

AUGUST 2024

Community Benefits Framework

Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, Queensland Hydro acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands, skies and waters where we operate throughout Queensland.

We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples, and extend our respect to Elders past and present, and honour their continuing spiritual and cultural connections to Country.



Acknowledgement of impacts

We recognise that projects like ours can cause disruption in the community. Our job is to minimise that disruption where we can, using local knowledge to help make the right choices for initiatives and funding. We're committed to working collaboratively with local communities to support ways that enhance your way of life over the long term.

If you took part in the consultation process for this Community Benefits Framework, thank you. Your invaluable participation means this framework has been informed by locals, and will ensure we contribute to a positive legacy now and into the future.

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A message from the CEO



Kieran Cusack
CEO, Queensland Hydro

Dear community members and stakeholders,

I am pleased to introduce Queensland Hydro's inaugural Community Benefits Framework to you.

Queensland Hydro recognises that our responsibilities extend beyond the projects themselves and we are committed to achieving the best outcomes for both Queensland and local communities. This framework stands as a testament to being a good neighbour and ensuring that communities benefit from our presence.

The Queensland Hydro Community Benefits Framework acknowledges the values we share with our communities in delivering benefits that empower individuals, communities and regions. Fair, transparent, collaborative and enduring – we will hold ourselves to these standards.

This framework has been finalised with the help of you – our neighbours, our communities. During a comprehensive two-month consultation period, we received over 460 survey responses and held seven community workshops across both proposed Project locations and online.

We heard you and we appreciate the feedback and the ideas you shared with our team. It is my hope that you see the reflection of your feedback through this framework and in the programs we will be rolling out as part of our Community Benefits commitment.

I invite you to view the Queensland Hydro Community Benefits Framework, learn about our road map to shared benefits and consider how your community could get involved in working with us to ensure positive benefits are realised now and into the future.

Together, we will continue to shape Queensland Hydro's Community Benefits approach for enduring and sustained outcomes.

Thank you for joining us on this journey toward supporting our communities to grow and prosper.

Sincerely,

Kieran Cusack
CEO, Queensland Hydro



Background

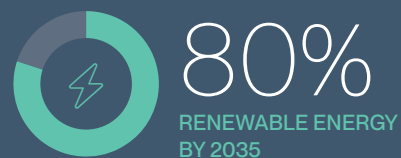
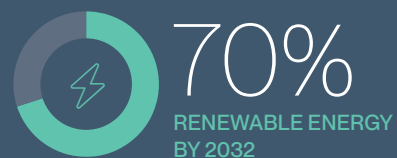
About Queensland Hydro

We're powering Queensland's clean energy future.

Queensland Hydro is a publicly owned entity established by the Queensland Government to design, deliver, operate and maintain long duration pumped hydro energy storage (PHES) assets that will be the cornerstone for the transformation of the state's energy system.

We are playing a critical role in helping to meet the Queensland Government's renewable energy targets and net zero emissions by 2050, supporting the shift in our economy to a decarbonised energy system.

The Australian Government has committed to reducing emissions by 43 per cent by 2030 and achieving Net Zero by 2050. The Queensland Government has also set targets of 70 per cent renewable energy by 2032 and 80 per cent by 2035.



Queensland Hydro has two pumped hydro projects:

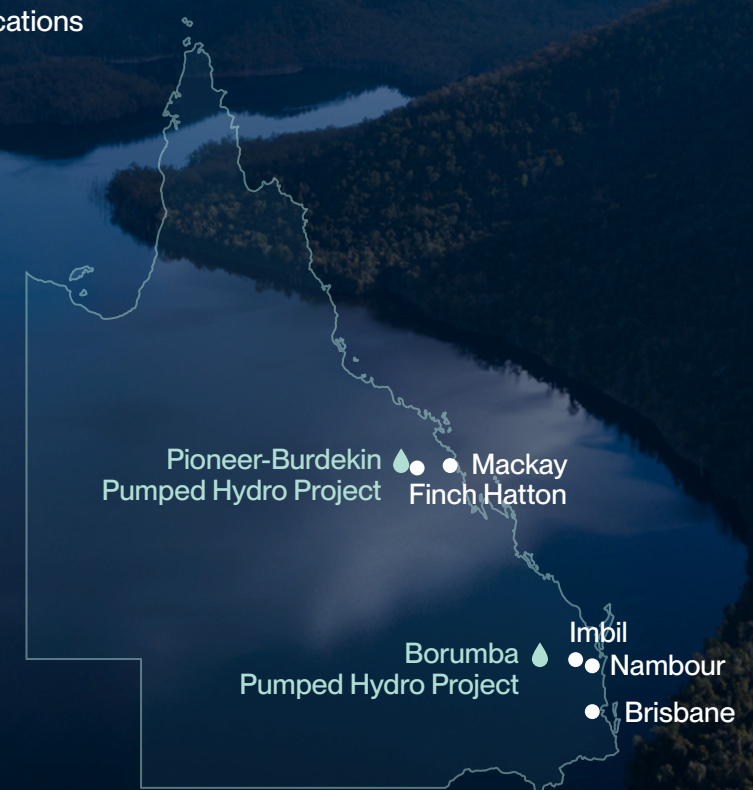
Borumba Pumped Hydro Project

The proposed Borumba Pumped Hydro Project is a 2,000 MW pumped hydro energy storage system at Lake Borumba, located near Imbil, west of the Sunshine Coast. In June 2023, the Queensland Government committed \$6 billion to progress the project. Pending approvals, the project is targeting first power in 2030.

Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro Project

A proposed 5,000 MW PHES located in the Pioneer Valley and adjacent ranges, west of Mackay. Queensland Hydro is currently undertaking a number of detailed technical studies to refine knowledge of the proposed reservoirs.

Our locations



● Office locations

💧 Project locations

Purpose of this document

Our goal is to deliver the best outcomes for local communities and all Queenslanders, now and for generations to come.

While our projects will bring significant long-term economic, environmental and social benefits, we recognise that this comes with disruption for local communities during investigation and construction. It is with this understanding that we have approached our Community Benefits Framework and the programs that it will guide.

How can we deliver lasting, positive outcomes for the communities in which we operate? We will work and partner directly with community, businesses and organisations who are delivering services that meet the needs and aspirations of your community.

The purpose of this document is to provide a high-level approach and outline the vision, values and strategic priorities that will inform decisions around how Community Benefits initiatives and investments are delivered in our Project areas. It underpins how the Community Benefits Fund will be administered, managed and governed. It also sets eligibility criteria that is fair and transparent to ensure consistency in the assessment of Community Benefits requests.

Understanding our Community Benefits Framework

The Community Benefits Framework is a strategic document. It provides the insight to guide how we intend to approach community benefits and a benchmark for how we intend to engage with our communities.

Our intention is to provide benefits that directly improve the wellbeing of the communities we work with, where they need it most.

This is the basis of the Community Benefits Framework.

The framework serves the following pivotal functions:



Fair and equitable distribution of funding

by addressing the specific needs and priorities of the communities in which we operate and ensuring a consistent approach to eligibility and assessment criteria is adhered to.



Guiding strategic investments

by outlining the vision, values and strategic priorities that underpin the approach to identifying and assessing initiatives.



Accountability

by establishing a set of strategic priorities and outcomes that articulate our intention and commitment to delivering, and realising, benefits to our communities.



Alignment to community needs

by recognising different values, priorities and cultural requirements, and ensuring community projects are delivering on the aspirations, meeting a community need and leaving an enduring positive legacy.



Consultation snapshot

What we did

Between February and April 2024 the draft Community Benefits Framework was available for public consultation. Community representatives were encouraged to participate by completing a survey and/or attending a workshop. During this period we received 462 survey responses and connected in person with members of the community during seven workshops held across both Project locations.

Local residents, businesses, not-for-profit groups and other community entities were encouraged to participate by either completing the survey or attending a workshop.

Who we spoke to

Queensland Hydro spoke to community members, including local residents, business owners, not-for-profit groups, and other community representatives, as well as the broader public across the regions.

The survey provided the opportunity for locals and the broader community to share their feedback, whereas the workshops supported in-depth conversations across the communities in which we operate.

What we heard

Vision

Demonstrate that the vision and values are being upheld through communication and actions.

Values

You agree that the values are highly important, particularly transparency.

Strategic priorities

- Survey participants placed greater importance on environment and sustainability.
- Workshop participants placed greater importance on economic, educational, cultural and connection-based initiatives.
- Infrastructure and regional growth is a priority across communities.
- Consider the role and inclusion of tourism within the economy strategic priority area.



WORKSHOPS ACROSS BOTH PROJECT LOCATIONS



SURVEY RESPONSES

Consultation snapshot

You told us

We listened

The Framework does not provide enough information or guidance.



Additional documentation will accompany the framework to outline the process and criteria for application and funding allocation.

Further detail is needed on how to apply for community benefits opportunities, assessment criteria and implementation process.



A dedicated webpage and online application form is available and contains the details of the assessment criteria and implementation process.

Create a mixed representative panel for funding decision-making.



We facilitated an EOI process to appoint a Community Benefits Panel which includes local representatives. An external, independent review will also be part of the assessment process.

Develop a Community Plan.



We acknowledge that a vision shared by the communities of each town will assist Queensland Hydro in understanding needs and priorities.

Provide support to community in the delivery of implementation.



Our community engagement teams will work alongside local providers to community groups to guide the successful implementation of community initiatives.



A more detailed summary of the consultation findings can be found here:
qldhydro.com.au/community

Benefits at a glance

Queensland Hydro is committed to investing in our local communities over the long term.

Our projects will progress through many stages, from early investigation, to construction and operations over decades to come.

Our intention is to become entrenched in community life in our project areas, supporting local businesses, generating economic growth, working alongside residents and enriching communities through our Community Benefits programs. Benefit sharing in major infrastructure projects can take many different forms.

At Queensland Hydro, we see benefit sharing in three main areas:

- community benefits
- regional development
- industry engagement

While each component has a unique focus, the result is an investment in our regions and communities that leaves them better than we found them over the long term.

Through ongoing relationships with community and stakeholders, we will support local communities to maximise and align the investments across each area.

Sometimes there are impacts from our projects that we won't be able to completely avoid. In such cases, we'll take steps to mitigate these impacts - focusing on the right outcome for community. Wherever possible, we'll find solutions to minimise these disruptions and prioritise long-term outcomes for local businesses and residents.



Delivering community benefits

Defining community benefits

Community benefits are designed to enhance the lifestyle and wellbeing of the local community. The framework informs the overarching approach for multiple programs to be rolled out, that will provide funding to support initiatives that go above and beyond mitigating the impacts of the Projects and demonstrate Queensland Hydro's long-term commitment to positively contributing to the communities in which we operate.

Our Community Benefits Framework has been designed to leave a lasting legacy for both the community and the environment. We'll do this by investing in initiatives that enhance community wellbeing, diversify local economies and secure enduring benefits that will leave a legacy, long after the construction phase is over.

Why it matters

Your community is our community. Once complete, our Projects will result in assets with a long life span, so they have the potential to bring real positive change.

To bring change, we need to work closely with locals who know their community best, to ensure the initiatives we support fulfill community need. This partnership approach ensures alignment and guarantees that our contributions are not just the right choices for now, but long into the future.

This framework puts into action our belief that community wellbeing and project success are connected, underscoring a commitment to creating a future where Queensland Hydro's projects are a source of long-term positive benefit and shared growth.

First Nations focus

Queensland Hydro is committed to meaningful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We will work collaboratively, openly and respectfully with Indigenous communities to identify needs and opportunities, and support initiatives that will benefit First Nations people.

Queensland Hydro is in the process of negotiating Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs). The ILUAs will provide priority consideration for benefit activities to be developed under this framework. Queensland Hydro is committed to cultural enrichment and will work closely with First Nation communities and the Traditional Owners to identify opportunities and co-design programs to ensure thoughtful and meaningful benefits are delivered.





Vision,
values &
strategic
priorities

Our vision

Delivering enduring legacies for our communities.

The Queensland Hydro community benefits vision embodies a strong commitment to realising positive outcomes for the communities and regions in which we operate.

Working closely with the community, we will support initiatives that will have enduring positive benefits and potential for the most significant impact.

Queensland Hydro's vision informs the values that will be reflected in our interactions with the community.



Our values

Inclusive, enduring, responsive and transparent.

These core values for community benefits provide a path toward equitable development, long-term community value and vibrant communities. They will underpin engagement activities and decision making with communities.

Inclusive

We value the diversity among our communities. This means we recognise the importance of providing different ways for a cross section of community to be involved. We're dedicated to promoting understanding among various communities and ensuring our initiatives are inclusive and respectful of diverse perspectives.

Accessible:

Ensure a broad range of community stakeholders have equitable access to opportunities.

Diverse:

Represent a broad cross section of community.

Shared benefit:

Ensure there is shared benefit to the community.

Enduring

Our projects are long lasting and we intend for our community legacy to be enduring also. We will create and support initiatives for now, and for the future, to meet the evolving needs and aspirations of the community.

Enduring:

Provide ongoing benefits to the community and environment.

Empowering others:

Support communities to positively contribute to the region and realise long term benefits.

Future focused:

Leave a legacy where the benefits are shared in the community and region for generations to come.

Responsive

We remain committed to listening and responding to community needs. Collaboration with communities, stakeholders, and partners is at the heart of what we do, ensuring we are working together to maximise benefits and bring meaningful change.

Consultation:

Engage effectively and listen to the needs of communities.

Alignment:

Align with community needs and organisational values.

Informed decision making:

Consider community needs and the organisation's strategic priorities to inform decision making.

Transparent

We believe in fairness and equality. We will ensure our communities have equal access to opportunities and be assured that we follow procedural fairness. We will require measurement and reporting of benefits to track delivery of outcomes and promises.

Equitable:

Distribute opportunities and benefits fairly across all segments of the community.

Procedural fairness:

Adhere to transparent processes and unbiased procedures that provide all community members with an equal chance to engage, benefit and contribute.

Measured:

Gauge the effectiveness and tangible impact of initiatives, ensuring accountability and transparency in delivering promised benefits.

Strategic priorities

Queensland Hydro will support and invest in community initiatives that align with the strategic priorities of the Community Benefits Framework.

Collectively, these pillars address a holistic perspective of the elements that combine to support a healthy and thriving community.

Community benefits

Tourism and economy

Tourism is an important driver and presents significant opportunities to grow and leverage enduring positive benefits for the local area and broader region surrounding our project locations.

We will support initiatives that help people and economies thrive. We will do this through local economic development activities that build capacity, capability and resilience to enable our communities and regions to grow and prosper.

Health and wellbeing

Health and wellness is at the core of every individual and collectively contributes to the vibrancy at the heart of every community.

We will support initiatives that deliver optimum health and wellness benefits to the local community. This may include programs or activities targeting community participation, or infrastructure of recreational facilities to enable them.

Environment and sustainability

We understand and value the importance of respecting and nurturing the environment that surrounds us, in both its natural and developed forms.

We will support initiatives that enhance, protect and celebrate the local environment. Ensuring a sustainable future for the land, skies and water surrounding our communities will benefit us all.

Community connection

Connection creates community. We will support initiatives that contribute to community connectedness.

This may include programs or activities that bring people together, connect cultures, backgrounds, ages and stages of life. It may include physical connections to enhance towns and local areas so there are pathways to connect or places to gather.

We will recognise and preserve the history and culture that underpins the area, celebrate creativity and the arts emerging from our communities, knowing that connection is at the essence.

An aerial photograph of a river valley. A wide, brown river flows through the center, crossing a concrete bridge. The river is flanked by lush green trees and grassy banks. In the foreground, a residential area with houses and a school building is visible. The background shows rolling green hills under a clear blue sky. A white curved line graphic is overlaid on the left side of the image.

In practice

Initiatives and investment selection

Informed by key stakeholders and the community, Queensland Hydro has developed programs that will be guided by this framework to enable the delivery of community benefits funding to the communities in our project areas.

All submissions for funding will be assessed and prioritised against three primary criteria – do initiatives demonstrate a strong strategic fit, can they demonstrate positive and enduring value to the community and do they have a high likelihood of implementation.

Strategic fit

Alignment with objectives

- Does the initiative align with our values?
- Does it fit with at least one of the strategic priorities?

Local relevance

- Does the initiative meet specific needs in the community?

Community value

Positive community outcomes

- Does the initiative have direct and meaningful benefit to the local community?
- Does it foster economic growth?
- Does it enhance community well-being or create opportunities for community connection?
- Does it enhance or celebrate the local environment?

Inclusivity

- What parts of the community will the initiative reach?

Deliverability

Feasibility

- Does the initiative have an effective delivery approach (clear objectives, accountabilities, timelines and budget)?

Effective execution

- Does it have a practical execution plan - feasible time, budget, resources to implement?

This comprehensive evaluation process will assist Queensland Hydro, the independent assessor and our community benefits panel to identify and prioritise initiatives that not only align with our vision, values and strategic priorities but also hold the greatest potential for creating positive change in the communities we operate.

Evaluating success and adapting

We know that our communities will change over time and so too will the way we approach benefits.

Our Community Benefits Framework is designed to continuously evolve as we listen, understand and support community opportunities.

Engaging with our stakeholders

We will continue to engage continuously and broadly with our diverse stakeholders, including community members, reference groups, local authorities and First Nations. Our collaborative approach ensures that our initiatives are informed by the needs and aspirations of the communities we serve.

Updating priorities

As community needs and priorities change we will adapt our strategic priorities accordingly. This flexible approach ensures that the framework remains responsive and relevant to the evolving needs of the regions where we operate.

Regularly evaluating our Framework

We will conduct regular and comprehensive evaluations of the Community Benefits Framework to determine its effectiveness in achieving our overarching priorities and outcomes.

Being transparent

We are committed to openly sharing the outcomes of our initiatives and investments with the community. This transparency ensures that our stakeholders are informed about the progress and outcomes of our initiatives.



Expected outcomes

Queensland Hydro has developed several high-level outcomes expected for the community benefits initiatives it will support.

For individuals

- Improved environment and access to community services
- Improved education and employment opportunities
- Improved safety and wellbeing
- Improved community support and cohesion

For communities

- Empowered, thriving, safe and healthy communities
- Restored and conserved environment
- Community supported to develop a shared vision and cohesive plans for a collective future

For the region

- Improved attractiveness as a region
- Enhanced businesses and industries
- Positive economic contribution



Next steps

2024

February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Launch of draft Community Benefits Framework for public consultation	Public consultation on draft Framework	Community workshops on draft Framework – Survey closed	Review and analysis of consultation feedback	Reporting on consultation – Update Framework with community insights and feedback	EOI assessment panel	Final Framework released	Community Grants Program - round 1 opens – Applications open for 6 weeks, support available	Round 1 closes – Assessment of grant applications	Evaluation by Community Benefits Panel	Grants awarded to successful applicants



Stay up to date via the Queensland Hydro website and find out how to engage with us going forward.
qldhydro.com.au/community



Get in touch

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National Relay Service: 1800 555 660
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Decorative white wavy lines on the dark blue background, consisting of two large, rounded, overlapping shapes.