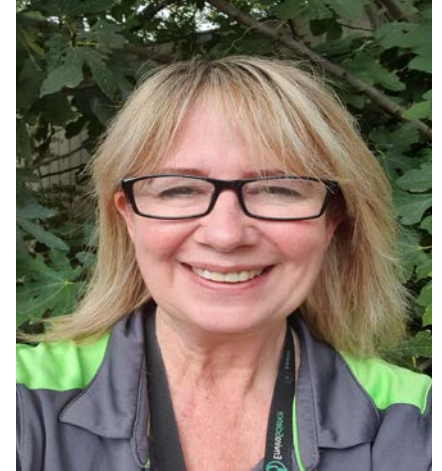




ANNUAL REPORT

2019

# MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR



As I write this, we are under the COVID-19 implications, after a difficult year of prolonged drought and bushfires. I ask myself, do we keep progressing as usual after all of this?

Maybe we needed a global adjustment from a capitalism and fiscal view? We currently measure the health of our nations by how well we are performing predominantly by economic measures. Well, really by measuring how much we are consuming. Is this the index we still use going forward?

When we get to the other side of COVID-19, droughts and bushfires, wouldn't it be altruistic to suggest:

- that we measure the success of our communities and nations by all 3 sustainability options - economic, societal and environmental values
- that we measure "success" by the happiness and wellbeing of our communities
- that in the immediate future, we value and empower our regional communities for the important services that they provide
- that we strive for the essential equity needed between metropolitan and regional areas
- that we work together and support each other.

The isolation measures that are currently imposed, bring us back to the basics of what it is to be humans. We are essentially pack animals and we need to interact with each other. Maybe, out of all of this we will remember why we need to rely on and support each other, including our local businesses.

We should also remember that we will adjust and adapt to local provision and ownership of services both in government and business including manufacturing, mining and agriculture. And:

- that we can be less reliant on motor vehicles and look for the old corner shops, delivery of locally produced products and services to our doorsteps, local distilleries, telehealth, soft drink manufacturers etc.
- that we as humans can actually consume less and procure more locally.

Now more than ever WRI is extremely relevant, as going forward there will be a need to ensure that from a societal, environmental and economic perspective, all of our communities continue to use WRI's services to understand the impact of their efforts in order to thrive and prosper.

This is an opportunity to do things differently - by Australia looking after its own patch and finally truly valuing and supporting the regions.

In closing, I thank the WRI staff, fellow board members, clients and supporters of WRI and wish all humans the best in health and happiness during these times.

**Juliet Duffy**  
Chair



# OUR GOAL

We aim to be a **trusted partner** of business, government and communities **in regional development**.

Our **integrity, local knowledge and strong local collaborations** ensure that our advice and support is highly sought after.

We help to **grow regional businesses** and services, **support better decision making** and help to attract investment for the benefit of our clients and stakeholders.

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of Country where we live and work.

We pay respects to Elders of past, present and the future and acknowledge continuous connections and contribution to land, sea and community.

# OUR BOARD



**Juliet Duffy**  
Chair

Juliet is an award winning, regional entrepreneur and can add WRI's first female Chair to her growing list of achievements.

Juliet is founding director of the start-up Regional EnviroScience. In 2018 Juliet was named NSW Regional Woman of the year, listed on both the AFR Fast 100 growing companies and the AFR 100 most influential women.



**Andrew Everett**  
Deputy Chair

Andrew has extensive experience as a senior executive in the telecommunications, data and IT sectors and is currently CEO of Westhaven Dubbo.

At the end of the year Andrew resigned as a Director of WRI, the fellow members of the Board and staff members of WRI thank Andrew for his engagement and support to WRI and wish him all the best in the future.



**Jo-Anne Strader**  
Treasurer

Jo-Anne is an accountant with senior level executive experience and is the Financial Controller for the global company DSM Nutritional Products Australia Pty Ltd.



**Gavin Priestley**  
Director

Gavin has an intimate knowledge of the issues confronting regional Australia which has enabled him to contribute in government (Federal and State) and the commercial arena. Extensive experience and qualifications in management has assisted him in developing remote teams ensuring professional service delivery of complex technical solutions.

Gavin is passionate about bringing education and employment opportunities to the smaller towns in NSW. He has particular focus on training and employment for aboriginal youth in remote communities.

# DELIVERING POSITIVE OUTCOMES

In 2019 a sample of our research contributed to regional projects valued at over \$627 million.

# \$627 million

Including  
\$19.6 million  
secured through State and  
Federal government grants.

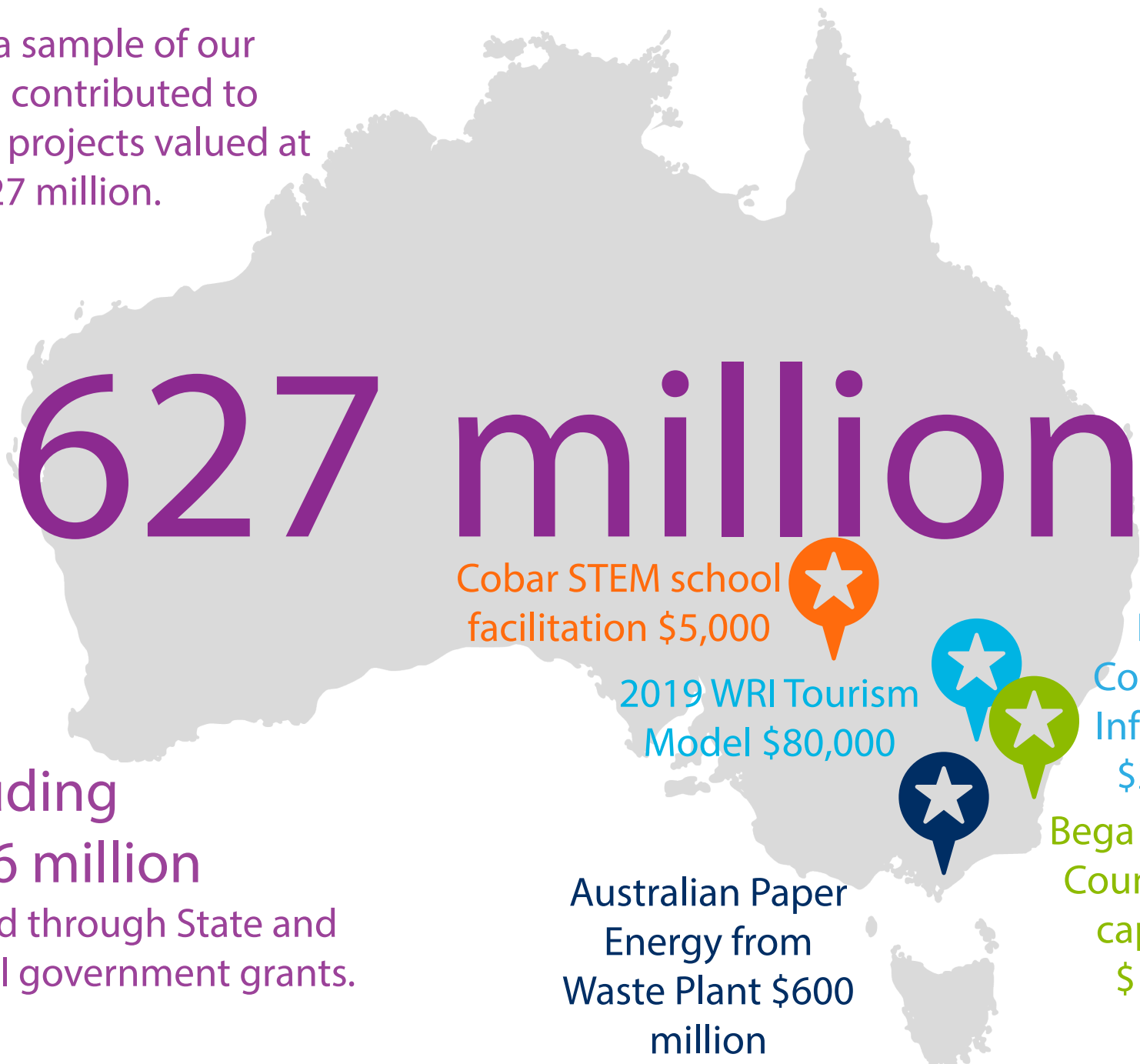
Cobar STEM school  
facilitation \$5,000

2019 WRI Tourism  
Model \$80,000

Australian Paper  
Energy from  
Waste Plant \$600  
million

Bathurst  
Regional  
Council Water  
Infrastructure  
\$27 million

Bega Valley Shire  
Council Labour  
capabilities  
\$120,000





# DELIVERING OUTCOMES: WRI TOURISM MODEL

We created a pilot Tourism Model project in 2019 which was funded by the WRI Inland Research Fund, Central NSW Joint Organisation of Councils, Destination Network Country and Outback NSW, and 10 Central West councils.

The participating councils were Bathurst Regional Council, Blayney Shire Council, Cabonne Council, Cowra Shire Council, Forbes Shire Council, Lachlan Shire Council, Oberon Council, Orange City Council, Parkes Shire Council and Weddin Shire Council.

The Tourism Model is available to other councils in 2020.



Photo: Central NSW Joint Organisation of Councils

## THE PROJECT:

The Tourism Model was created by WRI to improve the quality and level of reporting on the visitor economy of local areas. It provides reliable and complete data at the local government level. Our model collects real data on what visitors are spending in each local government area. We also analyse the impact of specific events to better understand what they offer to the local economy.

Our model provides annualised reliable estimates of the contribution of the visitor economy to gross regional product, employment and household income.

## OUR ROLE:

Our team collated data from a range of sources to estimate the visitor economy in council areas. This includes primary and secondary data sources which were collated to produce a profile that estimates the value of the visitor economy and the characteristics of visitors to regions.

Our Tourism Model captures a previously hidden part of the visitor economy by estimating how much residents spend hosting their family and friends. We learnt how people plan their trips, what they did while in the region and if they plan to return.

## OUTCOME:

CENTRAL NSW VISITOR  
ECONOMY VALUE  
ESTIMATED \$592.1  
MILLION PER ANNUM

# DELIVERING OUTCOMES: NEWCREST CADIA VALLEY OPERATIONS ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY



Photo: Cadia Valley Operations at night, Photo approved by Melissa O'Brien, (Senior Community Relations Specialist) Cadia Valley Operations

## THE PROJECT:

Cadia Valley Operations sought the research and development of an accommodation strategy to assist in managing the demand for accommodation during the intended expansion of the mine.

## OUR ROLE:

WRI provided Newcrest Cadia Valley Operations with a strategy to understand the impacts and develop techniques to manage the ebbs and flows in accommodation usage by employees/contractors working in Cadia Valley Operations over the next 5 years.

An estimate of the availability of rental (short and long term) and new housing stock was mapped against peak periods of employment during the expansion plans. The identification of opportunities for alternative solutions to ease the impact on accommodation was also provided.

## OUTCOME:

IDENTIFICATION OF THE PEAKS OF DEMAND ON ACCOMMODATION AND OPTIONS FOR THE SUPPLY OF BEDS AS THE EXPANSION PROGRAM PROGRESSES WITH THE ADDITION OF UP TO 1,000 EXTRA PERSONNEL BETWEEN 2020 AND 2022.

# DELIVERING OUTCOMES: AUSTRALIAN PAPER SOCIAL BENEFITS OF REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

## THE PROJECT:

Australian Paper's Maryvale Mill in the Latrobe Valley is Victoria's largest generator of baseload renewable energy. The site is also the state's largest industrial user of natural gas and a significant electricity consumer, facing increasing energy prices and supply uncertainty.

Australian Paper is currently partnering with SUEZ to develop a \$600 million Energy from Waste facility at the Maryvale site. The facility will reduce Victoria's net CO2 emissions by an estimated 543,000 tonnes annually. The project would support Maryvale's 850 jobs, create a further 1,046 Victorian jobs each year for the 3 years of construction and support 911 direct and indirect jobs thereafter.

## OUR ROLE:

The company contracted WRI to provide a report demonstrating the economic impacts of the proposed Energy from Waste plant. This research proved extremely useful to the project's feasibility study phase and helped demonstrate the social viability of the proposed facility.



Photo: Energy from Waste Plant: Maryvale site. Photo supplied by Craig Dunn, General Manager of Australian Paper

## OUTCOME:

**\$600 MILLION PROJECT  
MARYVALE MILL ENERGY  
FROM WASTE PLANT  
\$7.5 MILLION CO-FUNDED  
WITH AUSTRALIAN AND  
VICTORIAN GOVERNMENTS**



# DELIVERING OUTCOMES: SKILLSET ECONOMIC AND HUMAN SKILLS IMPACTS

## THE PROJECT:

Skillset is a not for profit organisation that has expanded its services over its 35 year history. Skillset engaged with WRI to provide an understanding of the economic and human capital impacts of their services. The report provided analysis of Skillset's services and the assistance the organisation offers to the economies analysed to get people educated and into employment.

## OUR ROLE:

WRI produced a quality and informative report that included several methodologies. Economic Impact analysis, Human Capital analysis, Benefit Cost Analysis and survey analysis where all used to create the report.

We created an infographic displaying the results on the impact of the programs offered by Skillset including Skillset Workforce and the Skillset Senior College. This document was used by Skillset as a marketing piece and can be found on their website.



Photo: SkillForce 360 Mudgee, photo supplied by Skillset

## OUTCOME:

**\$48.17 MILLION IN GROSS  
REGIONAL PRODUCT  
\$46.82 MILLION IN  
TOTAL LIFETIME HUMAN  
CAPITAL**

# DELIVERING OUTCOMES: REGIONAL ARTS NSW REVIEW AND POLICY ISSUES PAPER

## THE PROJECT:

Regional Arts NSW supports an extensive network in NSW that delivers arts and cultural development to regional communities. The membership of Regional Arts NSW is the 14 Regional Arts Development Organisations covering all regional NSW.

Regional Arts NSW contacted us to provide an assessment of the past decade of the Aboriginal Arts Officer program and the outcomes these positions have been able to provide to regional NSW.

The second purpose of this report was to summarise strategy and policy issues arising from the analysis and feedback from consultation with stakeholders for consideration in the future planning of Aboriginal art and cultural development.

## OUR ROLE:

WRI engaged in several consultation processes including an online survey that attracted 41 responses, one on one phone interviews with 13 stakeholders and 3 workshops with:

- Regional Arts Development Organisation Executive Directors
- Aboriginal Arts Officers and Regional Arts Development Organisation Executive Directors
- Regional Arts NSW Board.

This engagement allowed us to gather the information about the networks and the effectiveness of programs to deliver an informative report to Regional Arts NSW.



Photo: ARSTATE 2018 Opening Ceremony - Arts OutWest

## OUTCOME:

THE ABORIGINAL ARTS DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS WERE INVOLVED IN:

- DELIVERING OVER 760 INDIVIDUAL EVENTS ATTENDED BY 84,274 PEOPLE
- ASSISTING 3,245 ARTISTS
- THE CREATION OF 71 EQUIVALENT FULL TIME JOBS
- ATTRACTING PROJECT GRANTS AND FUNDING OF 15.4 MILLION

# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019

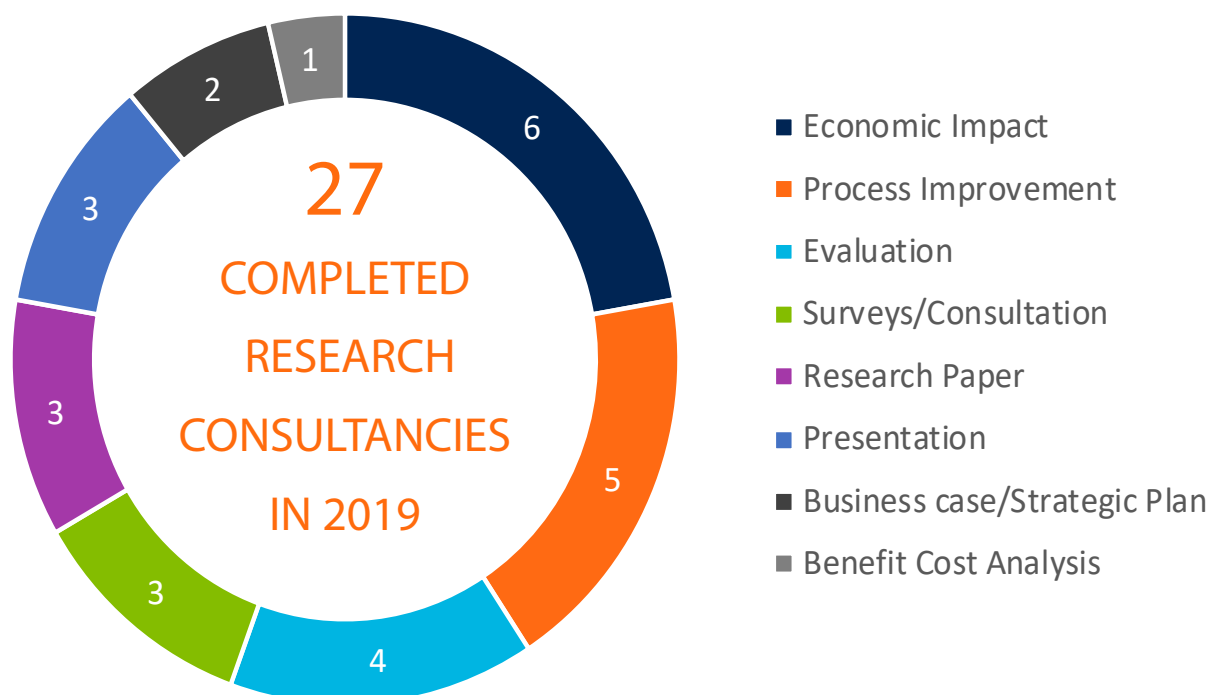
## SUPPORTING OUR REGION

Economic Impacts, Process Improvements, and Evaluations have all increased in 2019.

The demand of Process Improvements from our clients is increasing each year and we have gained much more experience in delivering this service to our clients.

In 2019 Process improvements have involved governance reviews, business services reviews, policy reviews and action plans. Our varied research supports all clients needs and is reliable and informative in all sectors.

We started engaging with 2BS 95.1FM to conduct monthly interviews held on the first Tuesday of each month. We thank 2BS and their team for the support, interest and promotion of WRI.



## OUR IMPACT

**Reliable and trustworthy for 20 years**

We consulted with 20 individual clients in 2019, to help them make informed decisions. Some clients came back to us for multiple projects.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVIDER OF CHOICE

**Quality service for regional NSW**

In 2019 we serviced 7 local government bodies. A further 10 local government bodies joined our 2019 Tourism Model. WRI continues to be appointed to the NSW Local Government Internal Audit Panel.

## HAPPY CUSTOMERS

**Building strong community relationships**

100% of our clients would recommend our services to a friend or colleague. 56% of our clients in 2019 would actively promote our services.



# INVESTING IN RESEARCH: INLAND RESEARCH FUND

FIRST  
INITIATIVE

Tourism data for  
regions

In 2019 WRI launched the pilot Tourism Model that identifies an opportunity to improve the tourism data available to regions, particularly in small regional centres.

More information about the Tourism Model can be found on WRI's website.



Photo: Silos, Grenfell Weddin Mountain Muster



## ABOUT: INLAND RESEARCH FUND

The Inland Research Fund was established by WRI in 2017. To date, WRI has allocated \$100,000 to the Fund.

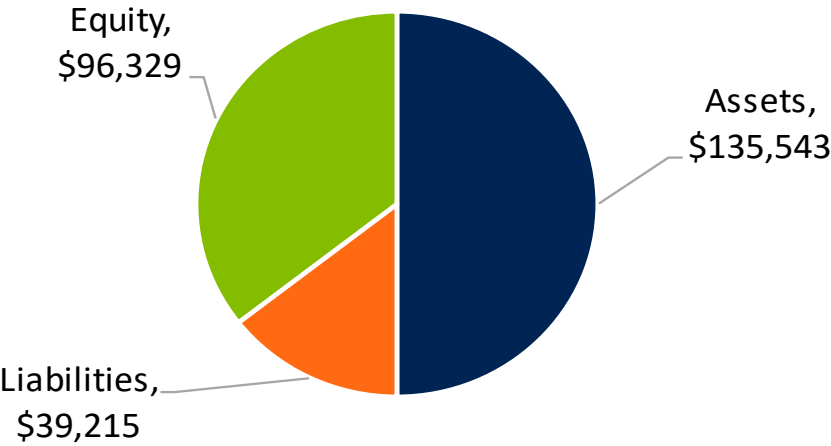
WRI established the Fund because we believed that there was a need for better research to inform public policy decisions and to improve the targeting of investment in jobs, health, education and economic development in regional communities.

The Fund will identify key focus areas and funding will be allocated in partnership with organisations to undertake research and analysis and for programs to promote economic growth and sustainability in regional areas, capability building, tourism and to facilitate inland social, economic and employment development.

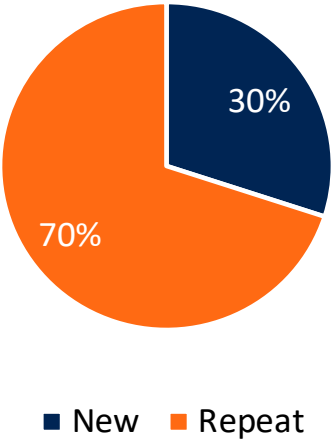
WRI PROVIDED THROUGH  
THE INLAND RESEARCH  
FUND \$30,000 FUNDING  
TOWARDS THE 2019  
TOURISM MODEL.



2019 Financial position



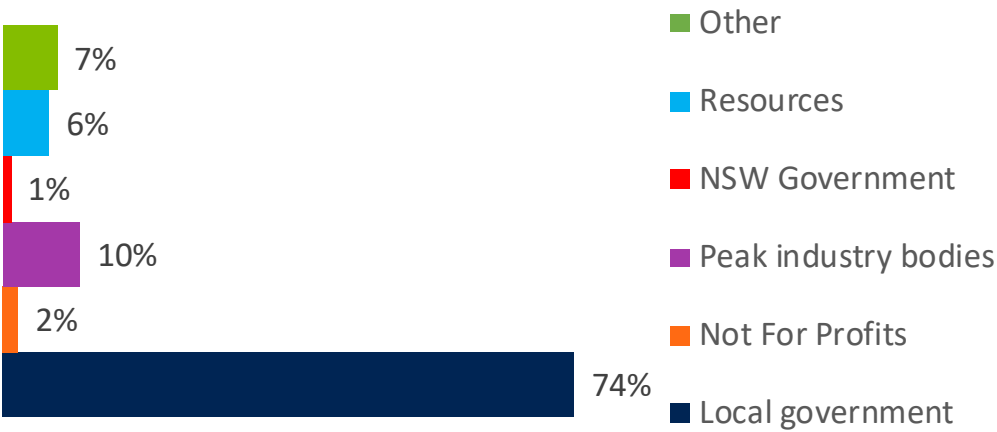
Our Clients



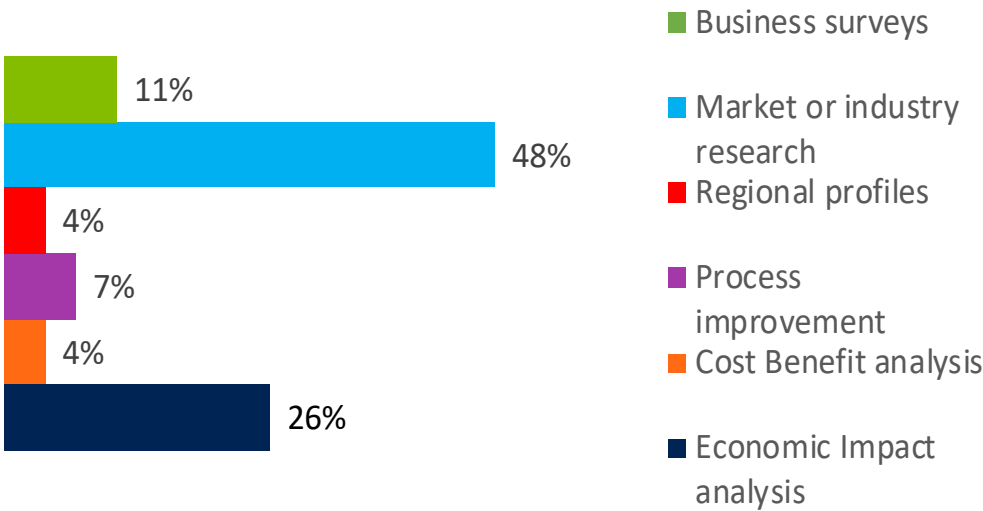
Profit and Loss



Sectors of our Clients



Services provided



# CLIENTS AND RESEARCH

Project	Client
Governance Review	Cementa
Strategic Plan	Central NSW Joint Organisation of Councils
Economic and Human Skills Impacts	Skillset
Impact of Victorian Fisheries	University of Technology
Alec Lamberton Park - future uses	Bathurst Regional Council
Tourism and Economic Development Strategy	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
Survey of Food and Organics Waste Services in Dubbo Regional Council, Mid-Western Regional Council and Narromine Shire Council	Netwaste
Stock Market analysis verification - 53 months	Super Investor
Clandestine Drug Laboratories	Regional EnviroScience
Business Services Improvement Review	Dubbo Regional Council
Aboriginal Arts and Culture Officer Review and Policy Issue Paper	Regional Arts NSW
Consolidated Process Improvement Action Plan	Liverpool Plains Shire Council
Social Impact Analysis	Housing Plus
Stronger Australia Conference	Business Council of Australia
Music Bowl - Benefit Cost Analysis	Dubbo Regional Council
Presentation on Clandestine laboratories in regional NSW	SEGRA
Stock Market analysis verification - 2 months	Super Investor
Darwin regional economic profile	Business Council of Australia
Cobar STEM school facilitation	NSW Department Premier and Cabinet
Population Projections	Oberon Council
Stock Market analysis verification - 1 month	Super Investor
Accommodation	Newcrest Cadia Valley Operations
Not for profit research project	Charles Sturt University
Stock Market analysis verification - 2 months	Super Investor
WRI Tourism Model	WRI's Inland Research Fund, Central NSW Joint Organisation of Councils, 10 Central West NSW councils, Destination Network Country and Outback NSW
Stock Market analysis verification - 2 months	Super Investor
Water Infrastructure - Benefit Cost Analysis	Bathurst Regional Council

# OUR TEAM



**Kathy Woolley**

CEO

Kathy joined the WRI team in February 2018 having previously worked on a variety of boards and in many senior management roles across sectors including media, health, education, regional development, government, research and sales.



**Alistair MacLennan**

Senior Research Officer

Alistair has a strong focus on fully understanding our clients needs and providing tailored research solutions that create value. Alistair is experienced in data analysis, economics and business analysis. Sadly WRI farewelled Alistair in early 2019.



**Chris Mullen**

Research Officer

Chris joined in 2018 bringing developed skills in benefit cost analysis, business statistics and economic modelling. He has a great interest and passion for macroeconomics and microeconomics, policy analysis and development economics.



**Philip Spiers**

Research Officer

Phil joined the WRI team in May 2019 and has well developed skills in economic and financial appraisal, policy research and strategy, report and submission writing, data analysis, stakeholder engagement and project management.



**Dale Curran**

Executive Officer

Dale understands our business, the needs of our clients and how to best deliver outcomes for them. Dale is experienced in administration, finance, marketing, project management and research.



**Heather Waters**

Administration Officer

Heather joined WRI in 2018 and brings strong skills in customer service from her experience working in the retail industry. Heather is passionate about building strong rural communities.

# CELEBRATING 20 YEARS



2019 marked WRI's 20th Year Anniversary. This special milestone was celebrated with our team, Directors, former staff, former Directors and our clients from across the region at Charles Sturt University Engineering Building, Bathurst.

Without the support from our all our clients, Directors and staff, past present and future WRI wouldn't be able to provide our services to our communities.

Thank you.



Photo: (Left-Right) Juliet Duffy (WRI Chair) and Jo-Anne Strader (WRI Director)



Photo: Current and former Director's of WRI

(Left-Right) Michael Milston, Sandy Morrison, Ian Davison, Jo-Anne Strader, Juliet Duffy, Peter Batten and John Hicks



Photo: Staff members of WRI former and present

Photographer: Matthew Harper





Photo: Kathy Woolley (CEO, WRI) and Professor Andrew Vann (Charles Sturt University, Vice-Chancellor)



Photo: Heather Waters (WRI) and Professor Euan Lindsay (Charles Sturt University Foundation Professor of Engineering)

## CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF RELATIONSHIPS AND SUCCESSFUL RESEARCH SERVICES FOR OUR REGIONS

Photographer: Matthew Harper

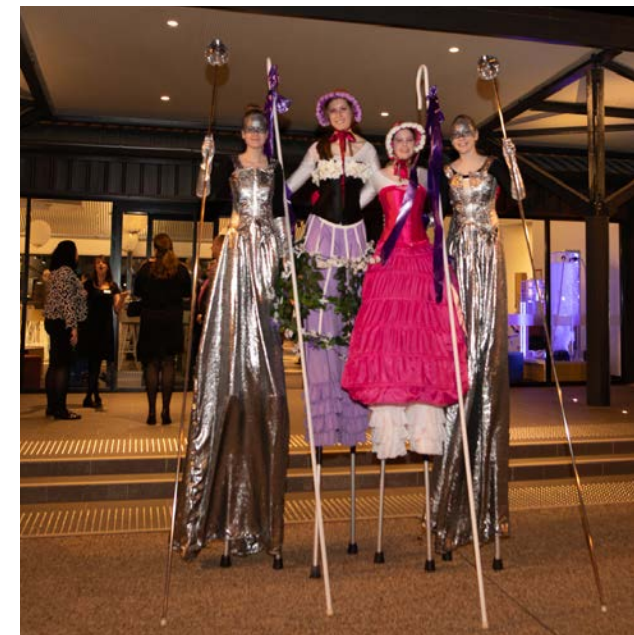


Photo: Circus Surreal



Photo: Craig Randazzo (CEO, Skillset) and David Cooke (Chair, Skillset and Director, Accumen)



Photo: Bathurst Charles Sturt University, Engineering Building





## REGIONAL BRAINSTORM

In September we hosted our first Big Ideas exchange gathering with regional thinkers to come up with a list of the top 10 Biggest Ideas. This workshop was unique and interactive and used collaborative technology to fire up lively discussions to generate the top 10 Biggest Ideas.

We thank our sponsors for their support and involvement with Big Ideas for Regional NSW and WRI's 20th Year Celebration.

### TOP 10 BIGGEST IDEAS

- Aboriginal culture
- Ageing population
- Decentralisation
- High speed internet connectivity
- Regional alliances
- Regional recycling centre
- Renewables
- Special activation precincts
- Water sensitive cities
- Youth retention

#### GOLD SPONSORS



**Charles Sturt  
University**



**shido**

#### SILVER SPONSORS



Regional  
**EnviroScience**

**skillset**  
YOUR FUTURE. OUR FOCUS.



**Upstairs**  
STEP UP YOUR STARTUP



# BIG IDEAS FOR REGIONAL NSW



Photo: Ken Keith (Mayor, Parkes Shire Council)



Photo: Charles Sturt University Bathurst, Engineering Building

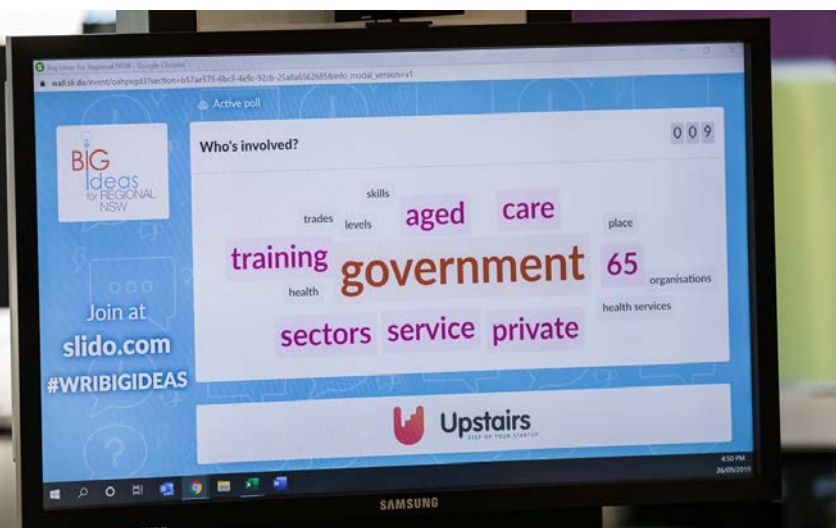


Photo: Big Ideas for Regional NSW sponsors

(Left - Right) Mathew Dickerson (Facilitator), Jo-Anne Strader (Director, WRI), Craig Randazzo (CEO, Skillet), Professor Jim Morgan (Charles Sturt University Professor of Engineering), Kathy Woolley (CEO, WRI), Juliet Duffy (Chair, WRI), David ten Broeke (Founder, Upstairs), Abbey Bell (Community Support Coordinator, Upstairs) and John Medcalf (Chair, Central NSW Joint Organisation of Councils and Mayor, Lachlan Shire Council)



Photo: Councillor Ian North (Bathurst Regional Council)







## PARTICIPANTS OF BIG IDEAS ENGAGING IN LIVELY DISCUSSIONS





## Contact us:



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