solar panels, to heat pumps, and energy efficiency upgrades. YEF has been hard at work, collaborating with organisations and Councils in the interest of household and precinct-scale electrification.

I commend Dean and his team for their exceptional work in launching these new initiatives and delivering outstanding results. I also extend my heartfelt thanks to my fellow board members for their dedication, support, and inspiration. Finally, to our partners and funders, including the City of Yarra, thank you for your commitment to YEF and our shared vision for a sustainable future.

David Anstee
Chair, Yarra Energy Foundation

From the CEO

Leading with others and learning from communities



This past year we've multiplied our impact through one-to-many approaches. Our actions for building industry capacity, fostering innovative battery projects, and preparing for government support for household electrification has positioned us as a key player in the energy transition.

A key accomplishment has been the delivery of new training courses for neighbourhood batteries. By addressing skill gaps and sharing expertise, we are laying a stronger foundation for communities and industry to deploy more battery storage — which we know is needed for a fully renewable grid. Community and governments now have more knowledge and capability for scoping new projects, in part due to our training initiatives.

We have also made big strides in developing new battery projects, particularly with local governments. These projects demonstrate the scalability of battery storage, with a growing interest in energy resilience applications.

Looking forward, we are positioning to support even more communities with household electrification. We're actively engaging with local governments, funders, and residents to plan for future programs, including the rollout of solar and electrification programs, and exploring how to support the most vulnerable homes.

There are still challenges ahead, but with each we see more opportunities. With a relentless forward-looking board and a talented team, we will keep driving positive change in the energy sector for government, industry, and communities. I extend my deepest gratitude to our partners, funders, board of directors and the City of Yarra for their support.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'DKline', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Dean Kline
CEO, Yarra Energy Foundation

About YEF

Yarra Energy Foundation (YEF) is an independent not-for-profit organisation with a huge ambition – to build a cleaner energy system to address a changing climate.

YEF exists to connect people to better energy. We do it by bringing government, industry, and community together to deliver innovative solutions for energy emissions reductions.

Established by Yarra City Council in 2010, this financial year YEF received support from Yarra City Council. The organisation is governed by an independent and highly experienced Board of Directors.

Our strategic approach: 2023-2028

To achieve our vision and mission we focus on our goals, backed by our principles. Through delivering projects we're exploring new ways to achieve our goals while adapting to changes in the market, policies, and technology, to ensure our impact is felt where it's needed most.



Our Impact

“YEF’s training on neighbourhood batteries was the best training I’d attended in years.” — Participant

By the numbers

- Assessed over **550+** potential sites for neighbourhood batteries.
- **65 participants** completed YEF’s neighbourhood battery training courses.
- **1,400 kilowatts/1.4MW** of residential rooftop solar milestone surpassed in the City of Hume through the *Hume Solar Rollout* program.
 - Over **\$2 million** invested by Hume community into solar PV.
 - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by approximately **1,500 tonnes** (CO2-e) per year.
 - Over **1,000** residents engaged.
- **Over 230 registrations** for the *Love Bayside: Electrify Everything* program, including:
 - Quotes sent: **125**
 - Appliance installations: **58**
 - Total combined investment: **\$252,121**
- Partnered with **22** local governments and Yarra Trams developing business cases for neighbourhood batteries.
- Conducted **five** webinars and more than **40** interviews with Council officers.
- Participated in around a **dozen** community energy events and conferences.



This Year in Review

Neighbourhood Batteries

Key points

- First neighbourhood battery training courses delivered
- Clifton Hill neighbourhood battery + EV charger progresses
- Developing neighbourhood battery projects and business cases
- Multi-council 'fast-tracking neighbourhood batteries' report delivered

Neighbourhood Battery Training

The Victorian Government's Department of Energy, Environment, and Climate Action (DEECA) funded YEF to design and deliver a series of training courses on neighbourhood batteries.

The courses were divided into both 1-day and 2-day offerings, with the first covering foundational concepts and the second a deeper dive into the technical aspects of project delivery.

In the training courses, participants learned what defines a 'neighbourhood battery', how they operate, what to consider when looking for a site, and what to consider when building both a feasibility assessment and a business case.

Participants included those from local and state government, non-profit, community, and the private sector. The training helped participants to better understand what opportunities, risks, and skills were needed to assess whether to progress with a neighbourhood battery.



Supporting Local Government Projects

YEF partnered with Mornington Peninsula Shire Council to help deliver a community battery in Flinders, funded under the Australian Government’s *Community Batteries for Household Solar Program*. The township has been highly active with the local group Flinders Zero Carbon Community (FZCC).

With YEF’s support, Council and FZCC consulted with the community on the battery site and artwork.

In a parallel project, YEF also supported Noosa Shire Council on their community battery funded under the same program. Community engagement was again a defining aspect of this project, with local energy group, Zero Emissions Noosa (ZEN) leading the community consultation.

YEF also won funding from the Victorian Government’s third round of *Neighbourhood Battery Initiative*, making YEF the only organisation to secure funding in all three rounds.

In this project, called the *Greenhouse Alliance Neighbourhood Battery Investigation – Metropolitan (GANBIM)*, YEF developed a business case for a neighbourhood battery in each of 22 local government areas.

As part of this project YEF worked closely with the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA) to engage Council officers and facilitate knowledge sharing and capacity building — a notable co-benefit of project delivery.

YEF delivered 22 stakeholder engagement plans, five knowledge sharing webinars and over 40 interviews with councils. In addition, YEF undertook a Request-For-Information (RFI) process to understand market leaders and options for both battery energy storage systems and retailer offerings.



These outputs showcase YEF’s depth of knowledge and technical capabilities, with results including in the market data of battery manufacturers, energy aggregation and retailing services, and capacity building across 22 local governments.

Supporting Distribution Networks

YEF was engaged by Jemena, one of Victoria’s Distribution Network Service Providers (DNSP), to support the delivery of four battery projects funded by the Australian Government.

Jemena is set to deliver batteries in Bellfield, Coburg, Alphington and Moonee Valley, supporting grid capacity, household solar and other community benefits. YEF has completed the development of community engagement plans and

strategy, and will be working closely with the distributor to complete community engagement activities through 2025.



Household electrification

In the last financial year, YEF made significant strides across multiple electrification and energy efficiency programs. The *Electrify Everything* program in Bayside had a successful inaugural year, leading Bayside Council to extend its partnership with YEF for another year to support even more homes to electrify.

The program was also temporarily expanded to support especially vulnerable residents by providing no-cost-to-customer reverse cycle air conditioning systems as part of an initiative to improve resilience to heatwaves.

The *Hume Solar Rollout* program achieved a major milestone this financial year, reaching a remarkable 1.5MW of installed solar capacity with over 300 systems overall. The program continued to deliver concession card rebates to vulnerable residents.

YEF also played a key role as an energy consultant in the *Bank Australia Electrify Your Home* program, supporting more Victorian homes to electrify and make energy efficiency improvements.



YEF's impact in the City of Yarra

Wired For Tomorrow: imagining an all-electric precinct

The *Wired for Tomorrow* project was a novel and exciting undertaking for YEF, which involved creating a vision of an all-electric precinct in the City of Yarra. Through visual design and extensive consultation with both community and industry experts, we reimagined the future precinct. A final report of recommendations was also provided to Yarra City Council on how to accelerate steps towards this vision.

This project involved Yarra City Council staff, community members, and the local group Electrify Yarra, and gained insights from an expert Industry Working Group of leading specialists from across Australia.

One major activity of this project was to support the emerging community group, Electrify Yarra (originally 'Electrify3068'). The group quickly grew and has since expanded its remit, with big plans to tackle their community's transition off gas.



Figure 1: Virtual model of the 'Wired For Tomorrow' all-electric precinct vision in the City of Yarra.

Progressing Yarra’s first Accessible EV Chargers

With Victorian Government funding, we advanced the planning for a neighbourhood battery co-located with the first accessible EV charging bays in the City of Yarra, located near the Collingwood Leisure Centre.

While a work in progress, YEF made significant strides determining the location and technical parameters of the battery and EV chargers. YEF engaged deeply with local residents through a Community Reference Group.

Over several months of community engagement, the Community Reference Group gave their input on the how the EV chargers could be operated and the principles underlying the EV charging prices.

Despite being a very technical project, community members and representatives from Yarra City Council made invaluable contributions to the design parameters.



Figure 2: YEF with local Community Reference Group members at electric vehicle charging bays in Collingwood, collecting data for the accessible charging bays planned for Clifton Hill.

One exciting innovations of the project is dynamic pricing to incentivise customers to charge their vehicles in ways that *support* the network, reduce emissions, and put downward pressure on energy prices.

Communications and engagement

'Harness the sun with community batteries' Yarra Trams campaign

YEF was selected as one of the six beneficiaries of the *Yarra Trams Community Partnership Program* for 2023. This saw a community battery-themed tram traversing the streets of Melbourne for four months including the bustling month of January during the Australian Open.

The tram was the focal point of an overarching campaign to raise awareness of community batteries, urging all to 'harness the sun with community batteries. The call to action included responding to a survey, of which results were published by One Step Off the Grid in April, in *People really like community batteries – and want one in their neighbourhood.*



One of the lucky survey respondents also won a free 6-month subscription to local e-bike platform Lug+Carrie, one of our campaign partners.

The tram artwork was illustrated by local artist, Hayden Dewar for our Fitzroy North community battery and depicts characters called 'solarquins' powered by the sun. The tram wrap was designed pro bono by local consultancy, Ellis Jones.



Figure 3: Thanks to sponsor Lug+Carrie, one survey respondent won a 6-month subscription to the e-bike platform.

Culture at YEF

At YEF we engage in ground-breaking projects with others who show up because of a shared passion for a clean energy future.

We are lucky to have a team that values diversity and supports each other's unique contributions. We have a flexible working environment, supporting our team as people, to enable them to balance personal and professional worlds.

Our team is continuing to grow and if you are interested in working with us, please email your CV and expression of interest to information@yef.org.au, we'd love to hear from you.



Looking Forward

At the time of writing, we have seen a shift in government and policy focus to Consumer Energy Resources (CER) and Distributed Energy Resources (DER). Following the success of rooftop solar penetration, uptake of home batteries, and the electrification of 'everything,' there are crucial questions about how to best manage rising electrical loads, solar exports, and the reliability of our energy grid.

How will regulators, governments, and industry set the right balance of technical and regulatory solutions that result in fair outcomes for energy customers? What is the most cost-effective and fair way to evolve our ageing distribution network infrastructure to handle fully electric homes with electric vehicle charging?

With coal generation expected to be fully withdrawn from the National Electricity Market by 2038, the window is rapidly closing to ensure we have the right balance of infrastructure and rules to provide clean, reliable and affordable energy.

For us at YEF, a major focus ahead is the advancement of neighbourhood batteries in terms of technology, markets, investor interest, services offered, government policies and DNSP regulations that affect them.

The second area of focus is distributed mass electrification, including the replacement of internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles with low-emission or fully electric vehicles. Driven also by global markets for electrification products, including solar and batteries, we expect electrification in Australia to be a multi-billion-dollar industry over the coming decade.

And third, once we become an electrified nation, how do we coordinate all this smart technology to enable the broader system to be safe, reliable, and affordable? How do we protect the most vulnerable and ensure they have a stake in the way the system is designed and the way it delivers? How do we ensure that private interests are served but not used to exploit loopholes in the transition? How do we know that electrification will also herald energy efficiency, and *cleaner* energy?

While there are plenty of new challenges ahead, we will remain focused unwaveringly on communities and their local interests, and advocacy by doing.

Our People

Staff

Dean Kline, CEO
Sasha Mayorov, CFO
Timothy Shue, COO
Glenn Drover, Company Secretary
Chris Wallin, Energy & Storage Programs Manager
Lachlan Hensey, Energy & Storage Lead
Finn Buchhorn, Energy & Storage Project Officer, Emerging Business
Phani Harsha Yeggina, Energy & Storage Project Officer
Lloyd Heathfield, Project Officer
Marie Lakey, Communications & Engagement Officer
Nicole Lonergan, Administration & Project Support Officer
Lorien Cutler, intern (February 2024 – May 2024)
Jeni Hay, intern (August 2023 – November 2023)

Advisors

Mitch O'Neil, Principal Consultant, Grids

Board of Directors

Current Board of Directors

David Anstee, Chair
Kirstin Schneider, Vice Chair
Melinda Scaringi, Non-executive Director
Arunesh Choubey, Non-executive Director
Gavin Lewis, Non-executive Director (appointed October 2023)
Cara Spencer, Non-executive Director (appointed October 2023)

Former Directors (FY23-24)

Cr Amanda Stone, Non-executive Director
Cr Edward Crossland, Non-executive Director
Mi-Lin Chen Yi Mei, Non-executive Director

Learn more about YEF

Website: <https://www.yef.org.au/about-us/our-people/>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/yarra-energy-foundation/mycompany>

Popular services

Solar and electrification programs

Lloyd Heathfield, lloyd.heathfield@yef.org.au

Neighbourhood battery support services

Chris Wallin, chris.wallin@yef.org.au

Community engagement strategy and implementation

Tim Shue, tim.shue@yef.org.au

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

Yarra Energy Foundation Limited For the year ended 30 June 2024

	NOTES	2024	2023
Income			
Revenue	2	1,710,572	1,905,296
Total Income		1,710,572	1,905,296
Total Income		1,710,572	1,905,296
Cost of Goods Sold			
Project Expenses		425,395	384,537
Total Cost of Goods Sold		425,395	384,537
Gross Profit		1,285,177	1,520,759
Other Income			
Interest Income		9,400	701
Total Other Income		9,400	701
Expenses			
Amortisation		10,115	10,113
Auditor Remuneration		5,400	5,000
Depreciation		17,826	17,745
Employment Expenses		876,637	815,335
General & Administrative Expenses		146,414	59,167
Occupancy Costs		34,281	15,646
Total Expenses		1,090,673	923,006
Profit/(Loss) before Taxation		203,904	598,454
Net Profit After Tax		203,904	598,454
Net Profit After Dividends Paid		203,904	598,454
Total Comprehensive Income for the year		203,904	598,454

Statement of Financial Position

Yarra Energy Foundation Limited As at 30 June 2024

	NOTES	30 JUN 2024	30 JUN 2023
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash & Cash Equivalents		1,206,605	781,928
Other Assets & Receivables		67,703	114,425
Total Current Assets		1,274,308	896,353
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment		232,210	241,753
Intangible Assets		-	10,115
Total Non-Current Assets		232,210	251,868
Total Assets		1,506,518	1,148,221
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables	3	110,224	243,438
Employee Liabilities	4	115,281	87,575
Credit Card Payable		1,266	2,364
Income Received in Advance	2	261,000	-
Total Current Liabilities		487,771	333,377
Total Liabilities		487,771	333,377
Net Assets		1,018,747	814,844
Equity			
Retained Earnings	5	1,018,747	814,844
Total Equity		1,018,747	814,844

Statement of Cash Flows

Yarra Energy Foundation Limited For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
Cash Flows from Operating Activities		
Receipts from grants and commissions	2,224,567	1,300,452
Payments to suppliers and employees	(1,801,007)	(1,406,951)
Interest received	9,400	701
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	432,960	(105,798)
	2024	2023
Cash Flows from Investing Activities		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(8,283)	(2,324)
Purchase of intangible assets	-	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(8,283)	(2,324)
	2024	2023
Reconciliation		
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	424,677	(108,122)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year	781,928	890,050
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	1,206,605	781,928

Statement of Changes in Equity

Yarra Energy Foundation Limited For the year ended 30 June 2024

	\$
Balance at 1 July 22	216,390
Profit/(Loss) for the year	598,454
Total Comprehensive Income	598,454
Balance at 30 June 2023	814,844
	\$
Balance at 1 July 23	814,844
Profit/(Loss) for the year	203,904
Total Comprehensive Income	203,904
Balance at 30 June 2024	1,018,748

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**YARRA
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