FRRR
Foundation for Rural
Regional Renewal

Investing in Rural Community Futures Victoria

Strengthening local not-for-profits for the vitality of rural and remote communities

Colac Community Roadmap

Year 1

Helen Macpherson Smith Trust

THE JACK BROCKHOFF FOUNDATION

THE ROSS TRUST

THE WILLIAM BUCKLAND FOUNDATION WBF

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Acknowledgement of Country

FRRR acknowledges the Gulidjan and Gadubanud peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the Colac Otway Region where the Investing in Rural Community Futures (IRCF) Victoria program is occurring.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging and are grateful for their continued custodial, cultural, and educational practices which are so important now and into the future.

About FRRR

The Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal - FRRR - (phonetically: F-triple-R) - is the only national foundation specifically focused on ensuring the social and economic strength of remote, rural and regional communities. FRRR's unique model of support is more than money - it connects common purposes and investment from government, business, and philanthropy with the genuine needs of rural people and places. Since FRRR's inception in 2000, it has delivered more than $200 million to more than 15,000 projects.

Purpose of this Community Roadmap

This Community Roadmap has been developed in collaboration with representatives of Colac's not-for-profit (NFP) organisations, community groups, and other key stakeholders closely connected to Colac's active NFP sector. The principles, vision, and goals were developed at a Community Roadmap Workshop in May 2025 held in Colac, with opportunities for feedback through a survey form and online forum in July 2025.

This document is for the use of the Colac community and is intended to:

- Inform how the funding and resources available through FRRR's IRCF Victoria program are invested to achieve locally-led impact across Colac's NFP sector and community.
- Help direct community resources and planning towards commonly desired capacity goals for the NFP sector, and
- Continue to adapt and evolve throughout the five-year IRCF Victoria program in Colac.

This Community Roadmap will be publicly available on the FRRR website.

Image 1: Colac community at Roadmap session, May 2025

IRCF Call to Action

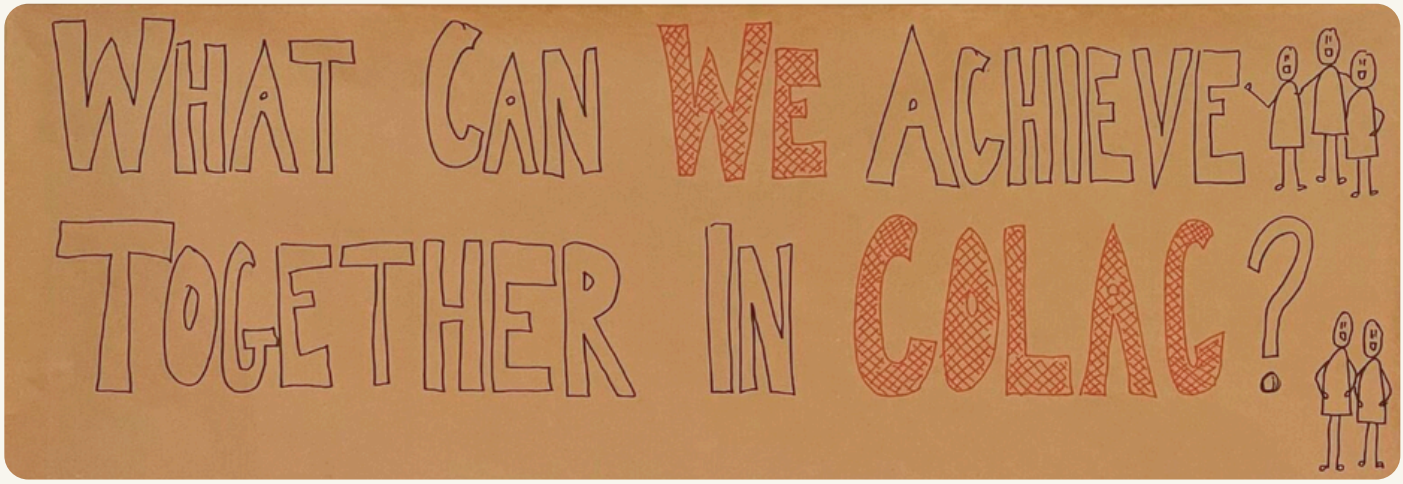
What can Colac's NFP sector achieve together through the IRCF Victoria program?

FRRR's IRCF Victoria is a grassroots program to strengthen NFP organisations in three partner communities, being Colac, Maryborough, and Swan Hill. Over five years, the program provides flexible and tailored support to the local NFP sector, enabling them to advocate more effectively on shared issues, contribute to a thriving community, and achieve long-term impact across priority areas.

Leveraging a proven program model incorporating a locally based Community Facilitator, community-led and informed funding, collaborative planning processes, and skill building opportunities, the IRCF program can be game-changing for rural communities to achieve positive change together.

Focused on small to medium-sized NFPs the program progresses at the pace of the community and can contribute to a range of priorities for NFPs, including, but not limited to, governance skills and strategic planning, volunteerism, organisational systems and processes, and local partnerships.

The impact of the IRCF program is demonstrated through the many outcomes achieved in the eight NSW communities FRRR has been working alongside since 2018 (starting in Junee, Leeton, and Nambucca Valley, and expanding further to the South Coast region). The program is expanding to our three Victorian community partners thanks to the support of four philanthropic organisations: Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, The Jack Brockhoff Foundation, The Ross Trust, and The William Buckland Foundation.



Colac NFP Sector

Colac, a rural town with a population of 10,500, is located in the Colac Otway Shire in South West Victoria. Some of the smaller nearby towns include Elliminyt, Barongarook, Irrewarra, and Birregurra. A diverse range of NFP and community groups play a vital role in providing services and fostering a vibrant place to live.

This Roadmap demonstrates that local organisations are committed to responding to community priorities and opportunities that reflect a shared vision for a thriving, inclusive and sustainable future. The Colac community have a strong desire to collaborate more intentionally while strengthening relationships, sharing resources, and growing the capacity of the local NFP sector.

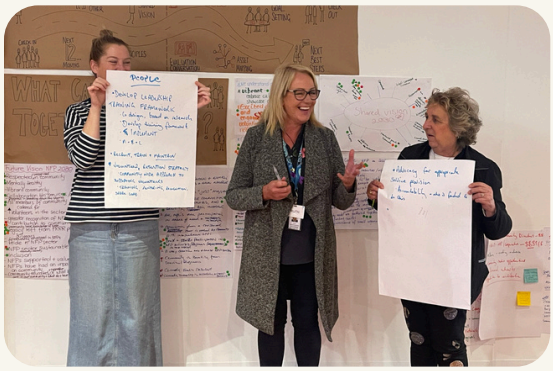


Image 2: Colac Community Roadmap Workshop, May 2025

Together, over 30 community groups have contributed to the development of Colac's Community Roadmap. Their collaboration highlights a collective aspiration for empowered leadership, connected organisations, responsive action, and innovative thinking that will support long-term impact in the region.

Colac's IRCF Journey - Year 1

February 2025
Community Selection Workshops

March 2025
Colac announced as one of three IRCF Victoria community partners

May 2025
Community Roadmap Workshop #1

June 2025
Draft Roadmap shared for feedback

August 2025 onwards
Funding available for projects aligned to Community Roadmap

August 2025 onwards
Community-led project activation

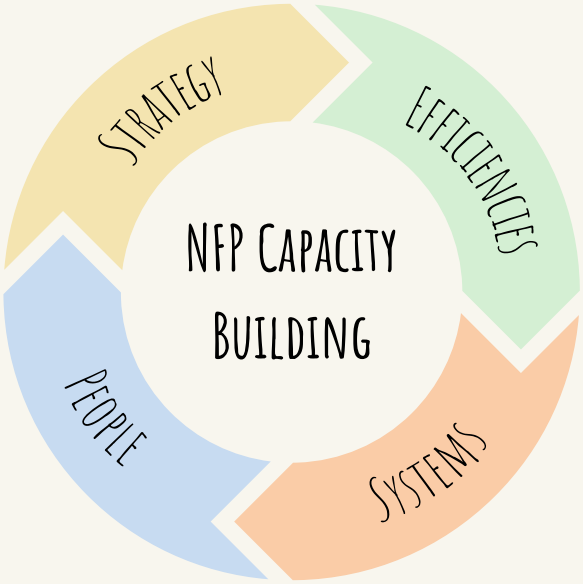
August 2025 Onwards
Capacity building & skill development opportunities

Four Pillars of Capacity Building

These are the IRCF Four Pillars of Capacity Building for NFP organisations. The pillars guide the program and are the focus areas for investment to help strengthen organisational capacity, activate ideas, and achieve community-led change.

The shared goals for the program as outlined in this document align to these pillars. By their nature, the pillars are connected and activity related to one pillar will likely have flow on effects to another pillar.

For example, developing leadership skills under the People pillar may in turn improve collaboration (Efficiencies), strengthen internal processes (Systems), and contribute to long-term organisational sustainability (Strategy).



People

Develop leadership capabilities, a renewed sense of community spirit & foster skill development to create strong organisations that bring together various leaders, groups and residents.

- Recruit & train staff & volunteers
- Encourage inclusivity
- Time Management
- Develop Leadership
- Digital Inclusion
- Mentoring

Strategy

Provide tools & measures that support & **enable the sustainability** of organisations into the future.

- People & vision development
- Strategic planning & monitoring
- Revenue Strategy
- Grassroots innovation & creativity
- Developing & embedding a framework for change

Efficiencies

Foster relationships & practices that support **efficient and effective collaboration** with other NFPs to amplify community impact. Such as:

- Partnership development & management
- Collective impact training
- Peer to peer mentoring
- Lead agency support
- Networking & sharing platforms
- Forming a NFP working group

Systems

Support community leaders to gain new insights & energy by sharing **knowledge, systems & structures** that demonstrate best practice.

- Legal structures, compliance & governance
- Financial management
- Communications & measurement
- Develop Board skills & financial literacy
- IT & Security
- HR & Performance Management

Figure 1: IRCF's Four Pillars of Capacity Building for NFP organisations

Colac's Shared Principles

These principles outline how we agree to work together:

Open communication

We communicate with **plain language**, ensuring **transparency** & **openness**.

Inclusive

We are **respectful**, **inclusive,** & **culturally aware**, & ensure all people feel safe, heard, & valued.

Broad Participation

We foster **active participation** & **engagement** across our community while **acknowledging people's time** & other responsibilities.

Collaboration

We **collaborate** with **intention**, drawing on our **collective strengths** & **energy** to create lasting & **sustainable** impact.

Creative Thinking

We champion **creativity** by **actively listening**, welcoming diverse perspectives & **valuing** every contribution.

Agents of Change

We are **agents of change** committed to strengthening the Colac community through **accountable, informed** & **purposeful** actions.

Resilient

We are willing to work through **challenges** & **differences** to adapt & benefit from new opportunities.

Colac's Shared Vision

This is what a strong and resilient NFP Sector in Colac looks like:

Organisational Strength

Our organisations have the **leadership, knowledge, skills** & **resources** to create lasting & meaningful **change**.

Diversity

Our organisations are **proactive, accessible**, **embrace diversity** & value all cultures, abilities, & identities.

Recognised & Valued

Our organisations are **recognised** & **valued** for the vital role they play in contributing to community health & **wellbeing**.

Creative Action

Our organisations are **trusted, informed** & respond to local priorities with **creativity** & **care**.

Connectedness

Our organisations & community are **proud**, **vibrant** & **connected**. Everyone feels **welcome** & **involved**.

Curious Innovation

Our organisations are **curious, forward thinking** & open to **new ideas** & **change**.

Supportive

Our organisations **support each other, foster positive health & wellbeing** & actively seek opportunities to work together & share resources.

Communication

Our organisations communicate **clearly**, **openly**, & **with purpose**, no one is left behind.

Thriving Volunteers

Volunteering is **thriving** & **celebrated** with people of all ages & backgrounds **inspired** & **empowered** to contribute.

Colac Community Assets by pillar

Workshop participants identified some of the local and regional assets available to leverage towards shared community priorities (noting this is not intended to be a complete list).

People

- Volunteer expo –-> opportunity to expand
- Mental health first aid
- Local store
- Induction processes (organisation specific)
- Community Hub/Colac Community Health
- Leadership volunteer network
- Regional leadership programs
- Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA)
- Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) – NFP/corporate
- Community radio
- Professional networks
- Appetite to contribute
- Skills & knowledge in each organisation to support succession planning
- Farm My School - Colac Secondary College

Strategy

- Grants funding & staff for large projects
- Connections with other groups
- Support channels
  - Diversity & Inclusive (cultural, religious, values)
- Other NFP networking
- Funding & financial structures
- Food recovery
  - Second Bite, Salvos, Kindness Network, VIC health
- Vision/statement of purpose implementation – some NFPs already have strategic plans
- Purpose
  - COM/BOM structures in place
  - Community Hub Inc – learn local
  - Bespoke education
  - Trade/TAFE
  - Individual functionality meets community needs
  - Sharing of knowledge – workshops, steering group

Efficiencies

- Local community directory via Community Hub
- Partnership development
  - Schools & communities together
  - Multicultural Network Committee
  - Informal connections
  - Media – community radio, MixFM, Colac Herald
  - Colac Chamber of Commerce
- Community grants
- Large business sponsorship
- Colac Community Fund
- Grant writing workshops
- Volunteer co-ordinators network
- 'Hey mate, we've got your back' drought initiative

Systems

- Unincorporated groups exist with knowledge of governance systems
- Networks & alliances
- Ability to manage finances
- Individual organisations have a range of skills
  - Paid or volunteer capacity
- Marketing:
  - OCRFM
  - MixFM
  - Social media various community groups
  - Local newspaper & newsletters
- Community facilities – places to meet
- Ourcommunity.com.au website
- Community Hub willing to provide governance structure
- Philanthropic toolkit
- Board observership program
- Annual NFP conference
  - Keynote speaker
  - Share resources

Colac Community Roadmap Goals

People

Develop **leadership** capabilities, a renewed sense of **community spirit** & foster **skill development** to create strong organisations that bring together various leaders, groups and residents.

- Recruit & train staff & volunteers
- Encourage inclusivity
- Time Management
- Develop Leadership
- Digital Inclusion
- Mentoring

Project Goal Area: Investing in People			
Goals	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**
Strengthened leadership skills and capabilities			
Accessible and community-informed training framework for NFPs (e.g. digital literacy skills, leadership)			
Effective succession planning, recruitment and training processes to maintain staff and volunteers			
Community approach to meaningful support, mentorship, and recognition of volunteers			
Leadership training and opportunities for youth			
Uplift in marketing and communication skills across all mediums			

Colac Community Roadmap Goals

Strategy

Provide tools & measures that support & **enable the sustainability** of organisation, into the future.

- People & vision development
- Strategic planning & monitoring
- Revenue Strategy
- Grassroots innovation & creativity
- Developing & embedding a framework for change

Project Goal Area: Investing in Strategy			
Goals	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**
Organisations have the skills and resources to effectively measure and report their impact			
Organisations have alternative and diverse income streams and are less reliant on grants			
Organisations advocate for, and are resourced, to provide appropriate service provision			
Organisations have current and relevant strategic plans to guide their growth and activities			

Colac Community Roadmap Goals

Systems

Support community leaders to gain new insights & energy by sharing **knowledge, systems & structures** that demonstrate best practice.

- Legal structures, compliance & governance
- Financial management
- Communications & measurement
- Develop Board skills & financial literacy
- IT & Security
- HR & Performance Management

Project Goal Area: Systems & Structures			
Goals	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**
Organisations and their people (board members, volunteers, employees) have strong governance and financial management skills and systems			
Organisations have robust recruitment process, e.g. documented roles and responsibilities for board members			
Organisations and their people have proficient IT skills, systems, and equipment to operate effectively			

Colac Community Roadmap Goals

Efficiencies

Foster relationships & practices that support **efficient and effective collaboration** with other NFPs to enhance community impact.

- Partnership development & management
- Collective impact training
- Peer to Peer Mentoring
- Lead agency support
- Networking & sharing platforms
- Forming an NFP working group

Project Goal Area: Sector Efficiencies			
Goals	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**
A local umbrella organisation is identified/established to act as a lead agency for community initiatives			
Organisations have access to training programs incorporating peer-to-peer mentoring and collective impact training			
Shared local facilities and spaces to avoid duplication, amplify resources, and promote collaboration			
Shared governance across organisations increases collective impact			
Develop and maintain a community asset register/map to leverage in project planning and delivery			

Examples: taking a goal to action

During the Community Roadmap workshop, participants brainstormed some examples of taking a shared goal into an actionable project. Below are three examples discussed during the workshop. Please note that these are intended to be examples only, and future funded projects may take an alternative approach and have other considerations. All projects funded through the IRCF Victoria program must align with at least one goal in the Community Roadmap. The Colac Community Facilitator will be available to support project development and applications for funding.

Goal: Creating a leading agency

- Identify existing potential lead with alignment to purpose
- Scope purpose/ objectives
- Look for examples elsewhere
- Practical considerations for all parties
- Legal/ governance implications
- Decision-making/ finances
- What is already existing?

Goal: Develop leadership training framework

- Who will own/ drive this?
- Timeline
- Existing frameworks and providers
- Identify target audiences
- Community engagement - assess need
- Overall objective
- Cost & location

Goal: Capacity building for governance groups

- Research needs and gaps
- Consider:
  - Skills
  - Systems
  - Processes
  - Confidence
- Consider:
  - Mentoring
  - Confidence
- Consider:
  - Succession planning
  - Recognition
- Review Constitution
- Source resources e.g. expertise, funds