

## Grant Details

**Organisation Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Neighbourhood Care Network Incorporated

**Delivery Organisation**

(If applicable)

**Project Title**

Plan, Connect, Protect - Community disaster preparedness across the Bellingen Shire

**Grant Awarded to your Organisation**

24,920.00

**Grant Reference Number**

38409

**Grant Program and Round**

Project Details

## Project Details

**Project Description**

As per your application your project was about.....

The Neighbourhood Care Network Inc (NCN) are seeking funds to run four very local and highly targeted disaster preparedness events across the Bellingen Shire.

The NCN is a community organisation run primarily by volunteers across the Bellingen Shire and surrounds. As at 22 May 2023 we have 1500 members and 26 Local Neighbourhood Groups. Our purpose is to encourage neighbours to help neighbours during and between emergencies. The NCN focuses on disaster preparedness and timely and reliable local communication. In addition to establishing Local Neighbourhood Groups that are supported by volunteer coordinators, we run the Bush Telegraph alert service. The Bush Telegraph sends out SMS alerts about local severe weather events and emergencies, from trusted, verifiable sources. The NCN works closely with Bellingen Shire Council, emergency services and other community groups across the region. More information about the NCN is at [www.neighbourhoodcarenetwork.org.au](http://www.neighbourhoodcarenetwork.org.au)

The NCN ran four local disaster preparedness events in 2022-23, in close collaboration with the RFS, SES, NSW Fire and Rescue and Bellingen Shire Council. These were held as a direct result of the 2019 Bushfires and the 2020 - 2022 floods These events were well attended and highly valued by local residents and emergency services. We are seeking to roll out these events across the Shire in 2023-24 to increase local knowledge, connection and local disaster readiness, especially in relation to bushfires and

floods.

These events include the development of very localised material such as maps showing risks locally, including projected flood levels and the impact on local roads and bridges, fire risks (working closely with the RFS) and historical data and images showing the impact of previous serious events. We also bring together long term residents to share their knowledge and help new comers increase their preparedness and resilience. The NCN undertakes all of the preparation for each event, produces resources and materials, liaises with participating agencies, films each event and makes the resources available on our website for future use.

We are very aware of community disaster fatigue following the 2019 bushfires, 2020 - 2022 floods and COVID. For this reason, in addition to usual marketing approaches we have a time intensive but effective community development approach to these events - reaching into very local communities and working with local influencers and champions to encourage interest and attendance.

The events planned for 2023-24 are a combination of new locations and return events in communities that have asked for them annually. The dominant focus of these disaster preparedness events will be on bushfire preparation, given the bushfire risks associated with the coming summer season. However the events will also include information on flood preparedness. They also encourage residents to register with the Neighbourhood Care Network, volunteer to help other residents with preparation and recovery activities and provide billets for those who need to evacuate.

**Were there any changes to your project? If so, please describe.**

(Changes to the original proposal, reasons for them and how they affected the project)

The locations changed from our original intention, in that we didn't return to any previous event locations. We had planned to run an event in Urunga, where our series started in 2022-23. However the Red Cross and Bellingen Shire Council hosted a disaster preparedness event in Urunga which meant that we could reach out to a new location. This did not impact on the project apart from extending the reach of disaster preparedness activities in the area.

**What specific activities took place, where, when and who participated/benefitted?**

We ran four disaster preparedness events as follows:

1. What? Community Radio Network - First Steps Workshop. The workshop presenters were from the Neighbourhood Care Network and a team of three operators from the Northern Rivers Community Radio

Network (CREST)

Where? Thora Community Hall - Thora NSW

When? 4 November 2023

Who? 47 residents, mainly from the Thora and Darkwood area attended but some travelled from other parts of the Shire. Feedback was very positive and locals felt much better informed about how to set up a local community radio network for use during times of severe weather events and disasters. This is particularly important as large parts of the Shire, including the Darkwood/Thora valley have frequent internet and mobile phone outages during storms and fires.

Feedback was very positive with 19 people submitting feedback forms. (40% response rate) 68% of respondents said the workshop was very useful and 26.3% said it was useful. 100% of respondents said a community radio network would be useful in a local emergency. For more info see the uploaded feedback summary.

2. What? Plan, Prepare, Connect Dorrigo Disaster Preparedness Workshop. The presenters were from the Neighbourhood Care Network, Bellingen Shire Council, NSW Fire & Rescue, NSW Rural Fire Service, Deervale Rural Fire Service, NSW SES Dorrigo Unit, Dorrigo Veterinary Clinic, Disaster Recovery Team, NSW Health.

Where? Dorrigo Community Hall

When? 29 November 2023

Who? 56 residents from Dorrigo and the Dorrigo Plateau area. Feedback was positive with 26 people submitting feedback forms. 81% of respondents said they found the workshop very useful or useful with 12 people being confident they would get a household emergency plan in place as a result of the workshop. For more info see the uploaded feedback summary.

3. What? Bellingen Show Weather Watch Presentation. This was a presentation about the Weather Watch project which is an NCN initiative to recruit and train local weather watch monitors to provide timely information about rainfall and river heights in local catchment areas without reliable BOM monitoring.

Where? Bellingen Showground - Sustainability Tent

When? 5 May 2024

Who? 15 local residents attended the presentation. Unfortunately, our presentation was scheduled at the same time as the local Mongrel Dog Show which had a couple of hundred people in the audience. However, the presentation was well received by the audience, and it highlighted local sources of important information during floods and severe weather events.

4. What? Dundurrabin Disaster Preparedness Community Conversation. Presenters included the NCN, SES, RAHMP, RFS and UHF Radio Project.

When? 23 June 2024

Who? 36 residents from the Dundurrabin and Blinks community. This area was seriously impacted during the 2019 fires. Feedback was very positive with 12 feedback forms being submitted - a 33% response rate. (This is a big return for this community) 83% of respondents said they found the workshop very useful with the remaining 17% saying it was useful. Refer to feedback summary for more information

## Project Outcomes

If applicable, how many people did your project benefit? \_\_\_\_\_

369

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**In your original application, you identified your project would achieve the following outcomes.**

Communities that can innovate or respond to local opportunities / issues

Greater ability to deal with / respond to individual / community level challenges

Stronger individual and / or community resilience

**From the above, please rate the extent to which these outcomes were achieved / met? \_\_\_\_\_**

Outcome One

Agree

Outcome Two

Strongly agree

Outcome Three

Strongly agree

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**Which of the following would you say is the primary outcome achieved?**

Stronger individual and / or community resilience

### Grant Specified Purpose

The purpose of your grant, as agreed by your organisation by completing the EFT or signing the grant agreement.

Enhance local risk awareness, including bushfires and weather events, and bolster household and neighbourhood disaster preparedness through organising readiness events.

**Tell us about what you achieved, what was most successful? What are you most proud of?**

We are very pleased that there was a good turnout at 3 out of the 4 events: Thora, Dorrigo and Durrumbidgee. This is pleasing given the level of disaster fatigue across the region. These are small communities, and the events were very targeted at the local area. We had great feedback from participants and are confident that most people attending the workshops will make practical changes to improve their disaster preparedness. The project has improved local understanding that there are things we can do proactively to increase community resilience and connectedness which will help with local emergency responses during and recovery from severe events. In particular the interest in establishing local community radio networks across the Shire is something we intend to continue working on. (Note regarding the number of people who benefited - 154 participants x 2.4 persons per household to estimate household impact/benefit)

### **Were there challenges? What would you do differently next time?**

The presentation at the Bellingham Show was an experiment. We were disappointed by the low turn out because we were competing with a major fun event. However this feedback has been given to the organisers who have committed to better scheduling next year. We will try again next year because it is an opportunity to reach many people who are at the Show.

We will also look at how we integrate more info about the NCN throughout the presentations, which is feedback we received, particularly from the Dorrigo participants.

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### Attachments

## **Statement of Project and Expenditure**

In order to financially acquit your grant, please complete the [Financial Acquittal form](#), detailing all income and expenditure for the project, and signed by the head of the organisation, or a person who has delegated authority to sign.

***Please note that evidence of expenditure may be requested by the Program Manager for acquittal of this grant.***

Attach Financial Acquittal form

Browse for the document and upload here.

FRR PCP Grant Financial Acquittal Signed.pdf

## **Photos**

We love photos that tell a story and include community members.

Please upload three of your best project photos here (Highly regarded and most appreciated.)

**Please note, files are preferred to be no larger than 10MB.**

## Photos

Browse for the document and upload here.

1 Dorrigo.jpg

## Additional Photos

Browse for the document and upload here.

2 Dorrigo.jpg

## Additional Photos

Browse for the document and upload here.

3 Dorrigo.jpg

## Other Documents

Please use the following attachment fields to upload other relevant project information.

**Please note, files are preferred to be no larger than 10MB.**

### Other documents

Browse for the document and upload here.

PlanPrepareConnect Event Feedback.pdf

### Additional documents

Browse for the document and upload here.

Examples PPC Event Publicity.pdf

## Feedback

## Feedback

FRRR value your honest feedback about your experience with the FRRR process. Your answers will assist us to improve our programs and work with community grant seekers.

How would you rate your experiences with FRRR?

2. Good

How instrumental was this grant in helping you to facilitate the project's success?

1. Without grant, project would not have gone ahead

How would you rate your satisfaction with FRRR Grant processes?

2. Good

I received notification of the outcome of my application in a timely fashion.

None

FRRR staff were able to assist and support our project when we needed.

1. Excellent

We had sufficient time from receiving the grant to acquitting the grant to deliver the project.

Agree

Comments:

We really appreciate FRRR's support. We are a very small community organisation that is volunteer run. This grant meant that we could continue operating by running specific community disaster preparedness events that also meant we could cover our fixed costs for the period. We have done some planning and are working on finding ways to bolster our income so that we are confident we can continue well into the future. This grant came through at a very challenging time for our organisation and we are very grateful. The FRRR team have been very helpful and easy to communicate with. In closing we just really appreciate the grant and FRRR's support.

Confirmation

Acquittal Confirmation

Statement

I confirm that the information contained in this report is correct and agree to the following conditions:

- Acknowledge and understand that this report will become the property of FRRR and that it may be provided to other funders;
- Agree that FRRR can publish written content provided by me in this Acquittal and agree to the terms of the [Photo and Audio Release](#) for any attachments I have uploaded.

I have read and agree to the above

Yes

Name of authorised person completing this certification

Kerry Pearse

Position

Treasurer

Date

October 15, 2024