

TRY TALKING

August 2020



G'day

Well wishes to all you, and we trust you are coping with the extraordinary times we are enduring. The social distancing reminds us how important it is to look after the people close to us, those living near to us and the most vulnerable. Fortunately, TRY is just another example of a growing global trend – celebrating the power of 'local.'



TRY's Golden Yak below the Fronius inverters at the launch of the Virtual Power Plant in the Yack Public Hall

This is a rather belated and abridged newsletter from TRY – we all have much in front of us. Please be assured however, effort continues apace!! Importantly, the progress on the federally funded master plan has kicked off in a spectacular fashion – details below and to follow!

And more, Yackandandah is collaborating with a range of communities that suffered from the

recent bushfires. The question being asked: just how do we build an energy system that manages the growing risk of extreme weather and fire? A genuine interconnected, local and distributed energy system goes some considerable way to answering that question.

Go well!

— Matthew Charles-Jones

TRY & Fundraising

The life of TRY has been punctuated with strong support from individuals right across the community. Thank you!

As well as this, State and Federal Government agencies have facilitated some very ambitious projects, the initial analysis work to launch a retailer, two microgrids and a virtual power plant.

We are also privileged to partner with a number of local entities to complete community focused tasks, including the Yackandandah Folk Festival, YCDCo, Yackandandah Community Centre and Indigo Shire. Likewise, a range of donors have been big supporters of TRY and the establishment of Indigo Power. These include The Reichstein Foundation, Into Our Hands Foundation, Australian Community Foundation, Patagonia, FRRR – there are more.

Earlier this year, TRY was fortunate to expand our charity status by successfully receiving donor gift registration (DGR) status.

This great news allows TRY to receive money from donors, who will then receive a tax receipt allowing them to claim a tax deduction.



Totally Renewable Yackandandah Inc, PO Box 730, Yackandandah, VIC 3749



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So if you wish to donate money please use the link below and in coming months and years we will be actively seeking financial support to drive through to 100% clean power. Yippee.

<http://totallyrenewableyack.org.au/get-involved/donate/>

Circle your power to local

Our good friends at Indigo Power have an interesting challenge – how to make sure we use the locally generated power, locally?

The team at Indigo Power are actively recruiting new customers! A particular focus is being given to draw in people without solar systems to help use the local generation. Given the high volume of Yackandandah customers with solar energy systems (almost 60% of buildings), we really need to sign-up more non-solar residents to build the local energy hubs, so that locally generated electricity is used by local people. However, please don't hold back if you have a solar system and want to join Indigo Power – the more the merrier!!

Why not encourage people you know to make a call to Indigo Power and launch their clean local energy transformation?

— Matthew Charles-Jones

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The Ubi portal showing the proportion of locally generated and consumed energy at one house in the Yack Community Energy Hub

The next big step - closing the gap to 100%

From day one, the goal for TRY has been to achieve a community which can genuinely claim to be powered by 100% renewable energy, and set the year 2022 to achieve this milestone.

With strong support from community, commercial, and government bodies we have come a long way since TRY formed in 2014, and with our goal edging ever closer, the question has been 'How big is the gap to 100% – what will it take to get there?'

Until now, not an easy one to answer; however, the opportunity to do so is now before us.





TRY Committee members at a recent COVID-compliant Strategy Session discussing the the best approach for closing the gap to 100% (before Stage 3 restrictions recommenced!)

Late in 2019, the Federal Government, through the Department of Environment and Energy, announced The Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund – Microgrids, to support feasibility studies into more reliable, secure and cost-effective energy supply to regional and remote communities in Australia. The program provides funding for feasibility studies looking at microgrid technologies to replace, upgrade or supplement existing electricity supplies in off-grid and fringe-of grid communities located in regional and remote areas.

TRY made an application to the fund to conduct a feasibility study, intended to determine what power generation and storage would be required to achieve the 100% renewable goal for Yackandandah.

In making the application, we partnered with Mondo, to determine the power generation and battery-based storage requirements, and with Tamar Hydro, a Tasmanian based company with experience in pumped hydro technology for mechanical power storage.

Also, as TRY is a wholly volunteer based organisation, we recognised that there was a role for professional management of the project to ensure success, and identified Mach2 Consulting

as able to manage the project details through to completion if our application was successful.

And – our application was successful! At last we will articulate and work through a master plan for the exciting energy transition.

Commencing in July, with an anticipated 15 months to complete, our first step has been working to identify the power consumption over a typical year on the Yackandandah main power feed, which will provide a basis for Mondo and Tamar Hydro to determine appropriate energy generation and storage options to answer ‘How big is the gap to 100% – what will it take to get there?’

And that in turn leads to another question: ‘What do these facilities look like, and where will they be sited?’ – which will be explored as we determine the options available to us.

It’s an exciting time, and another critical step to achieving the renewable goal.

— Kim McConchie



Participants of one of two TRY Strategy Sessions in early August enjoy the 100% renewable sunshine before heading home