

2022 LODDON MURRAY COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM COMMUNITY PROJECTS OVERVIEW

*Making positive
contributions
to community
through high impact
projects*



LEAD Loddon Murray
LMCLP

An important part of the Loddon Murray Community Leadership Program is where each year's participants put their leadership learning into action through the identification and development of a community project charter.

These pages are a brief practical demonstration of the participants commitment to community and to driving positive change across the region.

Some projects will already be underway, others are in their early phases. Their potential impacts are both great and small, but they all will impact communities in their own ways.

We are proud to share with you the aspirations and dreams that the 2022 LCMLP participants hold for their communities.

Thank you to our Principal Partner the Victorian State Government and all our Scholarship Partners for making our program possible.

Your support helps to create the future for communities across the region

Principal Partner



Scholarship Partners



LEAD Loddon Murray acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands across the region, their rich culture and spiritual connection to Country, and pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

DINGEE BUSH NURSING CENTRE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Andrea Boudville
Minerals Council of Australia (Victorian Division) Scholarship



The vision of the Dingee Bush Nursing Centre (DBNC) is for healthy, active and resilient rural communities. The centre's key focus areas are improving health, wellbeing and empowering the health workforce to deliver high-quality, affordable and timely health services close to the community.

Acknowledgement of the significant Aboriginal Cultural heritage and history in the communities in and around Dingee is a critical step towards progressing the vision outlined in the strategic plan. The centre has already made considerable efforts in partnering with the Aboriginal Liaison officer at Echuca Base Hospital, staff have attended cultural awareness training facilitated by VACCHO and efforts have been made to connect with a local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (BDAC).

The aim of this project is to DBNC develop a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Aims:

1. That board and staff have a clear understanding of the RAP Framework and the four RAP types: Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate RAP process and stages of RAP development.
2. Improved relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Stakeholders.

Under these aims, broad objectives of the project include:

1. The RAP is informed and developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partner organisations and stakeholders.
2. DBNC establish a RAP working group to explore and scope this work.



HEATHCOTE COMMUNITY HOUSE I.T. UPGRADE

Austin Smith
City of Greater Bendigo Scholarship

Heathcote community house currently has a hard time documenting and sharing files. This is due to a lack of IT infrastructure and no utilisation of the cloud today. Effective file sharing is important to have because it helps you save time and money. If you don't have file sharing, then it will take much longer than you might expect to find what you're looking for, and your work may be delayed or even lost forever.

As a not for profit business the community house is able to apply for free licensing for Microsoft which will allow them access to the Office Suite. With this not only will they have new emails and access to tools such as word and excel but they're also given access to SharePoint.

The Project outcome for the Heathcote Community house is to successfully move their IT needs into the cloud using NFP licensing with Microsoft to allow them access to shared documentation and the tools to work collaboratively.

Austin will also be creating documentation on how to best utilise these new tools so anyone down the line at the community house is able to pick them up, as well as training on some more intricate programs and functions.

This will allow staff or volunteers access, and the know how to effectively utilise the cloud to increase productivity and collaboration with not only other staff members but also local community.



KNOW IT, NAME IT, OWN IT, CHANGE IT

Cassy Borthwick
Macedon Ranges Shire Council Scholarship

Know it, name it, own it, change it (KNOC); is a collaborative, preventative framework for regional Victorian communities, an alternative approach addressing family violence.

KNOC is committed to creating safe spaces where self-identified offenders are supported to realise sustainable, realistic changes for themselves and others.

KNOC is a grassroots approach which seeks out and encourages offenders to address behavioural, mental health, addiction, social and other changes.

Connection to specialised services in judgement-free environments is pivotal for offenders gaining the life skills, confidence and ability to sustain change.

An interactive website, self evaluation, social media, private group access, online group meetings, quick access online support, service connection, community collaboration, awareness events, workplace engagement and advocacy each play a role in the future success of KNOC.

This initiative has already gained some seed funding and developed a brand. The next steps are to continue research and establish further community partnerships and then constructing on-line platforms.

A launch event is already planned for mid-2023.



BENDIGO NORTHERN DISTRICT COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE

Chris Epworth
Agnico Eagle (Fosterville Gold) Scholarship



Bendigo Northern District Community Enterprise (BNDCE) is an organisation that was created with support from Bendigo Bank and Bendigo Telco to assist with generation of local community funds.

Part of the profits from community members use of Telco or Banking goes directly into the enterprise for the board to then decide how the monies can be spent on community projects. The group has been operating for about 14 years and more recently has struggled to be relevant in today's market.

To achieve great results BNDCE members need to be able to showcase the works carried out so far, and to have a business proposal for partners.

The benefit for local business' and partners is that they will be part of a group that supports major projects within the area that they operate.

The project will leverage social media, email campaigns and networking with the message that local people who support these business partners also support their community.

Their hope is that business' will be able to forward sponsorship and donation request through to BNDCE, who will be looking into being a full NFP so that they can also have tax benefits for partners.

Over the pervious 14 years the group has been able to support the local area with a sum of approx. \$300,000, and the aim is to increase the size of yearly revenue by 20% by the end of 2023 and thereby creating a larger pool of potential grant funds for community outcomes.



INGLEWOOD DISTRICT HEALTH SERVICE KITCHEN GARDEN LAUNCH

Cindy Gould
Loddon Shire Scholarship

The rate of food insecurity in Loddon Shire (11.5%) is higher than that of the Loddon Campaspe region (9.2%) and Victoria (6.2%). Specifically, South Loddon (17.4%), Inglewood/Bridgewater & Surrounds (16%) and Wedderburn & Surrounds (15.3%) have the highest rates of food insecurities across the Shire. Additionally, the proportion of people who consume sugary drinks daily is highest in the listed areas.

This project aligns with Goal 7 of the Inglewood community plan: Social opportunities Identify opportunities to increase social events and activities to bring the community together.

Action 1: Create a community garden

Action 2: Support and promote established groups and assets.



The open day and networking group will value add to existing community gardens and lunches. The Inglewood Community Kitchen hold weekly affordable lunches funded by local business including IDHS. It is run by volunteers, provides 30 meals a fortnight as well as discounted groceries on the alternate weeks through Foodshare.

The Kooyoora Women's Network is working to create a sustainable food distribution center at the Bridgewater on Loddon Railway Station that has now become Platform 1. The Platform 1 Project will take the form of a shipping container fitted with refrigeration that will house the perishable food that comes in from Bendigo Foodshare, the Salvation Army, industry stakeholder providers, and the local Community Food Gardens.

This project is part of the ongoing development of the Bridgewater railway buildings, the proposed solar system will slash power bills as well as heavily reduce their carbon emissions to keep the initiative sustainable. The money saved on electricity costs is to be spent on more activities based at the Bridgewater Railway including establishing the community garden, weekly garden club, weekly/ monthly lunches, a mural on the container and distributing food to the community.

BENDIGO HARRIERS 5K FRENZY EVENT PLAN

Ellyse Roper

City of Greater Bendigo Samantha Bell Memorial Scholarship

BENDIGO HARRIERS 5K FRENZY 2022 EVENT PLAN



The Bendigo Harriers is an athletics club that caters for all ages, genders and ability levels. Some members are full-time athletes who compete all year, while others compete half-yearly, or use their membership to strengthen other sports, such as soccer, football and baseball. They have had many members representing Australia who are also champions and record holders, as well as members who simply enjoy a social run or walk and talk with friends.

The 5k frenzy is a relatively new event for the Bendigo Harriers. The 2023 event will be the third time this event has run. Looking forward the plan is to expand the event, and grow the brand of the 5k Frenzy and the reputation of the Bendigo Harriers across Victoria and interstate. Event goal –Bring athletes to Bendigo and showcase athletics locally.

Historically the Bendigo Harriers 5K Frenzy has run at a loss. This is due to little planning and a lack of promotion. With assistance, this event can have the appropriate support to run as a success.

The goal will be to generate income for the club along with supporting the Bendigo Harriers to become a well-known athletics club that upholds a high level of competition in Bendigo. In addition to this with the 2026 Commonwealth Games approaching, this is an opportunity for the Bendigo Harriers to become a well-known sport locally that attracts community members' involvement.

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING - CONNECTING PEOPLE TO SOCIAL ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY

Isis Jordan & Isaac Newstead
LEAD Loddon Murray Board Supported & Mount Alexander Shire
Scholarships



The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has posed significant challenges for Australians, including higher levels of reported anxiety and psychological distress in the general population. Physical and mental health issues, economic consequences, and disruptive changes to lifestyles have had a significant negative mental health impact. Quarantine and physical distancing are associated with social isolation, which can negatively affect a person's social, emotional, and physical health and increase the risk of adverse mental health outcomes in the short and long term. The benefits of social connections and good mental health are numerous. Proven links include lower rates of anxiety and depression, higher self-esteem, greater empathy, and more trusting and cooperative relationships.

Social prescribing is a means for allied health professionals to connect people who have non-medical needs such as social connection, to a range of services in the community to improve their health and wellbeing (WHO2022). Social prescribing promotes holistic community based integrated care by linking community members to community-based activities. It addresses interpersonal challenges such as loneliness by offering support to attend a regular activity. Instead of treating the symptoms of ill health, social prescribing addresses the social determiners of health.

The Mount Alexander social prescribing project focuses on establishing a detailed and thought-out program that is financially self-sufficient and tailored to the Mount Alexander Shire's community members. The core outcomings are:

- Linking community members to local community and social activities with a direct focus and desired outcome of supporting the overall improvement of mental wellbeing and social connection for individual community participants.
- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical and other primary care services for patients.
- Commission services and activities to address the needs of people living with chronic conditions.
- Reduce potentially avoidable hospitalisations with a focus on vulnerable communities.
- Reduce psychological distress (anxiety and depression).
- Improved social connectedness and quality of life.
- Improved health outcomes for individuals.
- Reduce demand on the health sector.

EMPOWERING COMMUNITY WARRIORS IN KYNETON

Kate Tripodi
Coliban Water Scholarship

In 2022, the Lions Club of Kyneton was at risk of folding due to declining membership following the COVID19 Pandemic. At its peak, the club at 32 members, but has reduced to just 12 members, with decline due to ageing, health concerns and other commitments.

Members believe community is just not interested in volunteering anymore –changing priorities post COVIDThe group is impacted by challenges with “red-tape” to provide the services they used to within the community.

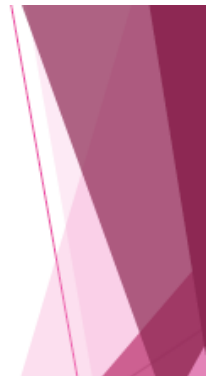
The story of the Lions Club of Kyneton needs to be more effectively told around the town –do the community know their contribution to the town?

The above issues have created a drain on the energy of the current club members

This project aims to achieve;

- Renewed energy for the current members
- Strategic direction and succession planning for the club
- Increased local pride and connection to the club, and
- An increased membership base.

Empowering
Community
Warriors in
Kyneton



It aims to achieve this by;

- Telling the story of the Lions Club of Kyneton,
- Establishing a physical presence in the town,
- Volunteer recruitment drive, and
- Strategic direction and succession planning.



A PLACE CALLED HOME

Kim Cornford

North Central Catchment Management Authority Scholarship

Long Gully is a suburb of Bendigo that was home to a significant number of gold mines during the gold rush era. It is traditionally seen as a working-class suburb, with many heritage buildings and older style fibro houses plus a concentration of light industry.

Long Gully has a strong community bond and pride. This ambitious but potentially hugely impactful community project will seek to bring together much needed support in the areas of affordable housing, climate-ready housing, and community support networks.

St Just Housing Initiatives is a new project seeking to encourage and enable creative community-based solutions to the current context;

- housing affordability,
- climate ready homes,
 - home design which considers climate readiness for future changes is more durable, comfortable and cost-effective in the long term.
- empowered and connected neighbourhoods,
 - communities surrounded by supportive neighbourhood networks, services and facilities contribute more to their local area and are resilient in times of stress.

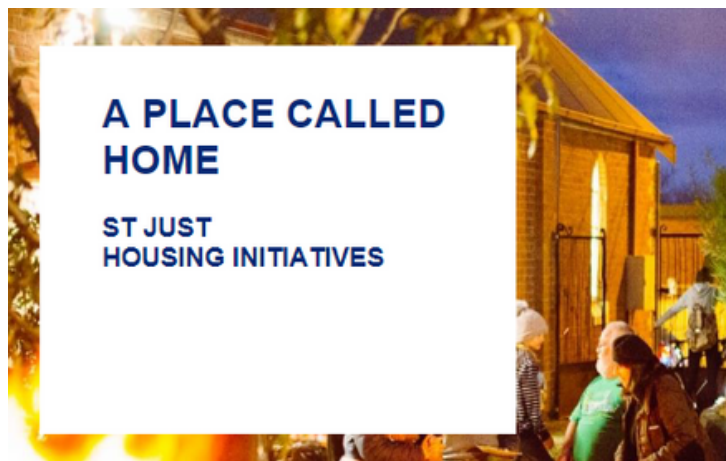
The key stakeholders currently include;

- Seeds Bendigo, a place-based Christian community group located in Long Gully
- Cassinia Community, a philanthropic arm of the Cassinia group of companies; and
- Saltbush Community Initiatives Inc, a local body which auspices funding for community projects.

Cassinia Community supports housing initiatives through its 'A Place Called Home' program which focusses on regional areas with acute shortages in property for housing.

There will be further partners to both fund and provide grassroots neighbourhood support.

Conversations have begun with several interested parties including private investors, community housing organisations, and local people involved in housing issues



BEAUTIFICATION OF TOWN CROSSINGS IN LOCKINGTON

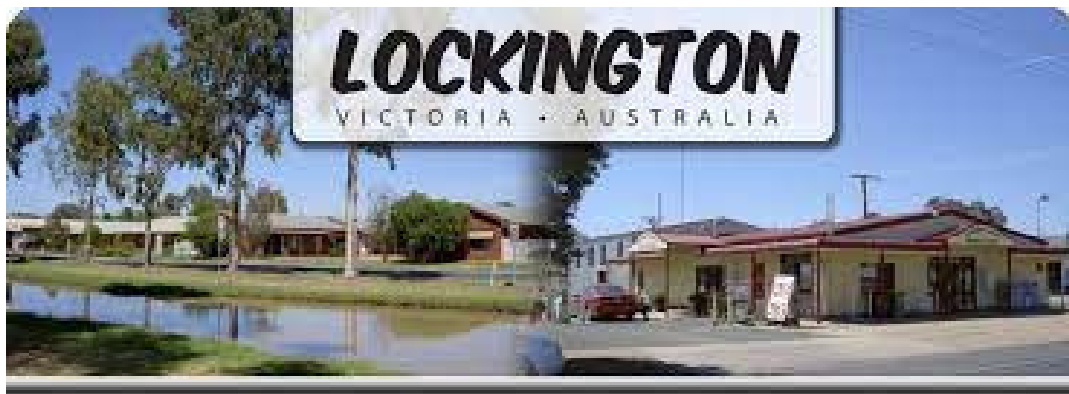
Monica Brereton
Lockington Business Centre Scholarship

Within the main street of Lockington there are three pedestrian crossings. One is near the aged care units on the north end of town, while the second and third are one hundred and two hundred metres south respectively. The one on the north side is well maintained by Shire of Campaspe staff in regard to planting, mulch and maintenance to park bench. The other two crossings in the town are not kept to the same in standard.

This project aims to see all of the crossings kept to a consistent standard throughout town.

If the two neglected crossings were improved and kept to the same standard as the others, then there would be continuity and consistency within Lockington in regards to town presentation and beautification.

This will help solidify town pride and respect for residents, with the hope of improved appeal to tourists and potential residents in the future.



Both crossings will require replanting and added planting. A new timber bollard is required on one crossing to replace one broken off at ground level, as well as weeding and spreading of new mulch.

One crossing also requires the removal of an old broken tree and the removal of a bull ants nest, which prevents use due to ants spreading out over the footpath. The new plantings will also require upkeep through watering during warmer and dryer periods.

If delivered successfully, the project will result in improved appearance and appeal within the town, particularly as tourists enter the town. It could also result in improved real estate value for properties within the vicinity of the crossings. It will also mean improved use of the footpath through removal of the ant's nest.

RIVERFRONT RESTORATION LITTLE MURRAY RIVER

Nicholas Mudge
Swan Hill Rural City Scholarship

The Riverfront Restoration project seeks to achieve an improvement in the environmental integrity of the riverfront along the Little Murray River, by undertaking weed control and revegetation and restoration works. Revegetation and restoration works by volunteer community groups will promote stewardship of the Little Murray River riverfront, improve biodiversity values and habitat, protect cultural interests, enhance amenity and encourage tourism.

Currently, sections of the Little Murray River require attention to eradicate the significant presence of exotic weed species in the area. Not only are these weed species unsightly, they can also impact on the health of the waterway and the neighbouring environment. Of particular concern are the presence of Weeping willows along the Little Murray River, which are known to cause erosion to the riverbank and impact on the overall condition of the river.

Improving river health was one of the main priorities that community members identified during the Swan Hill Riverfront Masterplan's development. Community support for this project has also been expressed by multiple members of the community, as well as the local sustainability group Sustainable Living In the Murray.

RIVERFRONT RESTORATION LITTLE MURRAY RIVER

This project aligns with the Community's visions of "embrace[ing] our rich history and natural environment" as well as Council's priority for "care and responsible management of our environment for a sustainable future", while also meeting multiple objectives outlined in the Swan Hill Riverfront Masterplan (see 02. Existing Work). In addition, the North Central Catchment Management Authority (NCCMA) have identified the Little Murray River as a priority asset in its Regional Catchment Strategy (2021-27).

The project will take place in stages over a three-year period.

This project will support a coordinated approach in protecting the Little Murray River from the introduction, establishment and spread of pest plants and animals. Restoration and revegetation of the riparian and surrounding lands will be undertaken via community planting events, thereby delivering a community-based participatory project that builds the capacity of volunteers to manage natural resources.

DAIRY QUEENS - WOMEN IN DAIRY MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

Rebecca Wyper, Andrea Boudville, Ellyse Roper
Gardiner Dairy Foundation, Minerals Council of Australia (Victorian Division), and City of Greater Bendigo Samantha Bell Scholarships

This project is a collaboration between three LMCLP 2022 participants and engages a number of stakeholders across government, non- government and business in regional Victoria.

The goals of this project are to identify and develop a better understanding of the mental health and service needs of communities, with a focus on women and the dairy sector. A secondary goal is to improve the delivery of targeted mental health program and services in the Loddon Murray region.

This project is important as the agriculture industry is generally isolating and it's important to bring people together and provide them support. We've targeted this group to women as quite often they become even more isolated, staying at home and looking after the kids and running the household. Linking them with other like minded people will help them connect and increase their networks within their community.

This project will be conducted in three phases;

Phase 1: Conduct a series of consultations with stakeholders to identify key priorities for womens mental health.

Phase 2: Once key priorities are identified phase 2 will involve further consultations with a broader network of stakeholders to develop targeted health promotion interventions for women on dairy farms.

Phase 3: Will involve engaging and connecting communities with health promotion programs and mental health services that can be delivered in the community.

Key outcomes of the project will include:

- Providing a safe place for sharing ideas and discussion about mental health and getting farmers and women 'off farm'
- Generating discussion around mental priorities, challenges and solutions to address the,
- Developing networks for farmers particularly women



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

Samara Hodson
Community Bank Gisborne & District Scholarship



Volunteerism is important to the health of communities, especially small rural communities.

Incorporated not-for-profit Associations that are volunteer based often have limited skills, people power or time to undertake necessary governance functions to comply with their legal obligations. As a result of the reduction of volunteers, the capacity for committees to undertake these tasks has dwindled, leading to people holding similar roles on multiple (NFP) community organisations. Committees and small communities can then lack inclusive and diverse voices, they can get stuck in old ways of thinking and miss out on new ideas, tools, attitudes and opportunities.

In exploring this issue, opportunities exist for corporate entities and government to become Community Partners who work with and support community groups in a few ways:

- Creating a funding stream or sponsorship for NFP's to pay an accountant for an amount of hours for Treasurer tasks or Company Secretary for secretary roles.
- Community Banks or local government become the employer for community members who undertake these tasks.
- Providing staff to support community groups to perform high level roles such as Secretary or Treasurer.
- Providing staff to support community groups develop a strategic plan.
- Increasing the capacity of community members and groups by assisting them with training and external support for their governance responsibilities.
- There is also an opportunity to develop partnerships with education providers and participants.

By activating Community Partnerships that bridge government, corporate entities and community banks with community groups there is a greater awareness of their activities and issues at a grass roots level. It also provides an opportunity for good corporate citizenship, brand exposure and community consultation/ information opportunities, and through that effective distribution of profits back in to the local community.

MEDIA MATTERS

Scott Bourne
Gannawarra Shire Council Scholarship



The COVID-19 pandemic impacted regional Australia's media industry, with 60 regional Australian newspapers folding since March 2020. Another nine newspaper mergers occurred following this date, with 41 newspapers shifting to digital-only editions and 28 newspapers scaling back services.

This change has resulted in a 30 per cent reduction in news pages available for community groups to promote events, campaigns and achievements.

Media Matters aims to empower community groups with the tools necessary to ensure promotions for their events, campaigns and achievements are at the forefront of journalists when they are producing the next edition of their local newspaper, radio news bulletin or television news broadcast.

Utilising the skills award-winning former Gannawarra Times Senior Journalist, Scott Bourne obtained during his 12.5 years in the industry, Media Matters is a one-hour workshop where community group representatives can learn:

- How to develop positive relationships with their local media outlet
- How to develop media releases that can be published or broadcast by media outlets
- Other ways to communicate with their community without using local media, including digital and non-digital options

Media Matters has the capacity to be rolled out to other areas across regional Victoria, depending on the project's popularity and success in Kerang.



CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN CASTLEMAINE

Tiffany Inglis

North Central Catchment Management Authority Scholarship



The aim of this project is to create a new and exciting circular industry that reuses waste to make new products, based at Castlemaine Secondary College. It will work to build the environmental sustainability of Castlemaine and surrounds by teaching students how to turn waste into a new product they can sell.

The project will establish a plastic bottle lid recycling system locally, where students will coordinate the collection of the bottle lids, a valuable resource, and turn them into a new product. The project will also purchase machines that the Castlemaine Secondary College students will use to turn the lids into a product and then sell them back to the community. The profits generated from the sale of the products will then be used to develop new products and therefore setting up a circular industry.

The project will purchase two machines and product mold for the Technology Department of Castlemaine Secondary College.

These machines use a new and exciting technology designed to be used by schools and community groups to help address the waste problem facing our communities. With the need to process our recycling in Australia, instead of sending it overseas, late last year the Victorian Government released its new plan 'Recycling Victoria: A new economy'. This plan sets out the actions the state will take to move towards a circular economy. One of the key actions of that plan is development and support of a stronger waste and recycling industry, which this project will work towards.

By introducing school students to the full process of product development, from sourcing raw materials (the bottle lids), to learning how to use new technology (the machines), through to selling their product to customers within our community (marketing), they will learn important skills about understanding supply and demand and how to fill that demand in future by recognising waste products as a valuable resource. By also sourcing all the materials locally and then selling locally, they will help their community to thrive.

EASTERN MACEDON RANGES FOOD TRAIL

Tom Whiteman
Agriculture Victoria Scholarship

The Eastern Macedon Ranges is an area boasting many specialist food producers, however it is not very well known.

Tom's project is to do a food trail focusing on the smaller producers of the Eastern Macedon Ranges.

This will bring more income and publicity to smaller producers whilst also providing an enjoyable experience for visitors.

The basic premise is to suggest a producer where visitors can have breakfast, they then learn about the producer and their products and have an enjoyable social experience with the people they bring along. After breakfast, they then visit other small producers where they learn about their produce and have a tour of the producer's property, and hopefully leaving with some products from that producer. After the morning visits, the visitors will have lunch at another designated small producer, and after lunch it is time for another one or two small producer visits, and then finally, dinner in the area.

The project aims to increase the exposure of the many excellent small food producers in the Eastern Macedon Ranges area, and hopefully grow to include a broader number of producers, and increase awareness of the region.



THE LMCLP 2022 STORY

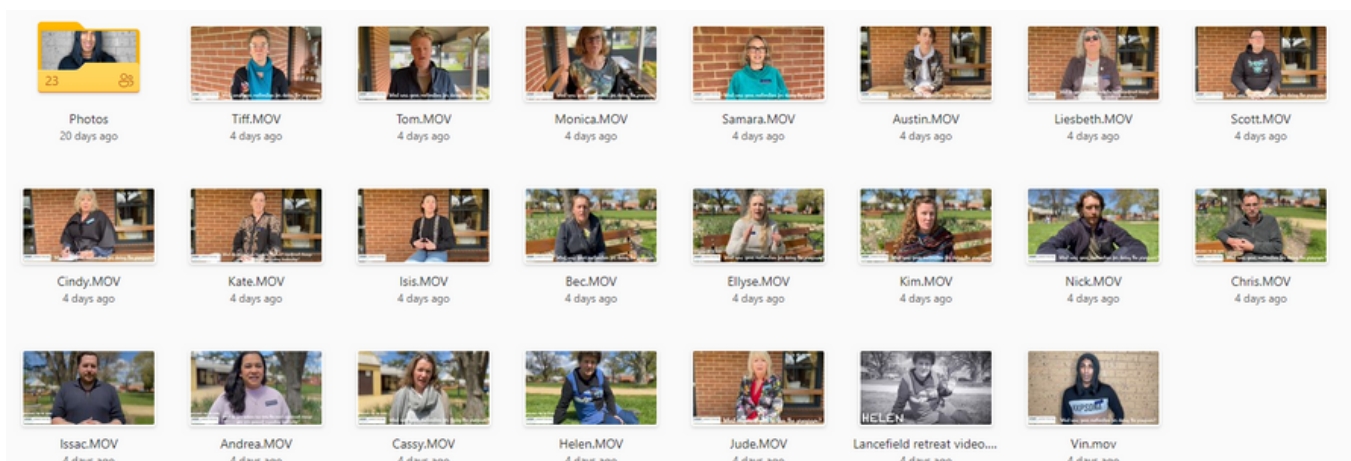
Vin Jarrod
Lockington Business Centre Scholarship



This project leverages strength in visual storytelling and the documenting of the 2022 LMCLP through photos and video from the first through to the final retreat.

There have already been videos of the individual stories of each of the 2022 LMCLP participants produced, and this project is focused on preparing a video that captures the full story and impact of the 2022 program from the perspective of the participants, rather than them just telling their own stories.

Individual videos have been released gradually via the LEAD Loddon Murray social media pages (Facebook and Linked In), and the final overall video will also be released via the socials, telling the story of the growth, learning and development of the community ethos of the 2022 participants.



LEAD Loddon Murray

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