

Climate Lens

A toolkit for all funders



AEGN

PHILANTHROPY
AUSTRALIA

IMAGE CREDITS (COVER)

Left: Mark Chew

Right: davidf (iStock)

About the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network

The Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network (AEGN) is Australia's premier network for philanthropists funding in climate change and environmental protection. Our mission is to drive a rapid step change in effective giving to climate and environment by providing trusted connections and information, tailored to our diverse members, to maximise the impact of their giving.

Our offices are on the lands of the Kulin Nation and Eora Nation. Acknowledging the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia, we recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. And we pay our respects to the Traditional Owners, Custodians and Elders both past and present.

Visit aegn.org.au for more information about how you can get involved.

About Philanthropy Australia

Philanthropy Australia is the national peak body for philanthropy, working to achieve a generous and inclusive Australia through more and better philanthropy.

We serve a community of funders, social investors and social change agents working to achieve positive social, cultural, environmental and community outcomes.

Philanthropy Australia acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants of the nation and the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Visit philanthropy.org.au for more information.



What is a climate lens?

Climate change is impacting all causes that Australian philanthropists care about and already fund. The Climate Lens is a toolkit for understanding and acting on these impacts, and can be used by every funder, regardless of your structure, size or approach.

We invite you to apply the tool to all aspects of your philanthropy, from grantmaking to investments and operations. There is no one “right” way to do it: where and how you apply the lens is up to you.

Its application will help you to minimise the effects of climate change and enhance your impact, while remaining focused on the people, places and causes at the heart of your mission.

Foreword

Only around 4 per cent of philanthropic giving in Australia is directed to the environment and climate change; we need far more resources now.

A message from the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network and Philanthropy Australia

A changing climate affects everyone, but it doesn't affect everyone equally. Communities least resilient to disasters like bushfires and floods, low-income households struggling with rising electricity bills and people with chronic health conditions are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Launched in 2022, the Climate Lens toolkit is designed to help you maximise impact to reduce the effects of climate change on the people, places and causes you serve.

Used and endorsed by leading foundations, family trusts and individual donors across Australia and beyond, this new update includes valuable experiences and feedback from those who have applied the Climate Lens across their work.

This groundbreaking resource shows how climate change connects with everything Australian grantmakers care about. Extreme weather, pollution, and species loss are affecting a range of critical issues including food supply, jobs, health, human rights, disability and homelessness. By funding solutions to our planetary challenges, you can deliver substantial and tangible co-benefits, building a better future where people and nature thrive together.

It's a powerful tool; it's also flexible. We've designed the Climate Lens for use by every giver regardless of your structure, size or approach, and for application across all aspects of philanthropy, from grantmaking to investments, to everything in between. Where and how you apply the Climate Lens is up to you; there's no one "right" way to do it. Taking your next step will make a big difference.

For inspiration, we showcase several Australian grantmakers working across a range of areas and at different stages of their giving journeys, who each take their own unique approach to applying a Climate Lens to achieve strong outcomes for people and planet across all sectors.

Keep funding your mission while simultaneously helping to heal our world. That's philanthropy working at its best, and we look forward to supporting you in your journey.



Claire O'Rourke, CEO
Australian Environmental
Grantmakers Network



Maree Sidey, CEO
Philanthropy
Australia

Regardless of the specific cause or pool of funds available, philanthropy has the power to change perspectives, systems and norms and the time to act is now. So, start where you are and start now (or keep giving with gusto)! We're in this together and there's great power in the collective.

**A message from
AEGN member
Bec Milgrom**

Here in Australia, the world's driest inhabited continent, we're on the frontline. Droughts, bushfires, heatwaves, floods — we all know they are becoming more frequent and more severe. We can see it; we can feel it; and those who are most underserved in our communities are being hardest hit.

We cannot ignore these escalating impacts. This decade is critical because with every year of delay the problems become exponentially harder to address. But action is the antidote to overwhelm, and we can turn this around if we act now.


For us at Tripple, this means putting an impact lens over 100 per cent of our investment capital to use these funds towards a just and sustainable world, investing in climate solutions in all asset classes. But investment capital alone is not enough and we cannot expect tech to save us. By focusing our grantmaking dollars on systems change and climate justice, getting behind advocates and movement builders, strategic litigators and narrative shifters — those pushing for bold climate policy — we are amplifying our ability to create long-lasting change. These often overlooked and sorely underfunded opportunities have huge potential for impact and we are already seeing some great shifts and wins.

We also know that we can only be our best as a country when everyone can thrive, and when we listen and acknowledge the truth of our past and present. Centring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have been custodians of this land for over 60,000 years is critical. They hold wisdom and knowledge from caring for Country for millennia, but have been pushed out of policy- and decision-making for too long. At Tripple, we are proud to support a number of incredible First Nations-led organisations and we continue to lean in and learn here (we invite you to join us).

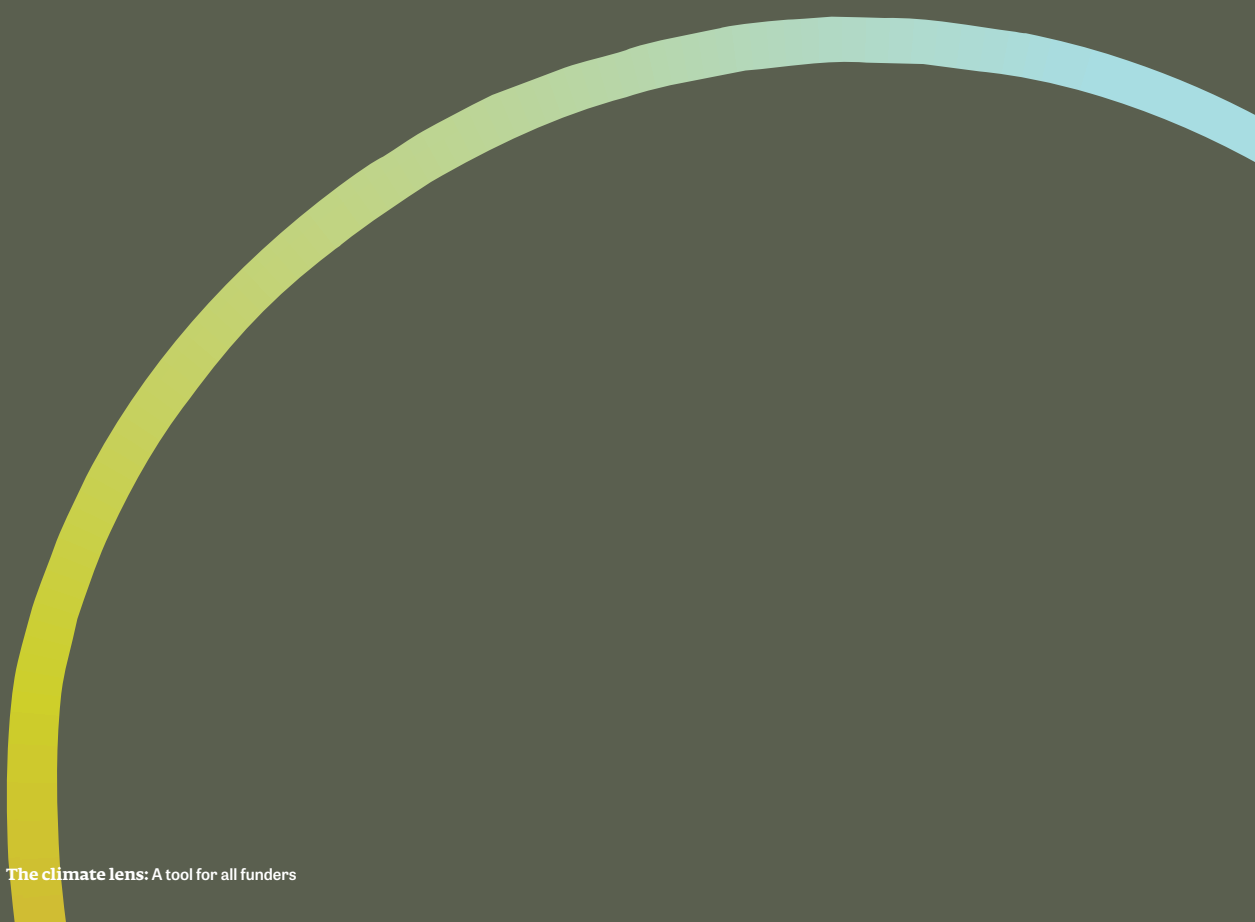
A climate lens is important because it is going to take all hands on deck and all tools in the toolbox to tackle the climate crisis. Philanthropy has a critical role to play in shaping our national ambition, shaping the narrative and ensuring the voices centred in this work are diverse and representative of those on the frontlines.

Climate justice and systems change are our focus, but other issues may feel closer to you. Regardless of the specific cause or pool of funds available, philanthropy has the power to change perspectives, systems and norms and the time to act is now. So, start where you are and start now (or keep giving with gusto)! We're in this together and there's great power in the collective.

Bec Milgrom,
Executive Director, Tripple



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Introduction

Climate change is impacting all causes that funders care about and already support. The Climate Lens is a tool for understanding and acting on these impacts, and enhancing philanthropy's capacity to create positive social and economic change for everyone.

Section one begins with an exploration of how climate change is deepening inequalities and compounding existing challenges within seven areas of interest to funders: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice; health and wellbeing; children and young people; women's rights and gender equality; disadvantage in Australia; disasters and emergency management; and nature and biodiversity. In doing so, it shows how humanity's well-being is inextricably linked with our living planet and exposes the injustice lying at the heart of the issue: that while a changing climate affects everyone, it doesn't affect everyone equally.

Solutions exist and philanthropy is powerfully positioned to help realise them. In recognition of this, the tool offers philanthropists a carefully curated list of funding options tailored to their specific areas of interest. Indeed, philanthropy has a vital role to play, and the sector is already mobilising to restore a safe climate and create a better world. In **Section two**, we showcase five of these funders, who each take a different approach to applying a climate lens to achieve better outcomes for people and the climate.

Section three is the practical part. The Climate Lens tool concludes with a detailed offering of practical steps for funders to start applying a climate lens across their grantmaking, investments, operations and sphere of influence. It acknowledges that applying a climate lens will be different for every funder — there's no "one-size-fits-all" approach. The best thing to do is to simply make a start.

We hope you will be inspired to join a growing chorus of Australians who are choosing to act in the interests of a safe climate, and find the Climate Lens tool a helpful resource on your journey.



SECTION 1: Why apply a climate lens?



IMAGE CREDITS
Top: Mark Chew
Right: Marnie Hawson

A changing climate affects everyone, but it doesn't affect everyone equally — that's why climate change is known as an inequality or threat amplifier. In this section, we outline seven issue areas where climate change is deepening inequalities and compounding existing challenges. Our aim? To help you see — and armed with this insight mitigate against — climate change's pervasive impacts on the people, places and causes you serve.

Everything — everything — we hold dear is threatened by climate change. Yet our time to avert catastrophic change is rapidly running out. In this critical decade, we must do everything possible to cut our emissions deeply and rapidly, while also preparing for the climate change impacts we can no longer avoid.

Momentum is growing for climate action both at home and abroad. So too, is the realisation that the climate crisis presents humanity with an opportunity to build a better future: to create cleaner cities, develop sustainable agriculture, restore landscapes and improve people's lives. Philanthropy has the power to turn this crisis around through its long-term perspective, ability to collaborate with and empower others, and willingness to take risks and invest in innovative solutions — scaling up the most workable at speed.

Indeed, the philanthropic community is mobilising — and in increasingly sophisticated ways — to ensure a safe climate and create a better world, and has already achieved some phenomenal outcomes. Nevertheless, we still face an enormous investment gap that must be closed by 2030 if we are to avert climate catastrophe. Only around 4 per cent of philanthropic giving in Australia is directed to the environment and climate change. We need more resources now, and there are immediate opportunities to have real and lasting impact.

We encourage you to consider funding and investing in climate action directly and offer guidance to this end in Section 3. For now, we invite you to understand how climate change impacts are already playing out within your current areas of focus and armed with this insight, tackle these impacts head on — a task to which we now turn.

A note on the Sustainable Development Goals



In 2015, United Nations Member States across the globe issued an urgent call for united action to improve the lives and wellbeing of the world's people and our planet. At the heart of the agreement is 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which “recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests”.¹

Today, the Sustainable Development Goals provide a way for funders to ensure their work is tackling the root causes of the disadvantage they seek to address and that their work is united with others.

Throughout this section we include icons that relate to each of the 17 SDGs to demonstrate how applying a climate lens to funding can help address the issue being discussed.²

Climate change impacts: a snapshot

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice



Deep, ancestral connection to Country means First Nations Australians experience unique grief and trauma surrounding climate change



In the Torres Strait Islands, sea levels are rising more than half a centimetre each year.

- First Nations Australians in NSW, VIC, ACT and Jervis Bay Territory were twice as likely to be directly impacted by the 2019–20 Black Summer Bushfires than their non-Indigenous neighbours
- Healthcare is less accessible and more expensive for First Nations Australians living remotely where the health impacts of climate change are felt

Health and wellbeing



An unstable climate underpinned by rising temperatures leads to poor health outcomes for our loved ones, for those already vulnerable in the community and for the health system itself



Dengue fever could infect as many as 8 million Australians by 2100 if temperatures don't stabilise

- Heatwave intensity in Australia has increased by 103% since 2001, killing more than 2300 people each year
- For every 1 person who experiences physical injury in climate disasters like floods or heatwaves, 40 people will experience psychological impacts

Children and young people



The future of our children and young people directly depends on whether climate action is taken today



1 billion children are at “extremely high risk” from the impacts of the climate crisis, according to UNICEF

- 86% of young Australians aged 14 to 17 already consider climate change a threat to their safety
- Rising temperatures are already proving an equal or greater contributing factor to child malnutrition than factors such as poverty, sanitation or education

Women's rights and gender equality



Climate change compounds existing gender inequalities by eroding economic independence and reinforcing traditional gender roles, with dangerous consequences



The UN estimates that women comprise 80% of people displaced by climate change

- <1% of international philanthropic funding supports girls' and women's environmental action and protection
- A key driver of women's inequality is domestic violence, which can escalate in the wake of large-scale disasters

“ Any grantmaker who just chugs along on the same issues without addressing climate is, truly, fiddling while the world burns — particularly given the certainty that whatever short-term progress is made through these efforts will be lost if climate change continues unchecked.

Larry Kramer, *President, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation*

Disadvantage in Australia



Climate change deepens disadvantage and widens the gap between rich and poor people



Western Sydney is one of the most heat-affected places in Australia — it's also the most disadvantaged part of Sydney

- Disadvantaged Australians feel the pain of rising electricity costs more than any other group
- Disadvantaged people are more likely to live in areas most affected by climate impacts. When disasters hit, these communities have less resources to cope

Disasters and emergency management



In Australia, climate change has already breached our ability to successfully manage emergencies



Globally, for every dollar invested in climate-resilient infrastructure, six dollars are saved in future disaster costs

- The 2022 *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report* predicts “cascading and compounding” climate disasters if the world refuses to act on climate change
- 82,480 personnel were involved in responding to the Black Summer bushfires, with volunteers representing 78% of responders

Nature and biodiversity



The Earth's carbon cycle is out of balance, with climate change and biodiversity loss trapped in a self-perpetuating cycle of destruction



3 billion native animals were killed or displaced by Australia's 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires — the worst wildlife disaster in modern history

- Australia leads the world in mammal extinctions and 19 of our most important ecosystems are collapsing
- More than 1900 Australian species are threatened and at risk of extinction

For sources see aegn.org.au/climate-lens/why

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice



Sustainable Development Goals



Australia's First Nations peoples descend from more than 60,000 years of reciprocity between people and the planet. This is underpinned by a worldview where land, sea, air, plants and animals are sacred. In this context, the causes and consequences of climate change affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples uniquely and profoundly.

Despite contributing the least to global emissions, Indigenous peoples are at the forefront of climate change impacts.³ Land dispossession and cultural erasure due to fossil fuel expansion exacerbates inequality. At the same time, connection to Country often means First Nations Australians experience extreme weather events and rising sea levels disproportionately. Despite these challenges, Indigenous knowledge is crucial to creating a sustainable future, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are powerful agents of change.⁴

On the frontlines of fossil fuel extraction

Australia has a long history of removing First Nations peoples from their land, severing their connection to Country.⁵ Fossil fuel extraction continues this tradition, which has detrimental consequences for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health, wellbeing, culture and livelihoods.⁶

The Northern Territory has the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people among its population in Australia, but more than half the territory is covered in exploration licences for oil and gas.⁷ In 2019, the Queensland Government extinguished more than 1,385 hectares of Wangan and Jagalingou Country to enable a coal mine site to proceed.⁸ First Nations justice cannot be separated from the fossil fuel industry — the dominant contributor to climate change.

Loss of Country, loss of culture

Planet Earth and its myriad of human and non-human life forms are inseparable in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.⁹ This deep, ancestral connection to Country means First Nations Australians experience unique grief and trauma surrounding climate change.¹⁰ Disasters such as the 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires forced Aboriginal people to not only lose places and possessions, but also their cultural identity and ancestral ties. As billions of plants and animals burned, Aboriginal communities mourned the loss of totems and kinships that have been passed down for thousands of generations.¹¹

As *The Guardian's* Indigenous affairs editor Lorena Allam wrote in an Op Ed at the time: "Like you, I've watched in anguish and horror as fire lays waste to precious Yuin land, taking everything with it — lives, homes, animals, trees — but for First Nations people it is also burning up our memories, our sacred places, all the things which make us who we are."¹²

This grief is compounded by the fact that colonisation is an underlying cause of climate change,¹³ which was acknowledged in the sixth *International Panel on Climate Change Report* for the first time in 2021.¹⁴ Removing First Nations Australians from the lands and seas they successfully managed for 60,000 years has led to the destruction of many of Australia's unique ecosystems.¹⁵ This in turn, has left the environment more vulnerable to fires, floods and other climate change impacts.¹⁶

**“ If our Country is suffering...
we also suffer.**

Amba-Rose Atkinson, PhD Candidate,
The University of Queensland

Widening the gap

Climate change deepens inequality between First Nations and non-Indigenous Australians. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection and cultural obligations to care for Country means they often live in areas where droughts, floods, bushfires, heatwaves and rising sea levels are most severe. Research from the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (Australian National University) found First Nations Australians living in NSW, Victoria, the ACT and Jervis Bay Territory were twice as likely to be directly impacted by the 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires than their non-Indigenous neighbours.¹⁷

Existing health and economic disparities play out further with climate change. Healthcare is less accessible and more expensive for First Nations Australians living remotely where the health impacts of climate change are felt.¹⁸ Existing economic inequality means Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are likely to have fewer resources to relocate or adapt when climate events destroy homes and rising sea levels displace communities.¹⁹

Furthermore, changing weather patterns and rising temperatures threaten food sources for First Nations Australians who rely on the land and ocean for their livelihoods and nutrition. As Tishiko King, a proud Kulkalaig woman from the Island of Masig, Kulkalgal Nation of Zenadth Kes, explains: "We are seeing our ecosystems shift as our oceans are warming ... this is the future of our food security that's at risk. It's impacting the way we hunt and practice our culture and traditional ways. Weather events are becoming more frequent and more aggressive. My people are finding it harder to identify those seasonal cues."²⁰

SDGs of relevance



What can funders do to apply a climate lens to First Nations programs?

- Fund renewable energy projects in urban, regional and remote First Nations communities to boost energy access and reduce electricity bills and carbon emissions.
- Support Indigenous ranger and bushfire programs on land and sea to care for Country and deliver co-benefits by storing carbon in the environment and providing sustainable employment for First Nations people.
- Fund First Nations communities and organisations that are protecting Country from coal and gas projects, and/or support communities to be prepared for climate impacts like storms, flooding and fire.
- Support Aboriginal housing organisations to retrofit housing to meet sustainability and energy efficiency standards to reduce energy costs and emissions.
- Support First Nations-led businesses and social enterprise, particularly in regenerative agriculture, to provide sustainable employment on Country, store carbon in the soil and bolster a sustainable, localised food supply.
- Fund First Nations people to participate in philanthropic decision-making, for example in senior leadership and Board positions, scholarships, placements, internships and establishing wisdom groups.
- Ensure First Nations skills, training and employment programs include preparing participants for employment in the burgeoning clean economy.
- Ask First Nations communities and organisations you already fund how climate change is affecting (or will affect) them, and if they need support to adapt or to take part in a clean, net-zero emissions economy.

Health and wellbeing



Sustainable Development Goals



There is global consensus that an unstable climate underpinned by rising temperatures leads to poor health outcomes for the people we love, for those already vulnerable in the community and for the health system itself.

The World Health Organization stated nearly a decade ago that “climate change is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century”.²¹ The Australian health sector is already feeling the effects of a warming climate. The Australian Medical Association, the peak body for doctors in Australia, officially declared a climate health emergency in 2019, joining health organisations around the world.

Australians are still coming to terms with the aftermath of extreme weather events in recent years, the health impacts of which are physical and mental, immediate and long term. Seven in ten health professionals said climate change is already impacting public health in the largest ever survey of Australian health services.²²

Unnatural disasters

Bushfires, floods and other extreme weather events are becoming regular occurrences in Australia, with deadly consequences. The 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires took a devastating toll, with 33 people losing their lives from the fires themselves and 417 people dying from the toxic smoke that engulfed the east coast. Health workers in hospitals treated 4456 people for smoke-related illness at that time, putting a huge strain on the health system.²³ As the planet heats further, these extreme weather events will become more frequent and intense, posing a huge health risk to communities across Australia.

Heat

On 13 January 2022, the coastal town of Onslow in Western Australia reached a blistering 50.7 degrees Celsius, the hottest temperature recorded in Australia.²⁴ Three days earlier, EU satellite data confirmed the past seven years have been the world's hottest on record.²⁵ These trends persist, with 2023 setting a new benchmark as the hottest year on record, and early data suggesting that 2024 will surpass that. Australia is particularly vulnerable to extremely hot conditions, which can cause cardiac arrest, stroke, cardiovascular problems and premature death, particularly among young children and older adults.²⁶ Higher temperatures increase premature births, which can lead to health issues in later life.²⁷ Every Australian summer in recent memory has broken temperature records and it's only going to get hotter.²⁸

Air quality

The quality of the air that we breathe has a profound impact on our health. Bushfire smoke, greenhouse gas pollutants and pollution particulate matter damage vital organs and can lead to serious disease.^{29–30} Toxic chemicals from burning fossil fuels kill twice as many people worldwide as aids, malaria and tuberculosis combined.³¹

Climate change heightens allergic reactions and allergic diseases by altering the concentration of pollen in the atmosphere. In November 2016, a severe thunderstorm in Melbourne saw a 3000 per cent increase in asthma-related intensive care unit admissions.³²

Mental health

Climate change deeply affects the human condition and takes a profound psychological toll. “Eco-anxiety” — poor mental health due to existential environmental threats — is increasingly common,

“ Australia needs to actively prepare for 50°C in major population centres like Western Sydney.

Dr Sharon Campbell, Menzies Institute for Medical Research, University of Tasmania

especially among young people.³³ Indigenous peoples are deeply affected, as are communities who rely on the natural environment for their livelihoods and cultural identity.³⁴

Survivors of extreme weather events also experience mental health issues. For every one person who experiences physical injury in climate disasters, forty people will experience psychological impacts.³⁵ Suicide, aggression and mental health emergency presentations spike during heatwaves.³⁶ The negative impact that rising temperatures have on the human psyche cannot be overlooked.

Disease

As temperatures increase and rainfall patterns change, mosquitos will carry diseases across the world to new geographic regions, including Australia.³⁷ The 2019 Townsville floods in Queensland led to significant increases in Ross River Virus and Barmah Forest Virus.³⁸ Dengue fever could infect as many as eight million Australians by 2100 if temperatures don't stabilise.³⁹

Floodwaters also breed bacteria and parasites that compromise sanitation, causing food poisoning and contaminated drinking water.⁴⁰ Polluted floodwaters and mud left survivors of the 2022 Queensland and Lismore floods exposed to serious health risks.⁴¹

SDGs of relevance



What can funders do to apply a climate lens to health and wellbeing programs?

- Support low-income households to climate-proof their homes, which may require retrofitting to increase insulation from extreme heat and cold, and switch old appliances to electric, away from polluting and expensive gas.
- Support urban planning initiatives that increase green space, maintain existing bushland and encourage urban tree planting to reduce the concrete heat island effect, making suburbs more liveable.
- Support communities near major air pollution sources to monitor air quality for high pollution days and advocate for stricter air pollution standards.
- Fund initiatives to electrify public and private transport to reduce urban air pollution and encourage active transport for a healthy lifestyle.
- Support the charitable sector to upgrade vehicle fleets to electric vehicles (EVs), which in turn stimulates a second-hand EV market, making them more affordable for Australians.
- Fund mental health support for communities facing climate impacts like floods, bushfires and droughts.
- Support healthcare workers to access time off work for climate-related events such as heatwaves or to travel to disaster zones to provide immediate care to residents.
- Ensure mental health programs include guidance on climate anxiety.
- Support healthcare workers to have their voices heard in the formulation of a national climate change and health strategy.
- Support the health sector to decarbonise and adapt to climate impacts by assessing the emissions from healthcare services, and developing plans to reduce these and adapt operations to better anticipate and manage health-related climate impacts.
- Ask current grantees how climate change is impacting (or will impact) them or their work and how your funding may be able to support them.

Children and young people



Sustainable Development Goals



The future of our children and young people directly depends on whether climate action is taken today. We are already experiencing the consequences of inaction, and these will continue to unfold over the lifetime of the next generation. What kind of world will they inherit from us?

Failure to act on climate change violates the human rights of children and young people — their right to survival, development, protection and participation in society. Right now, a quarter of the global population is aged 15 years or younger. The cumulative and compounding effects of global warming will escalate as these young people grow up.

In extreme climate events, children are the most defenceless. They are also more susceptible to disease, mental health issues and malnutrition, all of which will skyrocket as the planet heats. Work already undertaken by philanthropists to alleviate poverty and improve childhood development risks being undermined by climate change impacts.

Climate inaction is child neglect

Australia remains one of the highest per capita emitters of CO₂ in the world.⁴² Children's vulnerability and lack of independence places them in the firing line of many of the worst effects of climate change. Furthermore, it's our children and grandchildren who will bear the brunt of climate impacts. Now, today, we must do everything in our power to ease that burden.

“ Climate and environmental shocks are undermining the complete spectrum of children's rights, from access to clean air, food and safe water; to education, housing, freedom from exploitation, and even their right to survive. Virtually no child's life will be unaffected.

Henrietta Fore, Executive Director, UNICEF

Extreme weather events

Research suggests that extreme weather events caused by climate change stunt childhood development. A study of women who were pregnant during the 2011 Brisbane floods found that their children developed lower cognitive capacity, smaller vocabularies and less imaginative play by the age of two.⁴³

Floods, bushfires and other extreme weather events are more life-threatening for children because they cannot protect themselves.⁴⁴ For example, age is the greatest risk factor for drowning worldwide, with the highest rates of drowning among children aged one to four. During extreme floods and storms, children are at greatest risk of death or injury.⁴⁵

Children are also most susceptible to the effects of heatwaves,⁴⁶ which is particularly relevant for Australia where heatwave records are breaking most summers.⁴⁷ Over the next decade, it's predicted 175 million children will be affected by climate-related disasters each year.⁴⁸

Disease

Children will be especially vulnerable to contracting illnesses as climate change increases the spread and prevalence of disease, including malaria. The World Health Organization believes that 85 per cent of global disease caused by climate change occurs in children under the age of five.⁴⁹ Water-borne illnesses, such as diarrhea and cholera, are likely to increase as water quality is impacted by climate change, and these will disproportionately affect infants.⁵⁰

Childhood malnutrition

A warming climate affects agricultural patterns and water quality, with severe consequences for food production and malnutrition. A recent 19-country study of more than 100,000 children found that rising temperatures are already proving an equal or greater contributing factor to child malnutrition than factors such as poverty, sanitation or education.⁵¹ Australia is not immune to this trend. Research predicts that within 10 to 20 years, Australian children will experience stunting, anemia and malnutrition due to higher levels of CO₂ concentration in staple crops and overall lower nutritional value.⁵² Climate change can dramatically escalate worrying health trends in children.

Mental health

Young people are increasingly experiencing climate-related anxiety, leading to longer-term mental health problems. Four in five Australian young people report feeling somewhat or very anxious about climate change.⁵³ Anxiety, trauma and other mental health issues are particularly prevalent in young people after natural disasters, with survivors of extreme weather catastrophes 50 per cent more likely to suffer from mental illness in the years afterwards.⁵⁴ Australian children exposed to the Black Summer bushfires reported higher levels of mental health symptoms than others, which if untreated can exacerbate over time.⁵⁵

SDGs of relevance



What can funders do to apply a climate lens to programs for children and young people?

- Ensure skills, training and employment programs include preparing participants for employment in the burgeoning clean economy.
- Ensure youth mental health programs include guidance on climate grief and anxiety.
- Fund physical and mental health support for children and young people facing climate impacts like floods, bushfires and droughts.
- Target youth programs in communities at risk of being left behind in the transition to a clean economy, such as industrial zones like Gladstone, the Hunter Valley and the La Trobe Valley.
- Support young people to engage in climate policy development at international, federal and local government levels by providing travel scholarships, advocacy training and media training.
- Involve young people in philanthropic decision making such as through Board positions, placements, internships, staff roles and advisory councils.
- Ask youth organisations you already fund how climate change is affecting (or will affect) them and if they need support to adapt or to participate in a clean, net-zero emissions economy.

Women's rights and gender equality



Sustainable Development Goals



Climate change compounds existing gender inequalities by eroding economic independence and reinforcing traditional gender roles, with dangerous consequences. Notwithstanding this, women are at the forefront of the environmental movement and are vital agents of climate action within their communities.

As climate change intensifies, so will gender inequality. The consequences of rising temperatures take a shocking toll on women's rights by eroding their economic independence and increasing gender-based violence. At the same time, women are at greater risk of climate-induced displacement, while traditional gender roles can make them more vulnerable when disasters strike.

Despite these challenges, women are taking the lead on climate action. In the 2022 Australian federal election, a record number of women were elected to public office with this mandate, joining an environmental movement already filled with trailblazing women. While the stakes are high for women in a changing climate, they can be its greatest agents of change to safeguard the future of the planet.

Violence against women

A key driver of women's inequality is domestic violence, which can escalate in the wake of large-scale disasters.^{56 57} Modelling commissioned by the NSW Council of Social Service and others found at least 60,000 women in New South Wales experienced domestic violence for the first time in 2020 — a direct result of the pandemic, compounded by the 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires.⁵⁸ Public health officials and service providers reported an

increase in domestic violence directly following the 2019–20 bushfires and the 2022 Lismore floods.⁵⁹ The 2009 Black Saturday blazes also saw higher rates of violence against women occur in areas more severely affected by fires,⁶⁰ including within families where violence hadn't been experienced before.⁶¹

Globally, climate change heightens the risk of trafficking, child marriage and sexual assault for women and girls.⁶² Political instability and armed conflict arising from climate disaster and resource scarcity are also expected to threaten the safety and agency of women and girls.⁶³

Economic inequality

In Australia, poverty disproportionately impacts women compared to men.⁶⁴ At home and abroad, women earn less than men and comprise the poorest demographic.⁶⁵ Economic disadvantage means women have less resources to cope with and adapt to climate change.⁶⁶ As temperatures rise, more women will be pushed into poverty and will face greater risk of climate-induced displacement.⁶⁷

Disasters can quickly erode women's economic independence, as shown by the COVID-19 pandemic. Australian women's economic participation went backwards for the first time in years. Women lost their jobs more than men and shouldered the unpaid labour burden disproportionately through home schooling, domestic chores and caring for older adults.⁶⁸ As climate change intensifies and environmental disasters increase in scale and frequency, this same dynamic is expected to play out.

Displacement

The economic inequality of women puts them at a higher risk of climate-induced displacement. There are more displaced people in the world now than ever before, and this is projected to increase as severe weather events and rising sea levels force people out of their homes.⁶⁹ Displacement puts women and girls at much greater risk of violence and exploitation, and drastically lowers health and educational outcomes as school attendance goes down.⁷⁰

“ Domestic and family violence increases dramatically in the wake of large-scale disasters ... Floods and fires increase financial stress, instability and uncertainty.

Joanna Quilty, *Former CEO,*
NSW Council of Social Service

Disadvantaged gender roles

Entrenched gender roles mean during times of disaster, women often take care of children and older adults before themselves.⁷¹ This, compounded with financial disadvantage limiting access to adequate healthcare, means women are more likely than men to die in extreme weather events.⁷²

Women have also been left out of emergency management and decision-making processes, so their needs are not embedded in plans and policies meant to protect them.⁷³ For example, Australian bushfire management plans have not specifically addressed women's bushfire awareness or accounted for family dynamics in terms of evacuation plans.⁷⁴ To address this, emergency management systems must actively involve women in planning and decision-making, ensuring their perspectives and needs are represented.



For inspiration on how to apply a climate lens to this issue, read the **Trawalla** case study on page 36

SDGs of relevance



What can funders do to apply a climate lens to women and gender equality programs?

- Fund physical and mental health support that is tailored to women and gender diverse people facing climate impacts like floods, bushfires and droughts, including for several years post-event.
- Ensure skills, training and employment programs including preparing women and gender diverse participants for employment in the burgeoning and diverse clean economy.
- Support professional development programs for women to provide greater climate leadership within their organisations and sectors.
- Ensure funding for crisis accommodation or affordable housing meets high energy efficiency and building standards.
- Involve women and girls in philanthropic decision making in ways such as Board positions, and seek gender equity in your organisation at all levels.
- Ask organisations you already fund how climate change is affecting (or will affect) them and if they need support to adapt.

Disadvantage in Australia



Sustainable Development Goals



Climate change deepens disadvantage and widens the gap between rich and poor people. Without adequate resources to begin with, how will vulnerable Australians cope with rising temperatures, expensive energy and increasingly severe climate disasters?

If breaking the cycle of disadvantage is your priority as a funder, climate change cannot be ignored. One in eight Australians already live below the poverty line, struggling to pay bills and put food on the table.⁷⁵ Energy prices have been skyrocketing, causing cost-of-living prices to grow at their fastest pace in 32 years.⁷⁶

Disadvantaged communities are on the receiving end of these pressures. Australians on low incomes, public housing tenants, people living with disabilities and chronic health issues, single mothers and others without equal opportunity will pay a much higher price for climate inaction.⁷⁷

Scorching temperatures erode standards of living that are already precarious. Add to that the rising rate of energy poverty, and social mobility is rendered impossible. Climate change will push many Australians further into poverty. At the same time, climate action can help improve living standards and break the cycle of disadvantage.

Heat inequality

Heatwaves kill more Australians than floods, bushfires and storms combined.⁷⁸ From 2001 to 2018, 64 per cent of people who died from heat-related illness in Australia lived in the most socio-economically disadvantaged areas.⁷⁹ Residents in these areas often have to stay in sub-standard, heat-affected rental accommodation⁸¹ that has no air-conditioning and swelters in summer.⁸² These same communities exist exactly where urban heat islands occur, as

low-income areas often have dense, poorly designed developments with minimal green space, amplifying heat and reducing comfort for residents.

Western Sydney, for example, is one of the most heat-affected places in Australia — it's also the most disadvantaged part of Sydney.⁸³ In some suburbs, where most public housing has been pushed, 80 per cent of the surface area is sealed with roads, concrete pavements, car parks, cement buildings and other kinds of construction that trap heat.⁸⁴ Natural cooling in the form of large trees and green spaces has been removed in favour of cheaply made, heat-attracting apartment developments,⁸⁵ most of which will become unliveable due to extreme heat.⁸⁶ Some suburbs of Western Sydney are already experiencing temperatures between 8°C and 10.5°C hotter than Eastern Sydney, which is also much more affluent.⁸⁷

On a global scale, green spaces built in cities to promote urban cooling mostly benefit white and affluent communities.⁸⁸ Australia is no different. Cities need to prioritise equitable green space access by ensuring new developments include green areas, especially in underserved communities, to promote urban cooling for everyone.

“ Our current economic model has been an enabler of catastrophic climate change and equally catastrophic inequality... Addressing the disproportionate carbon emissions from the wealthiest in society must be a key priority.

Ban Ki-moon, Deputy Chair of The Elders, former Secretary-General of the United Nations

Energy poverty

The ability to access affordable energy underpins human health and wellbeing.⁸⁹ Australian cities can expect 50-degree summer days by 2040, even if we limit global warming to 2 degrees.⁹⁰ Some disadvantaged Australians already struggle to sleep⁹¹ or eat during summer because they can't afford air-conditioning or refrigeration, and cooking inside further heats their blisteringly hot apartments.⁹² Working from home becomes dangerous, even fatal, if you live in sub-standard housing where the landlord won't provide air-conditioning.⁹³ "The direct consequences of energy poverty are an increase in health expenditure and a gradual decrease in labour productivity in the long run," says Dr Mita Bhattacharya, Monash Business School.⁹⁴ Disadvantaged Australians feel the pain of power costs more than any other group.^{95 96}

Climate disasters deepen disadvantage

Disadvantaged people are more likely to live in areas most affected by climate impacts.⁹⁷ When disasters hit, these communities have less resources to cope. And when the dust settles, they are left further behind. In Lismore, 21.3 per cent of residents lived in poverty before the devastating floods in February 2022.⁹⁸ Many vulnerable people living in rental accommodation built on low-lying, flood-prone areas lost everything they owned.^{99 100} Eight months later, more than 1300 people were still living in emergency

shelters including tents and caravans.¹⁰¹ Without adequate housing, the cycle of disadvantage is hard to escape.

Similar scenarios played out during and in the aftermath of the 2019–2020 Black Summer bushfires. Studies of this horrific event show socio-economically disadvantaged communities were disproportionately exposed to the fires.¹⁰² And declining farm incomes, limited access to essential services and lower populations in rural and regional towns made these residents more vulnerable to the fires' impacts.¹⁰³



For inspiration on how to apply a climate lens to this issue, read the **Wyatt Trust's** case study on page 32

SDGs of relevance



What can funders do to apply a climate lens to programs addressing disadvantage?

- Ensure skills, training and employment programs include preparing participants for employment in the burgeoning clean economy.
- Support organisations that provide emergency housing and accommodation, so they are prepared to respond to climate impacts like heatwaves and floods — for example, by providing emergency shelter at scale.
- Fund social and welfare organisations such as the Australian Council of Social Service and their state counterparts to advocate for climate policy and programs that address disadvantage to ensure all Australians benefit from climate change funding.
- Support low-income households to climate-proof their homes, which may require retrofitting to increase insulation from extreme heat and cold, and switching old appliances to electric away from expensive and polluting gas.
- Ensure affordable housing developments or retrofits meet high energy efficiency and building standards.
- Ask organisations you already fund how climate change is affecting (or will affect) them and if they need support to adapt.
- Support equitable access to green spaces, particularly in low socio-economic areas.

Disasters and emergency management



Sustainable Development Goals



Climate change is not simply an environmental problem. A heating planet will affect the socio-economic fabric of communities across Australia and the world — including how we manage, respond to and pay for disasters.

In Australia, climate change has already breached our ability to successfully manage emergencies. The 2022 Lismore floods and the 2019–2020 Black Summer bushfires pushed under-resourced emergency management to breaking point. These life-threatening events will become more frequent and less manageable as climate change intensifies, with emergencies taking place in multiple locations simultaneously. Ignoring climate change is to set ourselves up for emergency failure.

Traditionally, philanthropy has focused on alleviating the impacts of extreme events once they've occurred. We desperately need to prevent and minimise extreme events by acting on climate change now.

“ In the coming decade, the world will invest trillions of dollars in new housing, schools, hospitals and other infrastructure. Climate resilience and disaster risk reduction must be central to this investment.

UN Secretary-General **António Guterres**

Emergencies of greater scale and magnitude

The sheer scale of Australian climate disasters has already overpowered the strength of our emergency services. The NSW parliamentary inquiry into the 2022 Lismore floods found State Emergency Services and related agencies were overwhelmed by and ill-prepared to respond to disasters of this magnitude. The inquiry found that the NSW Government “failed to comprehend the scale of the floods and treated the disaster response as a ‘nine to five’ business operation – when it was one of the greatest climate disasters in generations”.¹⁰⁴

Cascading and compounding disasters

The emergency management sector has long dealt with the impacts of extreme weather.¹⁰⁵ However, the higher global temperatures rise, the worse extreme weather events are becoming. In fact, each degree of further warming is set to double the frequency of intense rainfall events globally.¹⁰⁶ In Australia, what is currently considered a “one-in-100-year flood event” could happen “several times a year”.¹⁰⁷

The Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council states that climate change is an urgent, significant challenge for its members; “one that amplifies the physical, legal, transitional, social and environmental risks and obligations now and into the future”.¹⁰⁸ The increased scale, intensity, longevity and frequency of climate-driven emergencies will put enormous strain on an already stretched emergency sector.

Growing economic costs

Australia's disasters are expected to exceed \$1.2 trillion in cumulative costs over the next 40 years.¹⁰⁹

When disaster strikes, evacuations, temporary housing, food, water and deploying emergency services all cost money. The aftermath sees seismic clean-up costs, where people's homes, schools and businesses need to be rebuilt, and public infrastructure like roads and hospitals repaired.

Who will foot the bill and how? The worst drought in living memory (2017 to 2019) caused \$53 billion in economic losses for Australia.¹¹⁰ As climate change warms our oceans, coastal communities will bear the brunt of cost increases, as they weather more tropical cyclones and flooding.¹¹¹

The economic cost of climate change is simply not worth it.

SDGs of relevance



What can funders do to apply a climate lens to disaster and emergency response programs?

- Fund climate change adaptation and coordinated emergency response to ensure preparedness before emergencies strike, such as advocacy for improved governance, nature-based solutions or resilient infrastructure.
- Support organisations that provide emergency housing and accommodation to prepare for responding to climate impacts like heatwaves and floods — for example, by providing emergency shelter at scale.
- Ensure disaster recovery funding considers climate projections, rather than rebuilds based on past conditions, for example, are flood levies increased as rainfall patterns change, or bushfire zones mapped to future risks.
- Commission research into the outcomes of disaster response initiatives, making sure the scope includes considering climate change and the recommendations incorporate projected future climate impacts.
- Ensure that programs replacing white goods after disasters apply minimum energy efficiency ratings to reduce electricity costs as well as carbon emissions.
- Provide funding to low-income community representative organisations to conduct climate resilience planning and implementation so that the impacts of climate disasters are lessened.
- Ask organisations you already fund how climate change is affecting (or will affect) them and if they need support to adapt.

Nature and biodiversity



Sustainable Development Goals



Australia is one of the most biodiverse nations on the planet. Much of our beloved wildlife is endemic to Australia's unique land- and sea- scapes. Many species cannot survive anywhere else on Earth. Yet human activity compounded by climate change is fuelling an extinction crisis.

Nature underpins life on Earth; the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink. The health of diverse ecosystems is interdependent on the climate, which is heating faster than ever before. Many precious species can't keep up with this pace of change.

Extreme heatwaves, bushfires and floods in Australia are devastating biodiversity and undermining conservation efforts. The lush, old-growth forests and rich, healthy oceans that have balanced the Earth's carbon levels for millennia are now on the brink of collapse. Global warming and biodiversity loss are caught in a self-perpetuating cycle. Indeed, biodiversity conservation is climate change action.

“ With biodiversity loss, we not only lose nature, we lose some of our best defences against climate change.

Myron Peck, Department of Coastal Systems,
Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research

A vicious cycle

The Earth's incredible natural carbon sinks — biodiverse ecosystems that absorb more carbon than they emit — draw down around 50 per cent of human-induced CO₂ emissions. However, climate change is driving biodiversity loss to such an extent that these crucial ecosystems can no longer sequester the huge amounts of carbon they used to. This loss of biodiversity releases more CO₂ into the atmosphere which, in turn, drives global warming that perpetuates extreme temperatures that decimate biodiversity.¹¹²

Australia is home to globally significant carbon sinks; however, they are approaching tipping points of collapse.¹¹³ Our land-based ecosystems accumulate some 150 million tonnes of CO₂ each year on average — helping to offset national fossil fuel emissions by around one third.¹¹⁴ Our mangrove, seagrass and saltmarsh habitats hold 5 to 11 per cent of the world's blue carbon storage.¹¹⁵ However, extreme weather events caused by climate change undermine these natural offsets. The 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires released 900 million tonnes of carbon into the air, causing mass dieback of mangroves¹¹⁶ in northern Australia and polluting the Murray River and Lake Hume with high loads of sediment and ash.¹¹⁹ With more frequent extreme disasters of this scale predicted as the planet heats, major carbon sinks will transform into carbon sources.¹¹⁸ The Earth's carbon cycle is out of balance, with climate change and biodiversity loss trapped in a self-perpetuating cycle of destruction.

Evolution can't keep up

Extinctions across the world prove many species cannot cope with the rapid rate of climate change we are now experiencing.¹¹⁹

The waters off Australia's south-east coast have warmed at almost four times the global average, with profound impact.¹²⁰ Further north, 99 per cent of green turtle hatchlings in the Great Barrier Reef are now born female because the sand temperature where they lay their eggs is too hot for male eggs to incubate.¹²¹ At 34°C, the eggs won't hatch at all. Green turtles are one of at least 9000 species that depend on the Great Barrier Reef for their survival,¹²² yet the reef itself is struggling to survive due to climate impacts and is now experiencing its seventh mass bleaching.¹²³

Interconnected food chains mean weather events in one ecosystem affect biodiversity in another. For example, prolonged drought in northern NSW and southern Queensland decimated bogong moth numbers in 2017 by stunting the grass on which their larvae feed.¹²⁴ Further south in the Australian Alps of Victoria, the mountain pygmy possum now faces extinction because the bogong moth is its main food source.¹²⁵ Climate change is already affecting nature's ability to provide for the breadth of species that call our planet home.

Ecosystems pushed to the brink

Extreme weather events caused by global warming cause mass extinction at a local level, pushing ecosystems past tipping points and into collapse.¹²⁶ Three billion native animals were killed or displaced by Australia's 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires, making it the worst wildlife disaster in modern history.¹²⁷ Eight million hectares of vegetation burned, including globally significant biodiversity hotspots such as the ancient Gondwanan rainforest; 116 plant species were completely extinguished.¹²⁸ The megafires were so huge they polluted coastal habitats downstream — the first ever global record of bushfires impacting estuarine habitat quality.¹²⁹



For inspiration on how to apply a climate lens to this issue, read the **Morris Family Foundation** case study on page 30

SDGs of relevance



What can funders do to apply a climate lens to nature funding?

- Fund research into the current and projected impacts of climate change on the region, species or ecosystem type you support to inform how management approaches may need to change.
- Support upgrading environmental education materials, tools and signage to include climate change in places like zoos, private conservation reserves and interpretive nature trails.
- Provide training and scholarships to land managers, ecologists and other staff to understand the impacts of climate change and learn about best practice ways to prepare ecosystems for a changing climate.
- Ask organisations you already fund how climate change is affecting (or will affect) them and their work and if they need support to include climate change preparedness in their programs.
- The AEGN can provide a list of projects and organisations addressing both nature conservation and climate change that are currently seeking funding.
- Fund nature-based solutions that draw down carbon and enhance ecosystem resilience to climate change, protecting both nature and the climate.

IMAGE CREDITS

Bottom: Mark Chew

Right: Marnie Hawson



SECTION 2: The climate lens in practice — case studies

When you apply a climate lens to your funding, it enhances your capacity to create positive social and economic change for everyone. In this section we showcase funders working across a range of areas — from social housing to women's rights — who have used a climate lens to achieve better outcomes for people and nature.

CASE STUDY The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation



Dr Catherine Brown OAM,
Former CEO

ISSUE AREAS: environment and sustainability; inclusive and sustainable economy and jobs; healthy and climate-resilient communities; homelessness and affordable housing

FUNDER TYPE: community foundation

SPEND: \$11.6 m to 259 organisations in 2021/22 across 131 strategic grant projects and 519 donor-advised and youth-in-philanthropy grants

SIZE: 24 staff

FUNDING LOCATION: Greater Melbourne priority

Dr Catherine Brown OAM leads Australia's largest and oldest community foundation as CEO of the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation. "Our job is to gather donors together and use our strategic grants program from bequests to respond to the big issues of the day facing Greater Melbourne," she says, which include the pervasive impacts of climate change.

The foundation funds across four areas: environment and sustainability; inclusive and sustainable economy and jobs; healthy and climate-resilient communities; and homelessness and affordable housing.

"We placed a climate lens across all of this work at the beginning of 2016," says Catherine, who championed the approach following the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 21) held in Paris the year before. "I had the benefit of taking part in a funders' initiative there, which brought together foundations working in climate around the world. Every day, we'd follow the negotiations; delegates would speak with us and share learning.

"It became clear that the health impacts of climate change were huge, the food impacts were huge, and that everything would be affected — that no part of our life didn't need to change to become more sustainable and resilient."

On her return to Melbourne, Catherine tabled a series of recommendations at her board's strategy meeting. "I proposed we use a climate lens and build the capacity of the team in that area. We appointed an environment and sustainability program manager, and built a program that has climate at its centre in the environment space, while putting the lens over our economic and housing work. Since then, we have appointed a program manager with expertise in climate resilience.

"Our strategic plan shows our work is becoming more and more climate focused. It's quite explicit: we don't just talk about resilience and disasters, we talk about climate resilience and climate-safe neighbourhoods, so our climate lens approach is well integrated now. We funded very close to \$4 million in grants using the climate lens in 2020/21, which was 43 per cent of our strategic granting program."

How climate change intersects with funding areas

Looking through this lens, the foundation has a clear picture of how climate change is intersecting with its different funding areas and armed with this knowledge, is responding in innovative and practical ways.

“If we’re funding affordable housing, for example, we fund well-designed housing that’s energy efficient and will be cheaper to run with lower emissions over the long term,” says Catherine. “It also has to be located in places that are part of a sustainable city — near public transport, services, schools and green space. These are requirements of funding.

“We put the climate lens over everything, including financial disadvantage and employment. For example, when we’re thinking about where the jobs are going to be, we’re not supporting jobs in unsustainable industries, we’re supporting jobs in emerging and clean industries, so the funding in this area has also started to pivot more and more.”

“ It’s actually pretty exciting — you get a double whammy for many, many projects. I think incorporating a climate lens into our work is one of the best things we’ve done.

Looking outward: applying a climate lens to grantmaking

The foundation has updated the outcomes it looks for in its four impact areas to include specific climate goals. “For example, now we don’t just say affordable housing, we say sustainable affordable housing with low emissions — we put that into grant guidelines,” says Catherine. “We ask ourselves, what can we do to reduce emissions or increase resilience through this grant?”

This approach is delivering significant outcomes, with the foundation’s philanthropic support for the Climate Resilient Homes campaign — led by its grantee, not-for-profit Renew — a case in point.

In 2022, state, territory and Commonwealth governments agreed to improve residential energy efficiency standards. The decision was years in the making, with Renew’s campaign leading the call for change. This uplift in standards will result in a cut to

emissions by up to 78 million tonnes by 2050 — the equivalent of taking 26 million petrol-powered cars off the road for a year — and reduce poverty and inequality by ensuring higher standards in social housing and private rentals. In sum, it’s a win for people and the planet, and proof positive that the climate lens can be a powerful philanthropic tool.

“Philanthropy is the most valuable funding because it’s the freest. It’s available for capacity building and it’s available for innovation. A lot of government funding is tied to specific outcomes, whereas philanthropy can help people see things in a new way or test and demonstrate new ideas, and I think we really have to use this unique role. We have to be brave.”

The foundation funds projects that take a systems view as well as those that have a direct on-the-ground impact, such as advocacy that leads to policy change, like the uplift in energy efficiency standards. “We look for philanthropic investment that will have a catalytic impact to leverage funding from others such as government and business.”

Looking inward: applying a climate lens to investments and operations

The foundation has a responsible investment policy — it screens out the usual suspects such as tobacco, alcohol and armaments — and is now laser-focused on a decarbonisation agenda within its investment portfolio.

“We’ve been meeting with fund managers and talking about how to achieve this, both through our Australian and global equities. There are steps they can do already, and then there are others that are going to take longer,” says Catherine.

“It’s an effective approach because it puts pressure on the fund managers. They listen to us — we’re not just charities anymore, we’re investors who might have \$10, \$20, \$30 million in their fund — so it’s a whole different ball game. If every foundation did this, it would be very effective.”

The foundation has included a 2030 decarbonisation goal within its business plan, which has also prompted the foundation’s imminent move to an energy-efficient building designed by Six Degrees architects, among other operational changes.

“If you really want to make action happen internally, do the strategic work and then put it in the business plan as a KPI and make it happen. By setting those targets you move to them.”

Measuring impact

How do you measure impact when it comes to climate change mitigation and adaptation? There's no single answer says Catherine — it depends on which area you're working in, and it can get complicated.

"The foundation has a series of outcomes it is working towards that we report against, for example, 'enable our transition to an inclusive and sustainable economy that serves people and planet', and 'the health and community sectors can support community resilience to climate change and disasters, including pandemics and other shocks'.

"In the climate communications space, you can measure reach and awareness, for example, the number of viewers who watched their TV weather presenter show climate data [an initiative of the Climate Change Communications Research Hub at Monash University]. You can measure the jobs created in a zero-carbon-friendly future or the changes in energy efficiency ratings on buildings.

"But in terms of trying to measure emissions reductions — which we do on the investment side of things — it's complex. We're working on that decarbonisation journey in most of the asset classes in terms of our investments. The fund managers are beginning to report more on this and our new asset advisors, Cambridge Associates, have this area as a priority to work with us on."

The benefits of a climate lens

"We can definitely have a lot more impact with what we do. Late last year, Housing Choices Australia and architects 6 Degrees started building our first affordable housing challenge in Preston and they're going to achieve really good efficiency outcomes. So, we can reduce homelessness and reduce emissions. Our sense of urgency about addressing climate change has only grown.

"It's actually pretty exciting — you get a double whammy for many, many projects. I think incorporating a climate lens into our work is one of the best things we've done."



LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Start with two questions — how can we reduce emissions or increase resilience? — then choose a couple of areas you're already working in and change the grant guidelines to accommodate these considerations, and see what comes in. Many people will rise to the occasion.
- 2 It's about trying to envisage, both in a rural and urban setting, what a zero-carbon economy is going to look like, and then granting to that. Don't grant to what we've got now.
- 3 Don't be scared to apply a climate lens. Now that we've been using it for this number of years, I think people respond really positively. Just start! You'll find a good idea to support whatever area you're funding in.

CASE STUDY The Morris Family Foundation



Hayley Morris, Executive Director

ISSUE AREAS: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice; regenerative food systems; oceans and reef; climate

FUNDER TYPE: private ancillary fund

SPEND: across 40 projects and 40 organisations in 2021/22

SIZE: four family members and four committee members, 0.2 staff

FUNDING LOCATIONS: Queensland, national, Africa, South-East Asia

Established in 2009, the Morris Family Foundation is a private charitable foundation and philanthropic arm of the Morris Group, an Australian-owned family business operating across tourism, hospitality, craft brewing, technology, aviation and agriculture. Through its network of businesses, the Morris Group strives to create a positive impact for “people”, “place” and “planet”.

The Morris Family Foundation's funding approach aligns with — and is an extension of — the Morris Group's mission. This is evident in the foundation's program of work, which reflects the social and environmental issues playing out within the regions where the group's businesses operate.

“Thinking about the Morris Group's tourism businesses in far-north Queensland, for example, especially around reef tourism, as a natural extension we became interested in reef health, which is linked to climate change,” says Hayley.

“One of our largest businesses is in Townsville, where Adani Group's regional headquarters are based. We learnt quickly that the perception locally was that Adani was the only option for local jobs. So, we set out to try and change this perspective with our philanthropy and focus on changing the narrative in Queensland. We've been diving into those perspectives, where environment and jobs are seen as separate, working on regional transition planning within those communities.”

The foundation funds across four issue areas in total: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice; regenerative food systems; oceans and reef; and climate.

How climate change intersects with funding areas

Climate change is undermining the foundation's work across all of these funding areas, including by deepening already existing inequalities and vulnerabilities within communities and countries globally. It's something the Morris Family Foundation is acutely aware of, prompting it to reassess its grantmaking program both at home and abroad.

“We always felt the amount of money you can give and the change you can create in people's lives internationally was a pretty good return on investment,” says Hayley. “We had quite a few projects internationally and were asking ourselves, is this problem going to get worse with climate change?”

“We don't want to be on a constant funding hamster wheel with these organisations. Are they just going to get stuck or get worse if we don't solve climate change? In most cases the answer is yes.”

Looking outward: applying a climate lens to grantmaking

To tackle this reality head on, the foundation implemented a climate lens in 2019; in practical terms, this means that all grantees must now be able to show that they're working towards a zero-carbon future through their projects or considering the impacts of climate change within their programs.

One Acre Fund is one such example — its mission, to break the cycle of poverty and starvation that impacts around one billion smallholder farmers across six countries in Eastern and Southern Africa. The Morris Family Foundation has supported One Acre Fund since 2015, with funding directed towards farmer communities in Burundi.

“What’s key for us in continuing to fund One Acre is the way they’re farming. They’re including things like family planning — in the context of the ‘drawdown list’, women and girls and family planning is high up there as a climate solution. They’re not buying into the commercial agricultural system which is increasing emissions. And they’re helping farmers to build biodiversity on their properties.

“The lens has allowed us to be not so, ‘if you’re not working directly on climate change, you’re out’; rather it’s provided the option to ask questions and see how our grantees are thinking about it, and how much an issue climate change is going to be for the communities they serve, but also what they’re doing to equip these communities to make a positive contribution.”

Looking inward: applying a climate lens to investments and operations

The Morris Family Foundation has a small carbon footprint — the hands-on team comprises Hayley and one staff member — whose work is supported by the Morris Group’s administrative and finance teams, but its climate lens has informed the operations of the Morris Group more broadly.

“We use our value set proactively within the businesses, and that can be from how to reduce their impact — so what are they doing to reduce emissions — but also around the people and community side, that’s where we’ve had the most influence. A strong, healthy community is a community that can respond, that can take action, and is more engaged,” says Hayley. “So, it might not look and feel much like an environmental project from the outset, but we’re working with and building up the community. Climate is a people problem as much as it is an environmental issue.”

Measuring impact

What does success look like when you’re seeking to mitigate climate impacts and build community resilience? The Morris Family Foundation is not prescriptive, preferring to accommodate its grantees’

individual success indicators, be it tonnes of emissions reduced, or the number of people influenced through a social media campaign.

“We’ve got these indicators that they provide, but they’re not consistent across organisations because we’ve let them choose, so we’re left with this fabulous long list of things that people have done with money that we’ve enabled that doesn’t necessarily tell the story of where the change has been — and for us, we’re fine with that,” says Hayley.

“As a society we can be too focused on short-term measurable outcomes, and I think this work is greater and deeper than that, and being okay that it’s not always measurable is just a place of discomfort that we probably need to sit in.”

The benefits of a climate lens

The wicked problems of the escalating climate crisis are complex, and it’s why the Morris Family Foundation has chosen to support organisations that have the capacity to shape real and systemic change, a strategy complemented by its climate lens approach.

“I think being heavily involved not just from a granting perspective but in that systems work, I’d say that’s been an unexpected benefit — of understanding how the change has to come from so many different angles,” says Hayley. “How do we use our philanthropy, how do we use our businesses, how do we use our people, how do we use our name or influence or our connections to government to try and push an agenda that’s beyond just the giving agenda.”



LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Incorporate some simple questions into your standard grantmaking paperwork that address how the grantee is seeking to solve the climate problem and in what way, and/or how they are working to help communities to adapt. The question we ask (via an interview is): How are you mitigating the impacts of climate change (i.e., reducing emissions) in the running of your organisation and/or projects?



CASE STUDY The Wyatt Trust



Stacey Thomas, CEO

ISSUE AREAS: inequality, poverty, social justice

FUNDER TYPE: Trust

SPEND: \$3.2 million across 50 organisations in 2021/22

SIZE: 12 staff

FUNDING LOCATION: South Australia

Awarding its first grant in July 1886, The Wyatt Trust is one of Australia's oldest philanthropic foundations. CEO Stacey Thomas has stood at the helm since 2019: "Our mission is to challenge inequality and eradicate poverty ... our grantmaking very much looks at South Australians experiencing financial hardship."

The Wyatt Trust supports people through a variety of areas including employment pathways, education access, financial management and housing. With an overarching vision of "a South Australia where inequality is challenged, and poverty is eradicated," historically, the Trust hasn't prioritised climate change as an issue. Until now. "As time goes on, we witness more crazy weather events and you just can't deny it anymore — regardless of where you focus your philanthropy, climate will impact it in some way," says Stacey.

“ Regardless of where you focus your philanthropy, climate will impact it in some way.

How climate change intersects with funding areas

The Wyatt Trust decided to apply a climate lens once it acknowledged how climate change disproportionately impacts disadvantaged communities. People experiencing financial hardship often have chronic health issues, yet they will also bear the brunt of climate change health impacts. Disadvantaged families may not have the financial resources to move away from climate disasters or to rebuild afterwards. Often affordable rental accommodation and public housing are not energy efficient or equipped to cope with extreme heat.

"It doesn't matter which angle you look at it, if you're on a low income or no income then you are disproportionately impacted by climate change ... So, while the focus of our grantmaking is around poverty and disadvantage, we need to be able to put a climate lens on everything that we do, knowing that it is disproportionately impacting the people we're here to serve," says Stacey.

In the lead up to the 2021 South Australian state election, The Wyatt Trust was approached to sign an open letter calling for the rapid achievement of 100% green energy, climate smart agriculture and biodiversity protection.

"It made sense for us to look at that letter but at the same time, how can we sign someone else's letter if we're not willing to look at our own practice?" says Stacey. It was a pivotal moment that spurred the Trust to act.

Looking outward: applying a climate lens to grantmaking

“Greening” the services the Trust provides was a natural first step. The Wyatt Trust helps around 1500 people in crisis each year whereby they may buy household items like whitegoods. A quick win would be changing these to energy-efficient whitegoods. “But we hadn’t done it,” says Stacey. For The Wyatt Trust, public accountability was the stepping stone. “We thought by making a public statement and actually putting it out there so we’re holding ourselves accountable, we’ve said publicly we’re going to do it, so now we just need to get on and do it.”

In 2021, the Trust published its [organisational statement on climate change](#), outlining its commitment to climate change action, how it intersects with its mission and a proposed strategy. The opening statement is, “The Wyatt Trust recognises that climate change is one of the most significant issues that impacts the immediate and long-term health of our society, economy and environment.”

From here, The Wyatt Trust will turn its focus towards grant partners. An example is revisiting their grant assessment process and asking whether partners have a climate statement. “It’s just a really great starting point because if the answer is ‘no’ they probably don’t have anything else climate-related — an actual statement or a strategy that outlines it.”

“If it’s a \$5000 grant, maybe you don’t mind, but if it’s a \$500,000 grant then you say, well for that level of support, we’d like to see a climate strategy for the partners that we have. We are happy to work with our grantees to develop a climate strategy if they don’t know where to start.”

Looking inward: applying a climate lens to investments and operations

Since becoming an AEGN member in 2021, The Wyatt Trust has been taking steps to understand how to apply the lens proactively. It had already established responsible investing principles for its portfolio, but its grants and operations needed reframing. The Trust hired a consultant to measure a baseline for its carbon emissions to see what the parameters were and how far it could push it. “It’s what The Wyatt Trust can do, but it’s also what our grantees can do, and our partners and the people they work with... that’s the work that’s going to happen over the next six months.” Once the Trust has established a baseline, it will develop a climate strategy.

The benefits of a climate lens

For The Wyatt Trust, applying a climate lens to its investments and operations has a direct benefit to the communities it serves. “If individuals are getting energy-efficient whitegoods now, that’s a direct benefit for them in terms of energy costs and emissions,” says Stacey.

There is also a flow-on effect to the whole sector when a foundation like The Wyatt Trust starts moving on climate. “We can say publicly we’re not an environmental foundation, but we think this is important and if you want to work with us and learn how to do it too, that would be great,” says Stacey.

For The Wyatt Trust CEO, the overarching benefit of applying a climate lens is helping to solve the greatest challenge ever faced by humanity: “If we’re doing our bit like so many others, then hopefully we’re contributing to that solution.”



LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 One size doesn’t fit all — just because large foundations may have applied a climate lens in a particular way, doesn’t mean that’s “the right way” — there are many ways.
- 2 The climate lens gives us flexibility. We have an act of Parliament that outlines what we fund in the poverty space, so we don’t have flexibility there. The lens is where we do have flexibility.

CASE STUDY The Keuneman Foundation



Tash Keuneman, *Director*

ISSUE AREA: climate change

FUNDER TYPE: private ancillary fund

SPEND: private

SIZE: self-managed with her partner

FUNDING LOCATION: national

Tash Keuneman joined the AEGN in 2019 after cutting her teeth as a tech entrepreneur at Atlassian, Intuit, and Data61. She is committed to funding climate action at scale. “Climate change will make the injustices we see now worse and worse until it’s really uncomfortable for billions of people.”

Shaped by her software design background, Tash takes a “systems thinking” approach to climate change funding. She sees an opportunity for philanthropy to apply pressure on energy policy and gradual divestment from fossil fuels. “Australian consumers are already installing solar panels and changing their stoves from gas to electric ... but the policy hasn’t caught up for business change.”

Since joining the AEGN, the Keuneman Foundation funds about three charities annually using an 80/20 model. “We tend to fund our big strategic themes with 80 per cent of our giving; that will take a couple of years until it bears fruit and we’re comfortable with that. We then pepper that strategy with 20 per cent of quick wins.”

“ Climate change is the ultimate injustice because the rich will just be comfortable and the lesser off will be dying of heat stroke and starvation.

Tash and her partner Wendell decide to fund projects and organisations in the same way they decide on their software investments. “We just took what we learned from our tech background and applied it to philanthropy,” says Tash. “For me, it’s very much asking — do they have a vision? Are they capable of scaling operationally? How do they want to scale? Have they done it before? Do they need the money and what will they do with it? We are very low-touch and low maintenance. I often get what I need from reading their annual report.”

How climate change intersects with funding areas

While climate change is now the sole focus for the Keuneman Foundation, the Keunemans started out funding primarily girls education through Room to Read. “We were probably giving 70 per cent of our funds to girls’ education for the last 15 years. And yes, while that will help climate change, the impact of that won’t be felt for 20 or 30 years, whereas we have to hit net zero carbon emissions by 2050. It’s not a matter of either or, it’s a matter of saying ‘yes, and...’”

Tash took it upon herself to map out the various impacts of climate change over many years. “I did the math on the impacts of climate change on issues I cared about and it’s when I realised that we needed to change our giving,” she says.

A nature lover at heart, Tash had funded a lot of conservation work in the past, “but I realised, it’s not just individual animals that are going to suffer [from climate change impacts such as floods, bushfires and heatwaves]— it’s going to be everything and everyone else as well”. She decided to take a different approach, one that aims to slow down and reverse these impacts.

Her map also painted a dire picture for inequality, another issue close to her heart. “Climate change is the ultimate injustice because the rich will just be comfortable and the lesser off will be dying of heat stroke and starvation,” says Tash. “Climate change will make the injustices we see now worse and worse until it’s really uncomfortable for billions of people.”

Looking inward: applying a climate lens to investments and operations

Tash used to tackle the climate crisis on an individual level. “I’d run myself ragged trying to do everything I possibly could, to the point where I almost had a meltdown — I was a strict vegan, I’d run around to all the different waste facilities and drop off things, I’d get everything repaired. It was a full-time job!” That was until a close friend told Tash she needed to slow down and focus on the bigger issues; to essentially take a first principles approach. “That feedback was really life-changing for me,” she says.

For Tash, that meant refocusing on what she had the power to change. In addition to setting up the Keuneman Foundation, she’s decided to only work with companies that are truly doing good in the world. Her partner, Wendell Keuneman, is working on funding for sustainability through his venture capital firm, Tidal. “We’re now focused on the climate career-wise, foundation-wise and lifestyle-wise... it’s not about everybody backing one thing; it’s about finding which kind of cause or charity you like and following that.”

For Tash, climate philanthropy is a choice that can and should be made. “I thought running a foundation would be a lot of work but it’s not. Your capacity increases; you don’t lose your work-life balance. It’s like working on your lung capacity. When you first start breathwork, people can normally only hold their breath for 30 to 45 seconds before they feel like they’re going to pass out. But you slowly work through it and within a couple of weeks, most people can hold their breath comfortably for two minutes plus and if you keep going, it could be held for seven minutes. You’re still the same human, but what you think is possible increases. We’re all capable of doing great things once the systems are in place.”

“Once you’ve made the choice to fund climate, it becomes in some ways easier than donating as an individual. Our accountant made it incredibly simple for us and is a great advisor. They care just as much as we do about the cause. Just remember that activism and philanthropy is like a choir, so if you’ve got to catch your breath, that’s okay, the song will still be sung.”

“ I did the math on the impacts of climate change on issues I cared about and it’s when I realised that we needed to change our giving.

The benefits of a climate lens

For Tash, it’s seeing the work that’s been done in Australia, and she is buoyed by the nation’s potential: “I’m constantly proud at seeing how much climate innovation is coming out of Australia. It’s really exciting! I just want to keep climate R&D projects here, though ... right now, great commercial companies are leaving because we haven’t got the necessary policies or market appetite.”



LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 Start by researching how climate change will impact the social issue you most care about (women and girls, or nature, for example) that will motivate you to consider climate change in your funding.
- 2 Giving to something as invisible as reducing carbon emissions doesn’t feel as good as say, working at a soup kitchen, where you see the tangible impact straight away. Our brains are designed to give us dopamine kicks based on immediate societal or personal impact. Knowing that, find ways to celebrate the impact your climate work is having with friends and family.
- 3 Consider short- and longer-term impact. Allocating 80 per cent of our funding to longer-term systems change work and 20 per cent to responsive quick wins is a great way to structure our giving. It keeps us engaged in the issue while staying focused on impact.
- 4 Do what you can — not everyone can fully align their career, but everyone can do something to consider climate in their investments, philanthropy and lifestyle, so explore what your strengths are.

CASE STUDY The Trawalla Foundation



Sarah Buckley, *Chief Executive Officer*

ISSUE AREAS: gender equality; social justice; environment and climate

FUNDER TYPE: private ancillary fund

FUNDING LOCATION: national

Established in 2004, The Trawalla Foundation works with organisations and individuals who have a vision for Australia's future that will help strengthen gender equality, creativity, sustainability and social justice. Underpinning the foundation's work is a belief in the value of more female leaders.

“Essentially, we're looking at how to grow a critical mass of female leaders in business, politics and the media,” explains foundation CEO Sarah Buckley — ultimately so they can deliver positive social and environmental outcomes.

To this end, Trawalla uses a variety of levers, including grants, investments, skills, networks and advocacy to deepen the impact of those it collaborates with. A significant lever within the mix is the foundation's research and advocacy arm, [Women's Leadership Institute Australia \(WLIA\)](#).

All of this work is managed through the family office of Carol and Alan Schwartz. “Both Carol and Alan are really focused on meaningful change, so we move quickly, have a high-risk threshold and are willing to try new things,” says Sarah. “It's about finding great leaders we want to back or bringing together a coalition to explore a new idea and turn it into pragmatic change.”

How climate change intersects with funding areas

“Most of our work is in the gender equity space, but there's always been a focus on the environment, climate change, medical research and social justice

alongside this,” says Sarah. “They're interrelated, with a particularly strong intersection between the environment and female leadership. There's so much research showing that female leaders tend to focus more on climate change and push for those outcomes, whether it's at the local or national level.”

Trawalla supports an impressive roll call of female leaders in Australia, among them Anna Skarbek, CEO, Climateworks; Anna Rose, CEO, Environmental Leadership Australia; Heidi Lee, CEO, Beyond Zero Emissions; Isabel Reinecke, Executive Director and Founder, [Grata Fund](#); and Victoria McKenzie-McHarg, Strategic Director, Women's Environmental Leadership Australia — “all stellar women doing really critical work to accelerate momentum for meaningful climate action,” says Sarah.

“We're backing great leaders, particularly with an advocacy focus. When you consider some of the strategic areas outlined in the AEGN's Climate Change Funding Framework — transforming the politics, shifting the money, enforcing and expanding laws — that's the space we want to operate in. Carol and Alan have a background in this area [both studied law], but also that's where we consider we can be most effective.”

Looking outward: applying a climate lens to grantmaking

Trawalla's investment values and approach guide who it invests in or collaborates with, as well as the standards the foundation holds itself to. An illustrative example is Trawalla's support for Isabel Reinecke, Executive Director and Founder of the [Grata Fund](#), which uses legal avenues to fight systemic injustice.

"Isabel is one of WLIA's Fellows, and Grata's Australian Climate Case is something we've backed really strongly," says Sarah. The case is supporting two Traditional Owners from Guda Maluyilgal in the Torres Strait to take the Australian Government to court for failing to prevent climate change. It's the first time anyone in Australia has argued that the whole of the Federal Government has a duty to protect people from climate harm.

"Alan has been particularly involved, using the AEGN network to bring other funders to the table, but also regularly catching up with the Grata team and thinking about ways to bolster their work."

Looking inward: applying a climate lens to investments and operations

All of the foundation's corpus investments are managed with a responsible investing lens, including negative screenings (such as fossil fuels, alcohol, gambling, tobacco, animal welfare, firearms) and positive screenings (such as minimum 25 per cent of board directors must be women). Trawalla also invests a proportion of its corpus in social and environmental impact investments, including funds, social impact bonds and venture capital.

"We've invested in several incredibly successful funds over the years, like Kilter Rural's Murray-Darling Water Basin Fund, and some more mainstream ones to back at-scale funds for innovation. Credit Suisse has a fantastic climate innovation fund that we're part of, for example. Our investment strategy has been very much an intentional journey over the last ten years," says Sarah.

For Alan, it's been an intellectual journey, too. "He's published several articles in the *Harvard Business Review* and *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, among others, examining capital markets and their failure to consider environmental and social value, so he's grappling with this on many different levels," says Sarah.

Measuring impact

"We have an annual investment strategy, and for every investment we look at whether it's an A, B or C: 'Avoid harm', 'Benefit stakeholders' or 'Contribute to solutions'," says Sarah. "Many funds have their own measurement approaches, of course, and some are incredible—I always point to the

Bridges Israel impact investment fund, which is so sophisticated in the way it measures environmental and social impact."

On the grantmaking side, measuring impact is trickier. "We're about backing individuals and innovation, and in those early stages it can be difficult to pin down meaningful measures of success," says Sarah. "So, I can't tell you we have some sort of sophisticated measurement system we're mapping this all against, but we've intentionally decided not to go down that path. We have a very clear sense of the change we're trying to achieve and initiatives we're most interested in, and we don't get too hung up on it beyond that."

The benefits of a climate lens

"One of the benefits of tackling climate from a gender equity perspective has been the level of innovation, energy and leadership we're seeing when we meet with women leaders," says Sarah. "Many have been dedicated to climate action for 20-plus years—they've been pushing for a long, long time—but finally you can see the way they're shaping solutions for Australia and how momentum is building."

"Hopefully, we're in a time of possibility now, and can get on with implementing the right kinds of legislation, funding models and incentives. I think we're in an exciting phase and the AEGN is well positioned to be part of that change for Australia."



LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS (for those starting out)

- 1 Explore the AEGN's excellent climate change funding framework and consider what giving area/s most resonate for you.
- 2 Learn from and collaborate with the dynamic AEGN philanthropic network. The Project Clearinghouse is a great place to understand funding needs and how you could partner with others.
- 3 Find and back great climate change leaders—there is deep expertise in the community, and right now they need to be supported and resourced to get on with the huge task of Australia's climate transition.

CASE STUDY Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network



Recognising the urgency of the climate crisis the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network (AEGN) sought to understand and reduce its organisational carbon footprint. In doing so, we lead by example and demonstrate how philanthropic organisations can climate-proof their operations, in accordance with the guidance in the Climate Lens Toolkit.

Building the inventory

Developing an emissions inventory involves several crucial steps. Applying an emissions boundary is the first step to any carbon accounting process, and consists of determining which emissions are under an organisation's control and will be accounted for in the emissions inventory. Once the boundary is determined, it's good practice to set a base year to allow for the tracking of emissions overtime (and therefore emissions reductions). When the base year is set, organisations can start to calculate the emissions attributed to each emissions source within their boundary using relevant emissions factors.

There are many helpful standards and guidelines for calculating GHG emissions. The [Greenhouse Gas \(GHG\) Protocol](#) provides standards and detailed guidance on emissions factors and methods of calculation across various sectors and activities. But there are also many other sources to look to for guidance, including [Climate Active](#), the primary

carbon neutral certification program in Australia, and [Sumday](#), which has a suite of carbon accounting training, software and support. These standards and resources help ensure that the inventory is accurate, consistent, and aligned with best practices.

At the AEGN, we calculated the carbon footprint of our annual operations, including staff travel, waste and working from home, and the 2024 AEGN Conference. Combined, our footprint equated to around 18 tCO₂-e. The largest share of our emissions came from Scope 3 (indirect) sources, which made up over 80 per cent of our total emissions. Although AEGN's footprint is relatively small compared to organisations with comparable operations, it is important to understand our baseline carbon footprint and work towards reducing our emissions.

Annual updates to the emissions inventory is considered best practice, and can ensure continuous improvement in emissions over time. Key to this process is identifying and implementing opportunities to reduce emissions to enable year-on-year improvements. The AEGN identified several emissions reduction opportunities, such as choosing hotels with higher sustainability ratings (through tools like [NABERS](#)), offering vegetarian-only catering, and improving waste management at events. These were easy things to do with many resources online,

Collectively, these measures could reduce our carbon footprint by at least 30%.

Co-benefits of climate-proofing your operations

While developing an inventory and committing to an emissions reduction plan is a significant step towards decarbonisation, it's not the only benefit. Implementing emissions reduction measures – such as reducing energy consumption or switching to clean and active transport modes – not only helps to lower your organisational footprint but can also cut costs, making it both economically and environmentally favourable. Similarly, at a time when energy prices are at an all-time high, switching to renewable energy sources can help bring down costs and emissions.

Beyond savings from emissions reductions themselves, having a strong breakdown of data on organisational activities like staff travel can also provide valuable financial insights into operational spend, allowing for more opportunities to identify cost savings and informed decision-making.

Learnings and recommendations

Accurate emissions tracking requires robust systems. Structured data management processes, centralised documentation of activity data, and educating staff on reporting are essential steps for reliable tracking.

If you can't source actual data, use estimations by leveraging industry benchmarks, averages, or proxy data as the next best thing.



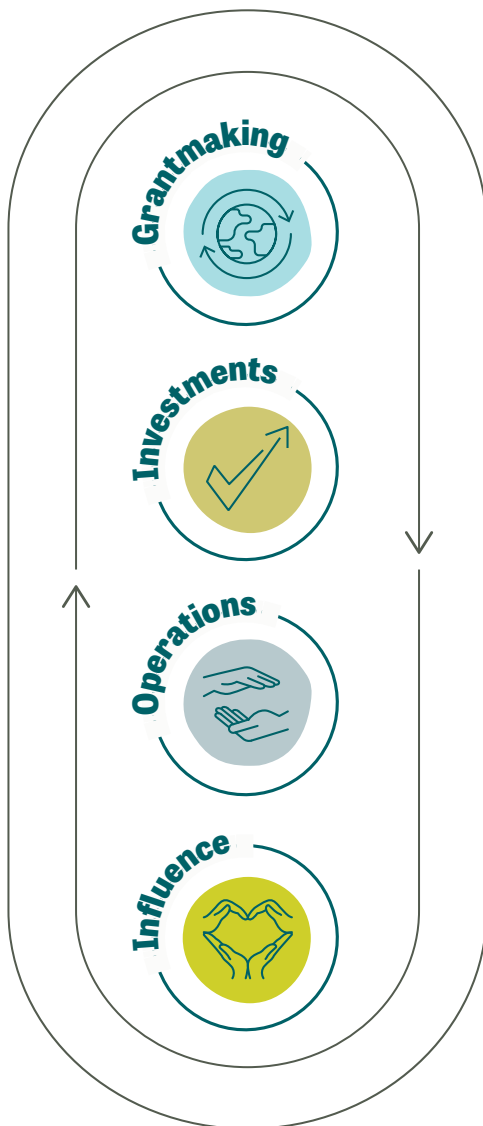
SECTION 3: How to apply a climate lens

IMAGE CREDITS

Top: Mark Chew

Right: Marnie Hawson

In this section we give you the practical steps to start applying a climate lens across your grantmaking, investments and operations, and explore how you can use your influence to progress action on climate change. Applying a climate lens will be different for every funder — there's no “one-size-fits-all” approach. The best thing to do is to simply make a start — you'll learn and refine your approach along the way.



Align your grantmaking

The independence and financial freedom of philanthropy has catalysed some of the most critical climate outcomes in Australia's history. Generous Australians, Trusts and Foundations can turbo charge Australia's contribution to climate action by applying a climate lens to their giving and produce co-benefits to protect people and our planet.

Use your investments for good

Every financial investment makes an impact. You can choose to make it a positive one for our climate. Aligning your financial investments with your values will make sure that your philanthropic purpose isn't undermined by investing in companies that are worsening the climate crisis. By going a step further your funds can be a catalytic force for good.

Climate-proof your operations

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions on a personal and organisational scale is an important step towards decarbonisation. And applying a climate lens to your operations — such as your electricity, transport and waste — can inspire those around you to do the same.

Harness your influence

As a funder, you're in a unique position to encourage and advocate for climate action and awareness throughout your personal, business, political and public networks. Harness your power for the future of our planet.



- ☐ Identify your knowledge gaps.
- ☐ Engage climate expertise.
- ☐ Include climate change expertise in your Board matrix.
- ☐ Make a public commitment to act.
- ☐ Update policies/mission statement etc to include your climate commitment.
- ☐ Connect with other funders, e.g., through the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network and Philanthropy Australia.
- ☐ Set a target of percentage of giving or dollar value of grants, with a timeframe.
- ☐ Consider whether you will integrate climate into your existing giving, if yes:
 - ☐ assess how climate change impacts your grantees and their beneficiaries;
 - ☐ notify current grantees of your climate commitment;
 - ☐ update your grant application process;
 - ☐ update your grant acquittal process.
- ☐ Review best practice climate funding tips.
- ☐ Consider spending down or increasing your funding.
- ☐ Develop your giving strategy.
- ☐ Establish your monitoring and evaluation approach.
- ☐ Set a timeframe to reflect on your own grantmaking practices.
- ☐ Provide flexible, core, multi-year funding to organisations, enabling them to work effectively on climate and respond to emerging challenges and opportunities that arise.
- ☐ Consider leaving a bequest to drive meaningful change for future generations.



- ☐ Make a commitment with your investment committee or financial manager to consider climate change in your investments and align with the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) for best practice.
- ☐ Create a responsible investment policy.
- ☐ Review your current portfolio to assess climate exposure and values alignment.
- ☐ Develop your preferred portfolio make up — you could use the Impact Spectrum.
- ☐ Engage your existing fund manager.
- ☐ Decide your investment approach/es:
 - ☐ divest your funds;
 - ☐ explore stakeholder activism opportunities;
 - ☐ consider impact investing.
- ☐ Connect with other investors and philanthropists.
- ☐ Develop your action plan.
- ☐ Commit to a timeframe and process to reflect on and adapt your approach.



- ☐ Make a commitment to reduce your organisation's carbon emissions.
- ☐ Establish a baseline of your emissions.
- ☐ Reduce emissions from travels and transport.
- ☐ Reduce your building emissions:
 - ☐ switch to renewable electricity;
 - ☐ upgrade gas appliances to energy efficient electric ones;
 - ☐ upgrade to LED lighting;
 - ☐ set air-conditioning and heating temperatures to maximise efficiency.
- ☐ Switch to a climate-friendly bank.
- ☐ Switch to climate-friendly superannuation.
- ☐ Ensure waste recycling practices reduce how much is going to landfill.
- ☐ Consider sustainability at event venues and catering.
- ☐ Source recycled, carbon-neutral office supplies.
- ☐ Consider offsetting your remaining emissions through the purchase of high-quality offsets.
- ☐ Consider offsetting your remaining unavoidable emissions through the purchase of high-quality Australian-based offsets.



- ☐ Engage your contacts in business or for-purpose organisations to discuss climate change.
- ☐ Contact any politicians or policymakers you know to discuss climate change.
- ☐ Join the AEGN's advocacy program to use your influence.
- ☐ Talk with your friends and family about why climate change is a concern for you.
- ☐ Think about who you could approach to fund action on climate change within your friendship group, family and broader connections.
- ☐ Consider sharing your story through the media — the AEGN and PA can help you.



Resources/links for further exploration



Prompting questions

Philanthropy has a vital role to play in acting on climate change. The independence and financial freedom of philanthropy has catalysed some of the most critical climate outcomes in Australia's history. Yet only around 4 per cent of philanthropic giving goes to the environment and climate change. We must urgently grow funding that addresses climate change and produces co-benefits to protect people and our planet from runaway climate impacts.

Actions to consider


1 | Boost your knowledge

Don't let perfect be the enemy of the good; get started and you will learn as you go. The sooner you begin learning, talking with others and funding, the quicker you will hone your skills and knowledge, and start contributing to the solution.

You can conduct your own desktop research into how climate change intersects with the issues you care about; these resources are also a great place to start:

- ▣ Browse through the [Climate Council's Explainers](#) to unpack complex climate issues
- ▣ Learn about funding that produces both social and climate benefits with [Project Drawdown](#)
- ▣ See [how Australia's climate action compares globally](#)

2 | Bring expertise in-house

Consider including climate expertise in your Board skills matrix and, if you have them, your staff group too. Those who have climate expertise or lived experience of climate impacts can bring perspectives that you may not have considered.  ¹

3 | Connect with others

Join a community of philanthropists who are considering or already apply a climate lens to boost your skills, knowledge and networks:

- ▣ Connect and act with others through [Philanthropy Australia](#) and [Community Foundations Australia](#)

4 | Join a specialist climate funding network

The Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network (AEGN) is Australia's premier network for philanthropists funding in climate change (see the breakout box on page 43 for details on the AEGN's service offering).

As an independent, trusted, member-based organisation, the AEGN could be a great place for you to develop your skills, confidence and network.

- ▣ Join the [Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network](#)

Groundswell Giving is a giving platform where members make donations, and the money is then pooled and granted to organisations addressing climate change. Membership is open to individuals as well as trusts and foundations.

- ▣ Join [Groundswell Giving](#)



¹ See this in practice at [The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation](#) on page 27

5 | Consider your approach

Deciding whether you will adapt your granting to include a climate lens, or whether you will directly fund climate change mitigation and adaptation work is important. You can do both by allocating some funds to climate change action while also revising your current granting approach and processes to apply a climate lens.

Use the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network's climate philanthropy tools

The AEGN has developed Australia's first **Climate Change Funding Framework** to identify the strategic opportunities for philanthropy to address climate change.  2

- Access the Climate Change Funding Framework by joining the [Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network](#)
- You can also access the Nature Funding Framework to identify strategic funding opportunities to address the nature crisis.

The AEGN's **Project Clearinghouse** enables funders to share projects that are ready to go, they simply need funding. You can begin by funding with others to help you find your feet and explore collaborative funding with others.

- View a sample of the member-only [Project Clearinghouse](#)

AEGN staff are also happy to have a 1:1 conversation with prospective members interested in applying a climate lens or joining a community of practice to learn and share with other funders.

- [Request a confidential conversation](#)

Meet with the AEGN's climate team to explore how you can support a safe climate with your philanthropy.




2 See this in practice at **The Trawalla Foundation** on page 36

3 See this in practice at **The Wyatt Trust** on page 32.

4 See this in practice at **The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation** on page 27

6 | Make a commitment

Make a commitment as a foundation or family to consider climate change in your grantmaking. Consider who needs to be a part of the decision-making — do you have a Board or Trustees? Are there family members to get involved? Spend some time discussing why climate change matters to each of you to help others understand the perspectives you bring. Making a formal resolution or decision will ensure those who are implementing the decision have the confidence to act.


You may like to make your commitment public, as The [Wyatt Trust](#) did, and inform your current grantees. Or perhaps you already have a statement of purpose for your giving that simply needs an update. For example, you could incorporate this brief example commitment statement: *"In recognition of the impacts that climate change is having on Australians, [add name] is joining a growing movement of funders committed to act. We believe acting to limit global warming is a critical role for philanthropy and we will be considering climate change in our grantmaking."*  3

You may like to join over 600 funders by signing the [International Philanthropy Commitment on Climate Change](#)

7 | Review your policies

Are there policies you need to update or change to ensure you can implement your commitment to acting on climate change? For example, do your existing granting impact areas need updating?

8 | Set a target

Set a target to keep you on track. The best of intentions can easily go unimplemented, but setting a target, agreed by your Board or decision-makers can help keep you focused. Targets may include a percentage of giving, the number of grants or a dollar amount distributed, and don't forget to set a timeframe for your targets. For example, your target might be: *"Our family will make sure three of our grants, up to a total of \$350,000, are focused on reducing climate change or supporting people to adapt, by the end of 2030."*  4

9 | Articulate your approach


Here are some prompting questions to help you clarify your approach. You may like to work through them with the other decision-makers in your family or foundation:

- ❶ Will you incorporate climate into your existing grantmaking and/or will you fund work dedicated to mitigating climate change or building resilience? (In other words, are you applying a climate lens to your existing programs or devising an entirely new climate-oriented program?)
- ❷ Are there any knowledge gaps you would like to fill? Who can help you?
- ❸ Who will you focus on supporting and where? For example, helping Hunter Valley communities transition to clean technology, supporting Pacific Island nations that are facing worsening climate impacts, or helping vulnerable Australians improve their energy efficiency.
- ❹ What is your time horizon? Set yourself a timeframe for when you will apply a climate lens to your granting or make your first climate-directed grant to keep focused on action.
- ❺ What great work is already happening in your areas of interest? Who are the experts in this area? You could seek out academic experts, community leaders and policy makers. What do they say?
- ❻ How will you reflect, learn and refine along the way? Is it helpful to have a regular meeting with your decision-makers to discuss your progress? Can you set a timeframe for when you will have certain actions completed by?

10 | Understand how climate intersects with your current giving

By making some changes to your existing giving you can make sure your grantmaking is part of the solution to climate change.


You may like to work through these questions:


- ❶ Ask your grantees how climate change is already impacting them and what support they may need to better consider climate impacts. Do they need some funding to develop a plan?  5
- ❷ How can your funding help address those impacts?

- ❸ Are there other funders supporting this type of work that are applying a climate lens? And what can you learn from their approach? Can you collaborate or co-fund with them?

11 | Apply a climate lens to existing granting

If you have open grant rounds, you can incorporate climate-focused questions in your existing application process. For example:

- ❶ How does your project/program consider climate change?
- ❷ How will your project/program reduce greenhouse gas emissions or help people adapt to the impacts of climate change?  6
- ❸ Does your organisation consider climate change in its work? If so, how?
- ❹ Do you need additional resources or skills to enable you to better consider climate change in your work?

You will have to decide what level of climate consideration you are seeking to achieve, i.e., at what point would you *not* support an organisation based on the strength of their climate commitment? Are you happy with a commitment to boost climate knowledge this round, with the understanding to ramp up action over time, or do you need to see greater action now?  7

Include climate-focused questions in any acquittal information you request to see how your grantees incorporated climate change into their work.

It is important to not over-burden grantees and applicants, so ensure questions are streamlined, clear and useful for both your assessment and the organisation seeking funding.

Consider helping your existing grantees to incorporate climate change in their work through providing connections or additional funding. For example, could you connect them with similar organisations that consider climate change already? Could you introduce them to a climate expert? Or fund a piece of research or external expertise to help them consider climate change?



5 See this in practice at **The Morris Family Foundation** on page 30

6 See this in practice at the **AEGN** on page 38

7 See this in practice at **The Wyatt Trust** on page 32

12 | Learn from best practice climate funding

Climate philanthropy is incredibly diverse and there is no one “right way” to do it. However, some key practices will put you on a quicker pathway to impact. The AEGN interviewed more than 40 climate leaders and funders and synthesised this into 14 insights for impactful funding. How many of them already guide your funding?

- ▣ [Insights for best practice climate funding](#)

13 | Spend down to leave a legacy

Many climate funders have committed to “spend down” or spend more of their corpus by 2030, in recognition of the critical window we face for climate change. Making a commitment to spend down can bring incredible focus to your funding. It also encourages funders to deeply consider the legacy they would like to leave for future generations.

- ▣ Reflect on the stories of others who have already “spent down” such as the [Ivey Foundation](#).
- ▣ Listen to the [ABC's Richard Aedy](#) explore spending down with three funders on Radio National's *The Money*.
- ▣ Listen to [AEGN member Stephen Pfeiffer](#) share why he decided to spend down an inheritance to fund climate action and the sense of purpose he's found in the process.

14 | Develop your climate lens strategy

Setting your intentions down in a strategy is a great thought process to go through and can help achieve alignment among your family members or foundation's decision-makers. Join a community of practice with other funders in the AEGN and PA to learn and explore applying a climate lens to your giving. The AEGN's team of in-house climate experts is available to help walk you through how to implement a climate lens. Contact the AEGN or PA for more information.

15 | Outline your monitoring and evaluation approach

Once you have your strategy, whether it's comprehensive or a simple statement of purpose and plan of action, being able to track its effectiveness will help you learn and improve over time, in turn building your confidence and effectiveness as a funder.

There are a lot of measurement and evaluation frameworks out there, and a lot of jargon, too. You can get as deep and complex as you like, but often it's enough to simply identify the best indicators of effectiveness throughout your funding process, figure out how to track them, and agree at what intervals it makes sense to review your data, glean any insights and make changes (or continue on) in light of what you find.

Be mindful of the burden you place on grantees when gathering information. Don't ask for data you won't use, and make sure the amount of detail you require is proportionate to the amount of funding provided. Every minute spent reporting is one less minute doing the work. Create a simple reporting template and let your grantees know at the start that you will be asking them to provide you with this information. Where possible, provide example indicators and responses to demonstrate what you're after. If you require lengthy reporting, consider providing additional funding to cover the time the grantee will take to complete your requirements. Consider providing core, long-term funding to give organisations the capacity to apply a climate lens to their work.

16 | Assess your own effectiveness

A less common but important consideration for funders when it comes to measurement and evaluation of effectiveness is that of your own practice and approach. What happens once the grant goes out the door is important but turning the mirror back on yourself will allow you to improve what you can control.

Beyond the amount given and to what, think about questions like how many connections did you make between partner organisations? How did you use your influence as a funder to progress your strategy, and were you successful? How responsive were you in a time of need, such as a natural disaster, and how did this change the outcome? These questions will be different depending on your priorities and approach but will help you to be accountable and to grow as a funder. Set a timeframe in your giving strategy to reflect on your own grantmaking practices.

17 | Consider leaving a bequest

Consider leaving a bequest to support longer term funding. Your legacy can help drive meaningful change for future generations.



Resources/links for further exploration



Prompting questions

Every financial investment makes an impact. You can choose to make it a positive one for our climate. Aligning your financial investments with your values will make sure that your philanthropic purpose isn't undermined by investing in companies that are worsening the climate crisis. By going a step further your funds can be a catalytic force for good.

This section will empower you to use your wealth to help people and the planet. And remember, there's no correct way to go about considering a safe climate, so start by what makes sense for you today and learn as you go.

Disclaimer: *This information is general in nature and not intended as financial advice and should not be relied upon as such.*

Things to think about

1 | Why your investments matter

Australian philanthropists hold an extraordinary amount of funds as capital, yet to date, much of the focus for funders has been on the power of grantmaking. How to use the corpus of foundations and wealth of individual Australians has received far less attention, but that is rapidly changing.

In the coming 20 years, Philanthropy Australia estimates that upwards of \$2.6 trillion in wealth will be transferred from baby boomers to the next generations. Unlocking this wealth to invest in climate solutions can transform Australia's contribution to climate change.

So, as wealth holders, what can you do? Here are some ideas to get you thinking.

2 | Learn what is possible

As concern about climate change grows, so too has the number of resources and expert fund managers to help you transition your funds to climate solutions. The Responsible Investment Association Australasia (RIAA) has more than 500 members representing US\$29 trillion in assets under management. RIAA exists to “promote, advocate for, and support approaches to responsible investment that align capital with achieving a healthy and sustainable society, environment and economy”. RIAA has a wealth of knowledge to help build your knowledge on what is possible:



[Responsible Investment Association Australasia factsheets and guides](#)




[Read](#) and [watch](#) case studies of funders who apply a climate lens to their investments.

3 | Understand your desired impact

Every wealth holder is different and has unique aspirations for their investments. Australian Impact Investments' tool, based on the globally recognised Impact Management Project, categorises investments into four types:






1. Harm People & Planet — The enterprise is directly involved in activities that harm or may harm people or planet.
2. Avoid Harm — The enterprise has no direct involvement in activities that harm people or planet.
3. Benefit People & Planet — The enterprise not only acts to avoid harm, but is also involved directly in activities that benefit people or planet.
4. Contribute to Solutions — The enterprise not only acts to avoid harm, but also intentionally generates positive, measurable outcomes for people or planet.

You may wish to consider your current investments along this spectrum and decide how you would like them to look in future.  ⁸



 [View the Impact Spectrum](#)

4 | Engage your existing fund manager or advisor

If you would like to engage your fund manager or advisor in a discussion about the climate impact of your existing investments, you will need to assess whether they have sufficient expertise and resources to support you. Below are some questions you may like to ask to help you assess their skills and knowledge:

-  What is your company's approach to climate change and how do you hold yourselves accountable?
-  What services do you provide to support organisations to implement a decarbonisation strategy?
-  What skills and experience do the responsible team members have in climate change investment or divestment?
-  How do you incorporate, price and disclose climate risk in your investment process? The Task Force on [Climate-related Financial Disclosures](#) (TCFD) can help guide how you do this.
-  How do you assess and report on portfolio divestment and decarbonisation?

If you would like to talk with a specialist advisor, these organisations provide directories:

-  [Ethical Advisers Co-op](#)
-  [Responsible Investment Association Australasia](#)

As considering the environmental and social impact of investing becomes more common, the risk of “greenwashing” is increasing. Do your own due diligence to ensure the impact you are seeking is being achieved. You may also like to include some questions about the social impact of your current and future investments. For example, are any renewable energy projects included, providing good working conditions and securing free, prior and informed consent with First Nations communities before progressing?




“ In the coming 20 years, Philanthropy Australia estimates that upwards of \$2.6 trillion in wealth will be transferred from baby boomers to the next generations. Unlocking this wealth to invest in climate solutions can transform Australia’s contribution to climate change.

|
Philanthropy Australia

5 | Develop a responsible investment policy

You may like to develop a responsible investment policy to clearly state your organisation's approach to considering climate change in your investments. Having an organisational policy can be important to ensure your corpus investments are managed in line with the objectives you've laid out and that there are robust governance and review processes in place. It also ensures the policy is insulated against staff changes and that the rationale for decision-making is transparent.

These resources may help you to develop a policy:

-  [View Principles for Responsible Investment's guide to writing a policy](#)
-  [2X Collaborative's Gender and climate finance toolkit](#) provides information on applying a climate and gender lens to investments.
-  Consider joining [Philanthropy Australia's Foundations Group for Impact Investing \(FGII\)](#) which exists to improve the supply and demand for impact capital.



⁸ See this in practice at **The Trawalla Foundation** on page 36

Strategies to decarbonise your investments

There are several strategies you can employ to decarbonise your investments. Shareholder activism, divestment and impact investing are three such strategies you may wish to consider. They can be used in isolation or combined; there is no one way to use your investments to support a safe climate.

1 | Divest your funds

There is huge momentum behind the global divestment movement, which encourages individuals and institutions to remove (divest) their money from fossil fuel companies that are fuelling climate change. Since gaining traction a decade ago, globally more than AUD \$59 trillion has been divested from fossil fuel and other companies that contribute to climate change. That's a figure higher than the combined GDPs of the United States and China.

To learn more about divestment:

- ▣ [Go Fossil Free – global](#)
- ▣ [Pledge your commitment to divest](#)
- ▣ [Divest/Invest guide for philanthropists](#)

There are also those who advocate for wealth holders who care about climate change to use their power as investors and shareholders to push companies to decarbonise. More information on the power of this approach is included below, and *Forbes* magazine has a short thought-provoking series about the power of divestment and engagement:

- ▣ [Forbes](#) on the merits of divestment and engagement

2 | Shareholder activism

Many of Australia's biggest polluters are publicly listed companies with shareholders ranging from big institutional fund managers to everyday Australians. Shareholders have incredible power to put pressure on companies publicly and through internal processes to urge the business to transition away from fuelling climate change and instead invest in climate solutions. This may look like asking questions or passing resolutions at Annual General Meetings, requesting meetings with staff, speaking out in the media or writing to the CEO and Board. Shareholders may also take legal action against companies they believe are failing to preserve the value of their investment by not considering climate change.

“Climate change demands that funders use their corpus as well as their grantmaking to achieve change, and many investors already are to great effect.”

Trevor Thomas, *Managing Director*, EthInvest

Many Australian businesses are increasingly considering and committing to net-zero targets and shareholders can play an important role in ensuring companies create and deliver on these commitments in line with the Paris Agreement to keep warming to as close to 1.5 degrees as possible.

Organisations that support shareholders (and often funded by philanthropy) to use their power for good include:

- ▣ [Australasian Centre for Corporate Responsibility](#)
- ▣ [Market Forces](#)
- ▣ [Investor Group on Climate Change](#)

3 | Invest for positive impact

The term “impact investment” has gained significant traction in recent years as people seek to generate more than simply financial returns from their investments. Impact investments are investments made with the intention to generate positive, measurable social and environmental impact alongside a financial return. Those investing for impact are encouraged to consider required levels of financial return and what form of environmental (and/or social) outcomes they'd like to achieve.

To learn more about impact investment and to connect with other investors:

- ▣ [The Impact Club](#) host regular events to learn about investing opportunities.
- ▣ [Impact Investing Institute's learning hub](#) has general resources.
- ▣ [Impact Investing Hub](#) has useful resources.
- ▣ Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN) has several [climate finance resources](#)

Actions to consider

Once you've committed to applying a climate lens to your investments, here are some actions you may like to take to get started using your investments for good. (These actions do not need to be followed in a particular order, so start where feels right.)

4 | Commit

Make a commitment with your investment committee or financial manager to act. You may like to invite expert speakers such as ethical investment advisors, or funders who have implemented climate change into their investment portfolio, to address your Board or finance committee. Can you anticipate the questions that may come up and have a response ready? Does developing a responsible investment policy make sense for your organisation? If so, who will draft it and by when?

5 | Take stock and engage experts

Review your current investments to assess your impact on our climate. Are any of your funds invested in fossil fuels? Do your investments match your values? Several organisations — many of which are listed in this section — specialise in supporting investors to decarbonise, so you don't have to learn alone. Who needs to be involved in making these decisions with you?

6 | Determine your vision

Decide what you would like your investment portfolio to look like. What would you like to invest in instead? Which strategy such as divestment or impact investing — or combination of strategies — would you like to employ to pursue your climate objectives? Consider whether you are willing to accept fewer financial returns in exchange for greater social or environmental good.

7 | Connect

Connect with others and learn together. What can you learn from your existing investment manager, leaders in the field and other investors and philanthropists?

8 | Develop an action plan

Develop an action plan to turn your vision into a reality. What timeline and process do you need to reach your vision? What additional skills or resources do you need to implement your plan?

9 | Learn and adapt

Consider how you will monitor and evaluate your impact. Set a timeframe for when you will assess your approach.

Disclaimer: *This document has been prepared and presented in good faith, and to the best of the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network's (AEGN's) and Philanthropy Australia's (PA's) knowledge and honest belief. While all care has been taken in its preparation, the AEGN, PA and the authors assume no responsibility for the accuracy, reliability or completeness of the information contained therein (except to the extent that liability under statute cannot be excluded). Information in this document does not constitute financial advice and the AEGN and PA does not have an Australian Financial Services Licence. The information is of a general nature only and does not take into account the individual objectives and needs of your organisation. The guide should not be used, relied upon or treated as a substitute for you or your organisation's specific requirements. The AEGN and PA recommend that funders adapt their investment strategy to take into account any existing contractual obligations. The sole object of the guide is to encourage funders to invest in climate solutions. The AEGN and PA in no way intends any harm to any individual or organisation as a result of advice given in the Climate Lens tool.*



Resources/links for further exploration




Steps you can take

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions on a personal and organisational scale is an important step towards decarbonisation. Furthermore, applying a climate lens to your operations can inspire those around you to do the same.

Whether you are part of a large, established foundation or an individual or family grantmaking from home, there are important steps you can take from switching to renewable energy to ensuring your bank doesn't invest in fossil fuels.

Actions to consider

1 | Develop a plan

Developing a plan to consider climate change across your organisation is an important step. Whether you develop a stand-alone climate plan or incorporate these considerations into your existing business plans and strategies  9 will depend on your organisation. There's no one correct way to do it.

Setting clear specific goals, with a monitoring and evaluation plan — however simple — and reporting the outcomes back to your stakeholders, be they family members or a Board of Directors or Trustees is a great practice to keep you on track. If you have staff, consider how you can incentivise them to change their behaviours.

Following are some elements of your operations you may like to consider.








9 See this in practice at **The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation** on page 27

10 See this in practice at **The Wyatt Trust** on page 32

2 | Establish a baseline




Larger organisations often climate-proof their operations by developing an emissions inventory and establishing a clear baseline first. This will help to determine which parts of your operations have the greatest impact on climate change and where you may like to focus your efforts. There are many publicly available tools to measure the carbon footprint of your organisation. For example:

-  [Greenhouse Gas Protocol](#)
-  [Science Based Targets](#)
-  [Climate Active](#)
-  [Sumday](#)

Larger organisations may wish to hire a sustainability consultant to help with measuring your carbon footprint and developing an emissions reduction plan that is specific to your needs.  10

3 | Travel and transport

Transport is Australia's second-largest single source of domestic emissions, half of which is due to private cars and other personal road transport. You can significantly reduce your carbon footprint by changing the way you travel. For example:

-  Use public transport and active transport (walking and cycling) instead of driving. If you employ staff, encourage them to do the same.
-  Hold online meetings; they reduce the need for the daily commute, long rural drives and flights (the latter being one of the most energy intensive forms of travel).
-  Upgrade to an electric vehicle — electric cars can reduce emissions by up to 77 per cent per kilometre.

4 | Electricity use

Renewable energy in our electricity network has almost tripled in Australia in the last decade. Here are some steps you can take to start this transition for your own operations:

- ▶▶ Complete an energy assessment to get a clear picture on how you can save energy in your home and workplace. [Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme](#) is a good place to start.
- ▶▶ Switch to a clean electricity provider. The [Greenpeace Green Electricity Guide](#) makes it simple.
- ▶▶ Electrify your household and workplace. Swap gas-powered appliances such as stovetops, hot water systems and heaters for electric alternatives powered by renewable energy.
- ▶▶ If you own the building you work from, you may be able to install solar on your roof. You can find an approved solar retailer through the Clean Energy Council. Australian start-up [Brighte](#) can also help finance renewable energy upgrades with zero per cent interest loans.
- ▶▶ Be mindful of how much air-conditioning, heating and lighting you use. Insulate your home and office; use window blinds and light roof tile colours to deflect heat in summer.
- ▶▶ Replace old appliances with energy-efficient alternatives using the 5-star Energy Rating. Most states and territories have programs to assist people to upgrade their old appliances, for example the [Victorian Energy Upgrades program](#).
- ▶▶ Swap halogen light bulbs for LED lights, which use up to 90 per cent less energy.

5 | Banking, finance and superannuation

Transition your banking and superannuation to institutions that do not invest in fossil fuels.

- ▶▶ See the climate performance of your bank and superannuation fund at [Market Forces](#)
- ▶▶ [Responsible Investment Association Australasia](#) has developed a directory where you can search for super, banking and investment products that do not invest in fossil fuels.

6 | Waste management

Reducing, reusing and recycling waste reduces landfill while embedding a “circular economy” approach to how you work. Planet Ark has comprehensive resources for businesses and individuals on how to do this, for example:

- ▶▶ Sign up for free workplace recycling programs:
 - mobile phones — register for [MobileMuster](#);
 - printer cartridges — [Cartridges 4 Planet Ark](#) collection box;
 - e-waste like TVs and computers — call [TechCollect](#) on 1300 229 837.
- ▶▶ Establish waste management systems such as recycling and composting stations, and educate employees on correct procedures. Consider hiring an environmental and waste auditor or consultant to create waste management systems specific to your organisation:
 - See Business Recycling to find an auditor or consultant in your area.
- ▶▶ If your business hosts large events, consider developing a waste management plan by identifying key waste streams and establishing recycling, composting, and waste diversion strategies. See [Rethink Waste's Guide to Preparing an Event Waste Management Plan](#) for guidance.
- ▶▶ Register your interest in the [Australian Circular Economy Hub](#) to learn about what more you can do.

7 | Procurement

The goods and services you buy as a funder or organisation can help drive demand for low-carbon options. Larger organisations may like to start by:

- ▶▶ educating in-house procurement officers on how to source environmental products and services;
- ▶▶ embedding environmental sustainability in all invitations for tender;
- ▶▶ booking venues for meetings and events that are energy efficient, sustainably designed and have a social impact (e.g., providing employment opportunities for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds);
- ▶▶ ordering vegetarian catering and certified organic, sustainably produced meat and/or fish if required;
- ▶▶ sourcing recycled, carbon-neutral office supplies such as paper and notebooks.

8 | Offsets


After implementing measures to reduce your organisation's emissions, you may still have some residual emissions that are difficult to reduce. To address these, consider purchasing high-quality Australian-based carbon offsets.

Climate Active is the primary carbon neutral certification program in Australia, which provides a framework for organisations to achieve carbon neutral certification. The program certifies that an organisation, product, service, or event has credibly reached a state of achieving net-zero emissions, meaning they have effectively balanced their carbon emissions with carbon offsets. Pursuing Climate Active certification would also allow organisations to promote to the public or stakeholders that your organisation or events are carbon neutral.





As a funder, you are in a unique position to encourage and advocate for climate action and awareness throughout your personal, business, political and public networks.

Actions to consider

Everyone can positively influence the people around them when it comes to protecting the planet. Working from within your own sphere of influence can have profound ripple effects that effect change more broadly.  ¹¹ Outlined below are some places you may like to start.

You don't need to be an expert on climate science to talk to people in your life about why you care about the safety of our climate. However, if you would like some support to boost your confidence, these organisations and resources can help:

-  Climate Council's [Climate Conversation Guides](#)
-  [Climate for Change](#) has an excellent guide and training opportunities

1 | A seat at the table

Are you a shareholder, Board Director or Chairperson for any businesses, organisations or for-purpose organisations? Having a seat at the table means you can push for change from within and encourage these organisations and their people to take climate action.



¹¹ See this in practice at **The Keuneman Foundation** on page 34



Resources/links for further exploration



Steps you can take

2 | Political influence

Do you have personal or professional relationships with local, state/territory or federal members of Parliament? What about future and past representatives? Reaching out and talking with policymakers about climate change, why it's a concern of yours and your climate funding ambitions is a powerful message to send to those with political power who make important policy decisions.

Join the AEGN's advocacy program to help develop your skills and confidence to champion change in your spheres of influence. [You can also check out Philanthropy Australia's tips for improving your government engagement.](#)

3 | Friends and family

Talk with your friends and family members about why you are interested in acting on climate change, what you have learned so far and why it's important for you. Is climate change a concern for them too?






Host a dinner or lunch at your home to spark conversation and inspire your friends and family to get climate active. You could invite a climate expert to give a talk and/or raise money for an environmental organisation or campaign. [Finally, consider encouraging the youth in your family to join Philanthropy Australia's New Generation of Giving Network.](#)

4 | Grow climate funding

Many Australians care about climate change, but don't realise that they can help protect people and our planet from worsening warming. Who do you know that has the capacity to give? Can you encourage them to join you in funding climate change issues or attend an event with you? If everyone encouraged just one more person to act, we would immediately double the funding available to climate action — what an impact that would have!

5 | Media engagement

Sharing your personal story and explaining why you care about climate change is one of the most powerful ways you can inspire other funders to give to the environment and climate action. As a funder you can share your personal climate funding story by:

-  writing and publishing opinion pieces in local, state and national newspapers and publications;
-  signing open letters and public petitions calling for climate and environmental action;
-  saying yes to interview opportunities;
-  speaking at and moderating public events; and
-  undergoing media training to learn how to best communicate across different media channels.

Thank you

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THE ROBERT HICKS FOUNDATION

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IMAGE CREDITS

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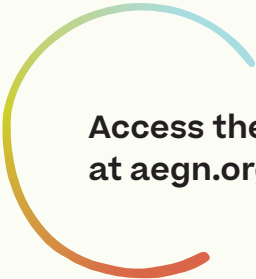
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“ You can see climate change as the greatest threat that humanity has ever faced. Or we can see it as our greatest opportunity. We cannot afford to waste that opportunity.

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