

Community Development Fund

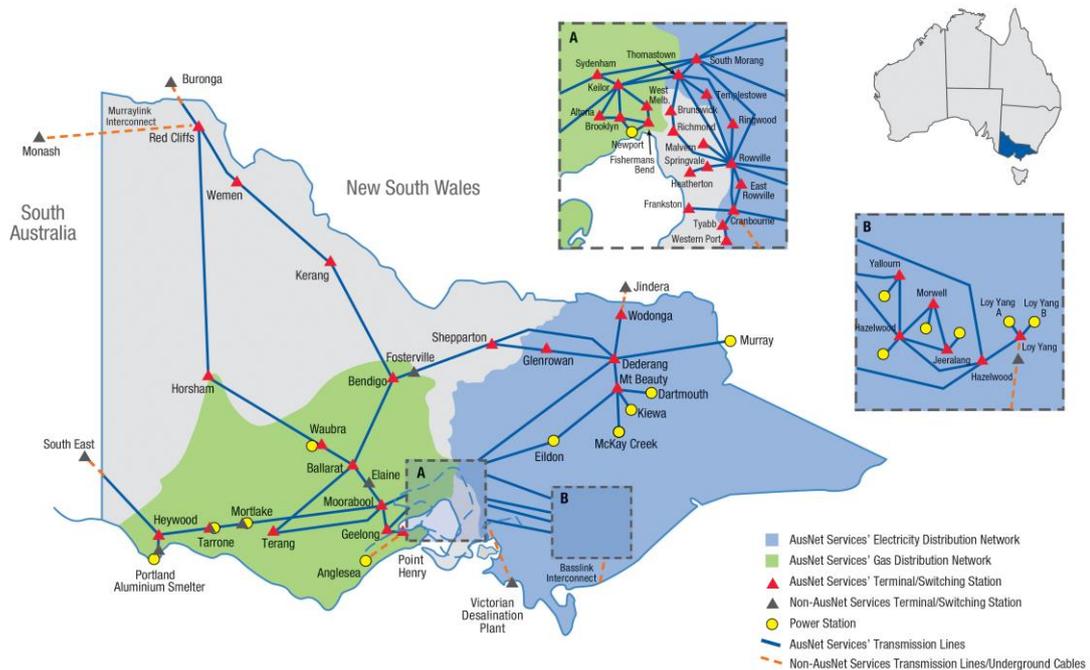
Background Information

AusNet Services is northern and eastern Victoria's electricity delivery service, bringing the benefits of electricity to customers 24/7.

Otherwise known as your electricity distributor, we deliver electricity via our network of assets – our powerpoles, powerlines and underground electricity cables. As well as delivering electricity, we also maintain our electricity network.

We are Victoria's largest energy delivery service, owning and operating approximately \$11 billion of electricity and gas distribution assets that connect into more than 1.3 million Victorian homes and businesses.

AusNet Services' Electricity and Gas Regions



How the AusNet Services Community Development Fund works

The AusNet Services Community Development Fund (CDF) has been designed to facilitate building stronger council and community partnerships by supporting local community initiatives via a grants program. The CDF is open to only one shire in AusNet Services' region at any one time and provides local groups the opportunity to apply for a grant out of the \$20,000 budget set exclusively for that local shire.

Local community groups are able to apply for a grant from this pool, with a maximum of \$3,000 provided to any single group.

Working with Shires/Councils

The CDF is an initiative developed to build trusting and strong relationships with the residents of the Shire, along with the council concerned. The spirit of the program is to share joint management of the grants program to enhance and extend the existing shire grants program.

Shire involvement can include:

- The participation of three council members in the Community Development Fund committee
- Inclusion of Shire logo in supporting materials
- Option to include quotes in program media releases
- Councillor participation in the launch event and announcement of the fund recipients
- Council offices as key pick-up point for application forms and brochures
- Determination of best methods for local communication
- Use of mailing lists to contact local community groups

The Community Development Fund committee

After applications close, selection of the CDF recipients is done by the AusNet Services CDF committee, who will be made up of representatives from AusNet Services and the Shire:

- AusNet Services CDF Chairperson
- AusNet Services Corporate Relations
- AusNet Services Region Manager/Representative
- At least one Shire/Council representative

This group will be responsible for evaluating the finalists and deciding on winners out of the CDF pool. We estimate this will require the investment of approximately one day of work during the entire campaign.

The Community Development Fund selection criteria

Successful applicants must meet the CDF selection criteria, ensuring that the successful grants projects benefit the community in a positive manner, through:

- Being community driven and led
- Providing benefits in the local communities in which AusNet Services operates
- Providing a long-term sustainable solution for a current local issue
- Being developed in consultation with stakeholders and having widespread community support
- Being practical and technically sound
- Having clear objectives, with a means for achieving a successful outcome
- Demonstrating the capacity to make effective use of the funds and financial accountability
- Providing recognition opportunities for AusNet Services
- Having a minimum time of eight weeks prior to the event or project commencing

When applying for the CDF grant, community groups must complete an application form which is sent to AusNet Services, along with any substantiating evidence.