

MEDIA RELEASE

New England Solar launches first round of community grants for 2024

February 2024, NSW – Uralla organisations and individuals are being invited to apply for the latest round of a community grants program run by the New England Solar project.

New England Solar has provided \$200,000 to local organisations over the past five years and is stepping up its level of support in 2024.

Applications are now open for the first round of this year's New England Solar Social Investment Program (SIP), which provides grants and sponsorship up to \$5,000 for eligible individuals and organisations contributing to building thriving and resilient communities in Uralla Shire and surrounds.

A total of \$150,000 in grants and sponsorships will be provided through the program in 2024, split between two rounds, with applications for Round 1 open until 29 March.

The program, previously known as Uralla Grants, has provided grants and sponsorships for a wide range of events and initiatives since it was launched in 2018, including sporting groups, community events, health and fitness groups, historical projects, schools and sustainability projects.

ACEN Australia, which established and operates the New England Solar project, is committed to providing more than \$7 million to the Uralla community through the Social Investment Program over the next 25 years.

"It's one of the ways ACEN Australia strives to be a valued part of the Uralla community," New England Solar Project Manager Sarah Donnan said.

"Uralla Grants is helping to meet an important niche in funding assistance for many community organisations, businesses and individuals doing amazing work to enhance the vibrancy and liveability of this district."

Preference for funding is given to activities that deliver benefits in at least one of ACEN's value areas: community enhancement & resilience, education & work, reconciliation, and environment.

Application forms and further information, including guidelines on who is eligible, are available on the New England Solar website. Printed copies of the application are also available by emailing info@newenglandsolar.com.au, phoning 1800 844889 or by visiting the Seasons of New England store at 58 Bridge Street, Uralla.

The update from Uralla Grants to the Social Investment Program coincides with a major milestone for New England Solar, when Stage 1 of the project became operational late last year and started supplying power into the national grid.

As part of that SIP update, the program has also been expanded in 2024 with a second stream of funding. Known as the Future Fund, it is focused on strategic, regional long-term investments and will also provide a total of \$150,000 to eligible organisations and events in 2024.

Details about the Future Fund will be announced as initiatives are launched.

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About ACEN Australia

ACEN Australia is the platform representing ACEN's renewable energy assets in Australia. With more than 1 gigawatt (GW) capacity of large-scale renewable energy generation in construction and operations, and more than 8GW capacity in the development pipeline, its portfolio includes several solar, wind, battery and pumped hydro projects across Australia.

New England Solar (Stage 1) in NSW is ACEN Australia's first operational project. It is one of Australia's largest solar projects participating in the National Electricity Market (NEM) and is the largest solar project in Australia to be financed on a fully merchant basis. Stubbo Solar in the NSW Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone is ACEN Australia's second project, which commenced construction in late 2022.

With 80+ employees and growing, our people are based in Tasmania, Victoria, NSW and Queensland.

www.acenrenewables.com.au

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