



**GEELONG
SUSTAINABILITY**



**COMMUNITY
ENERGY
REVOLVING
FUND**

Helping not-for-profits access
renewable energy upgrades

geelongsustainability.org.au



ABOUT GEELONG SUSTAINABILITY

Geelong Sustainability is a not-for-profit community association and registered charity. Our vision is for people and our planet to thrive within sustainable limits. Our mission is to empower people to regenerate and protect the planet. To achieve this, we deliver projects that are focused on four strategic priorities - Climate Change, Renewable Energy, the Circular Economy and Sustainable Cities.

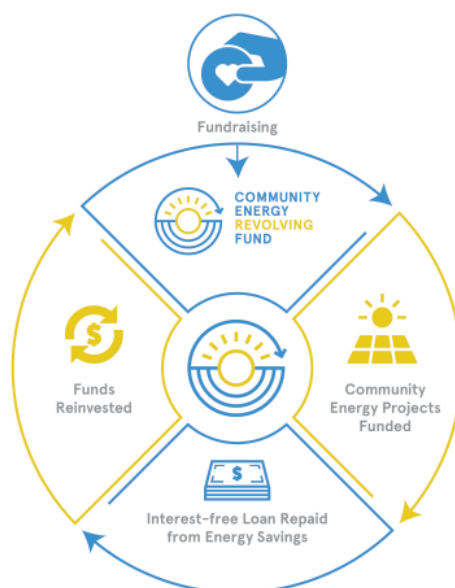
Since our establishment in 2007, GS has become the region's leading sustainability group with extensive networks in community, government and business throughout Geelong and the Barwon South West region. We are recognised for our evidence-based innovative projects, which educate and support our community's transition to a net zero, circular economy. Some of our many community focussed initiatives can be found on our website www.geelongsustainability.org.au.

Community Energy Revolving Fund

Although the long-term benefits of renewable energy clearly outweigh the upfront cost, often not-for-profit community organisations simply do not have the upfront capital to fund the installation of solar and energy efficiency upgrades.

Geelong Sustainability has established a Community Energy Revolving Fund with the purpose of providing interest free loans to not-for-profit community organisations who are seeking to install renewable energy systems (solar and batteries), undertake energy efficiency upgrades, switch away from fossil fuels or upgrade to electric vehicles. The fund builds community energy resilience and helps local organisations to cut power bills and reduce carbon emissions.

The Revolving Fund provides interest-free loans which are paid back to the fund from energy bill savings over a 5-year period, ensuring community organisations remain net positive for the cycle of the loan. Once the loan is repaid the Revolving Fund can support other projects in the community, so the cycle continues with other not-for-profit community beneficiaries.



Case Studies

YMCA Newtown Stadium

Geelong Sustainability has officially launched its Community Energy Revolving Fund with its first project – a solar installation at the YMCA Stadium in Newtown. The installation is projected to save the YMCA in Newtown \$14,000 a year on their energy bills.

The project was funded using the Community Energy Revolving Fund, which provided YMCA with an interest-free loan that is paid back over a 5 year period using the money they will save on their energy bills.

YMCA CEO Shona Eland said "the funds they are saving on their energy bills will directly benefit the community as they are able to keep their costs down and continue to make the facilities available for everyone. She said it will also help the Y deliver on its sustainability principles."

"One of the key things we talk about is we believe in the power of inspiring young people. Inspired young people are telling us we need to look after our community, our environment and our people, and this is part of it," Shona said.

The project marks the beginning of an exciting time for clean energy across the Barwon South-West as Geelong Sustainability continues to drive projects that increase access to renewable energy with a focus on community.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Solar System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60.3kW Solar System installed by RACV Solar • 131 x 460W JA Solar panels with a 50kW Sungrow inverter 	Environment Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saves 78 tonnes of CO2 per year • Equivalent to taking 20 cars off the road
Results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar energy generation is greater than facility consumption • Reduced electricity bills by 50% • Excess solar energy is exported to the grid and receives a feed-in-tariff • System designed to allow for a battery in the future 	Costs / Savings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation costs of \$62,800 funded by interest-free loan from Geelong Sustainability • Energy bills savings of ~\$13,800 per annum • Less than 5-year project payback period • Cashflow positive, with loan repayments less than energy bill savings



Freshwater Creek Steiner School

The Freshwater Creek Steiner School is a rural playgroup, kindergarten and primary school nestled in Freshwater Creek, Victoria. The school's educational approach is founded on the child development principles of Rudolf Steiner.

The 20kW solar system installation is funded by the Geelong Sustainability Community Energy Revolving Fund which was established to help not-for-profit organisations access renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. The solar system was installed in September 2022 by Vortex Electrical.

Freshwater Creek Steiner School Head of School Gabby Brennan says "Geelong Sustainability has helped our school realise a long held dream to generate our own solar electricity and reduce our environmental impact and CO2 emissions. This will help us reduce our energy bills so we can invest our precious resources in the children's education."

PROJECT SUMMARY

Solar System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20.4kW Solar System installed by Vortex Electrical • 49 x 415W Trina Solar panels with a 17kW SolarEdge inverter and optimisers 	Environment Benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saves 29 tonnes of CO2 per year • Equivalent to planting 5,488 trees over system lifetime
Results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 119% of the school's energy generated by solar • Significantly reduced electricity bills • Solar optimisers used to maximise solar generation across complex roof space 	Costs / Savings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation costs of \$25,051 funded by interest-free loan from Geelong Sustainability • Energy bills savings of ~\$4,800 per annum • 5-year project payback period

