

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

24 September 2024

### **SPARK RENEWABLES ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF \$20,000 DINAWAN ENERGY HUB PILOT GRANT PROGRAM**

Spark Renewables has announced the winners of the Pilot Grant Program, awarding \$20,000 to support eight community-initiated projects. The program is associated with the development of the Dinawan Energy Hub, a landmark 2.3 gigawatt renewable energy project located in the South West Renewable Energy Zone in NSW, incorporating a wind farm, solar farm, and a battery energy storage project.

The Pilot Grant Program is the forerunner to the long-term benefit sharing scheme, worth over \$60 million, proposed to run from the start of construction and throughout the operational life of the [Dinawan Energy Hub](#). The final size of the community benefit sharing program will be based on the approved and constructed size of the project.

Spark Renewables has been actively engaging with the host councils, Murrumbidgee Council and Edward River Council, and the local community to ensure a positive impact on nearby townships as the Dinawan Energy Hub is progressed. The long-term benefit sharing scheme includes multiple initiatives such as a community fund, a dedicated fund for First Nations initiatives, subsidies for electricity and solar/battery systems for project neighbours and contributions to priority capital works developments identified by the local Councils.

Similar programs are being explored at the Mallee Energy Hub and Wattle Creek Energy Hub, also being developed by Spark Renewables.

Beyond financial contributions, Spark Renewables is committed to leveraging its expertise and resources to provide training, employment, and upskilling opportunities, helping local communities thrive in the growing renewable energy sector.

“The high level of interest in the Grant Pilot Program and the quality of proposals highlight the enthusiasm, creativity, and passion within the Riverina communities,” said Will Stone, Head of Development at Spark Renewables.

“Choosing between 16 applicants requesting \$80,000 was very challenging, but we are excited to support eight projects that will make a positive difference in community health, wellbeing, social inclusion, cultural storytelling, and protecting the environment.”

Spark Renewables has awarded grants ranging between \$1,500 and \$3,000 from the Pilot Grant Program towards:

1. “Bringing back the reeds” biodiversity restoration and community clean-up program organised by Yanco Creek and Tributaries Advisory Council;
2. Upgrading the children’s outdoor playground at the Coleambally Community Club;
3. Transportation and accommodation support for Marrambidya Dance Group with the aim of reconnecting kids to community and ancestral culture;
4. Critical sterilisation medical equipment for the Cypress View Lodge aged care home;
5. Installing a heating and cooling system in the children’s area at the Jerilderie Football Netball Club;
6. Kids Go Fish Day (November 2024) hosted by the Jerilderie Fishing Club to promote awareness of healthy waterways amongst families;
7. Country Education Foundation of Coleambally-Darlington Point to provide financial assistance towards students’ education costs such as accommodation, text books, and uniforms; and
8. Publishing of a book by the local Coleambally author of *Aurora’s Whisper*, bringing inclusion to children living with disability.

“While not all applicants were successful, we’ve established valuable connections with those applicants and we hope to support their projects as part of the Dinawan Energy Hub benefit sharing program in the future,” added Mr. Stone.

“Our experience at Bomen Solar Farm, where we set up the country’s largest solar farm community fund (of one million dollars) established in collaboration with Westpac in 2020, has shown the importance of connecting with people and organisations who are passionate about making a positive change in their community.”

“This scheme has helped to connect with several organisations raising funds for locally important matters, which we hope to sponsor in the coming years.”

For more information about the Dinawan Energy Hub or to subscribe to project news, visit [dinawanenergyhub.com](http://dinawanenergyhub.com).

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## About Spark Renewables

Spark Renewables is a developer and long-term owner and operator of renewable energy generation assets. Its operational portfolio comprises the 120 MW<sub>dc</sub> Bomen Solar Farm near Wagga Wagga which commenced operations in 2020. Its development portfolio includes wind, solar and storage projects in the National Electricity Market.

Spark Renewables is a member of the Clean Energy Council (CEC) and a signatory to the CEC's Best Practice Charter for Renewable Energy Developments.

Spark Renewables is part of the leading Malaysian energy utility, Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB), a group of companies owning and operating renewable energy projects in Malaysia, Türkiye, Ireland, the United Kingdom and Australia.

Backed by the ~A\$30bn energy giant TNB, Spark Renewables is expanding its influence across Australia's renewable energy generation market, while maintaining the culture and local expertise that has always energised the team.

TNB currently has a total of 10.5GW renewable energy assets at various stages including operational, in construction and under development. The company is leading towards a more resilient and sustainable energy landscape, aiming to be a leading provider of sustainable energy solutions.

More information at <http://www.sparkrenewables.com>.

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