



Wodonga Urban Landcare Network

Who are we

The Wodonga Urban Landcare Network is an organisation based in north eastern Victoria that manages 16 member groups and 400+ volunteers dedicated to improving biodiversity, environmental, sustainability and climate-related outcomes in the region.

What we needed

Wodonga's population is growing fast. New housing subdivisions springing up in rural and peri-urban areas are putting huge pressure on the environment, especially our waterways.

Locals are increasingly aware of these issues and keen to help do something about it. Since 2012, we've grown massively and we find it hard to give our volunteers the support they deserve.

The new website will enable us to provide regular updates, sign up new people and sustain relationships with key organisations that are critical to the success of our work.

How we'll get there

The Telstra grant is awesome because we've been able to engage a website professional to build us a site that is more automated and far easier to use than our old one.

An enhanced online presence will help us educate the community about sustainable environmental practices. It'll feature a portal for volunteer coordinators to access information to manage their groups. It will also provide a prominent place for our enormous events calendar. Last year we held almost 80 events, managing these events is a challenge with limited staff.



Why it worked

By integrating all communication functions, the website becomes the hub for everything our network does. A big plus will be having a 'click to join' facility instead of emailing a form to complete by hand. An overall benefit will be the chance to develop a community of practice to share the wealth of skills, knowledge and resources currently spread across many members.

Where to next

Eco-anxiety is a real thing. Encouraging people to do something effective at a smaller scale can really help. It is what our network does so successfully – undertaking small projects that make a massive difference over time.

For example, an aerial photo of one of our earlier restoration projects shows what Clyde Cameron Reserve looked like before the surrounding area was developed for housing. What was once a sheep paddock with a few trees along the creek now has thick riparian vegetation that works as a wildlife corridor. The area has changed from rural to urban but from a wildlife and waterways perspective it is greatly enhanced.

Urban development is a reality. After all, everyone needs somewhere to live. What's important is to balance new homes with other amenities like recreation, habitat, clean water and healthy soil. At Landcare, our primary goal is to help people understand this and work with us to achieve it. This way, we hope future home buyers will be more likely to choose homes in subdivisions that are environmentally sensitive.

The Telstra Connected Communities Grant Program

Applications for the 2024 Telstra Connected Communities grant program on Tuesday 27th of February and will close at 5pm on Wednesday 27th of March 2024. This round will make \$200,000 available for applications of up to \$10,000 each. Successful grants will be announced in June 2024 and successful applicants will have 12 months to complete funded projects.

Learn more about the 2024 Connected Communities grant round here

<https://frrr.org.au/funding/place/telstra-connected-communities-program/>