



Impact Report 2024-2025



Nature
Impact
Collective



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A year of building relationships, learning and impact.

A Message from the Chair Jim Phillipson

I am delighted to share the second annual Impact Report for Nature Impact Collective.

What began as a small group of funders working strategically together for nature, has become a confident, values-aligned community focused on impact. Each member has lifted their level of giving and ambition, guided by shared priorities and trust in the process. Together, we're learning alongside the organisations we support and helping to build a stronger, more connected environmental sector.

No single organisation or funder can achieve the change our natural systems need. Our Collective creates space for funders to listen, learn and act together while reducing duplication and increasing the support available to those doing the work on the ground.

In 2025 we built upon our focus on water systems, extending our reach from inland rivers to estuaries and coasts. Much of our effort centred on the Murray-Darling Basin, where a coordinated approach has helped strengthen the network of science, advocacy and practical restoration across multiple states. We're now looking to deepen that impact in our 2026 funding round, while continuing to learn from what's working in this landscape.



We also supported organisations using both research and storytelling, from the Wentworth Group's policy work to Biodiversity Council's Nature Media Centre, recognising that evidence and communication both shape lasting change. Our portfolio spans First Nations-led initiatives, applied conservation, science and research, communication, capacity building and policy reform - each reinforcing the other.

Collaboration is in our DNA so unsurprisingly we have supported a range of collaborations, strengthening ties between organisations with shared purpose.

This has been a year of building depth in our relationships, learning and impact. Nature Impact Collective has matured as a funder group, as a learning system and as a model that others are increasingly inspired by.

We invite you to explore our shared journey towards a connected, thriving future.

Jim Phillipson
Rendere Environmental Trust Founder
Nature Impact Collective Chair

Our Second Year

We continued building our community of people who share the joy and excitement of using philanthropy to make the world a better place for the plants, birds and animals who share Earth with us.

We were thrilled to welcome Pademelon Fund and the Dawn Wade Foundation who joined during the year. With founding members The Gum Tree Foundation, Rendere Environmental Trust and Upotipotpon Foundation, we now have five members.

More members equals:

- more funds to distribute through our collective giving process
- more people to learn and share with, as we build our organisation and impact.
- a more sustainable resource base for our organisation through membership fees (\$52,500 per member in 2024/25).



Our Principles

Nature Impact Collective's approach to giving is guided by four important principles:

Trust based - we seek out and fund organisations with high integrity leadership, and build mutual, trusting relationships with them.

Brave and bold - we are comfortable taking calculated risks where our members agree it is needed to catalyse and amplify impactful work.

Fit-for-purpose - we empower organisations through providing flexible and mainly core funding.

First Nations - we acknowledge the ongoing custodianship and care for Country of Australia's First Nations people and are committed to supporting First Nations communities aspirations for nature protection, management and repair.

Measuring Impact

Setting goals and being accountable to them is key to making impact. Nature Impact Collective aims to achieve four key goals, of which three relate to our work as a Collective and active member of the philanthropic community. A key goal - building stronger, more effective environmental organisations - is the outcome we strive to achieve with our funding.

This report draws upon the information we have gathered during the year through our environmental NGO relationship-management processes and reflections on what we have accomplished and learned. Our impact measurement, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection, continues to evolve as we deepen our knowledge.

The four goals we monitor to understand our impact:

GROWING

philanthropic funding for nature.

GIVING

significant and sustained funding in this critical decade.

DEMONSTRATING

effective and collaborative philanthropic funding.

BUILDING

stronger, more effective environmental organisations

Giving significant funding in this critical decade

GOAL 1

We progress this goal by:

- Committing to giving significant funding for nature and encouraging others to do likewise.
- Providing larger gifts to organisations selected through our collective giving process.

For some members, joining Nature Impact Collective is a step up in their nature giving, meaning they give more, give faster - or both.

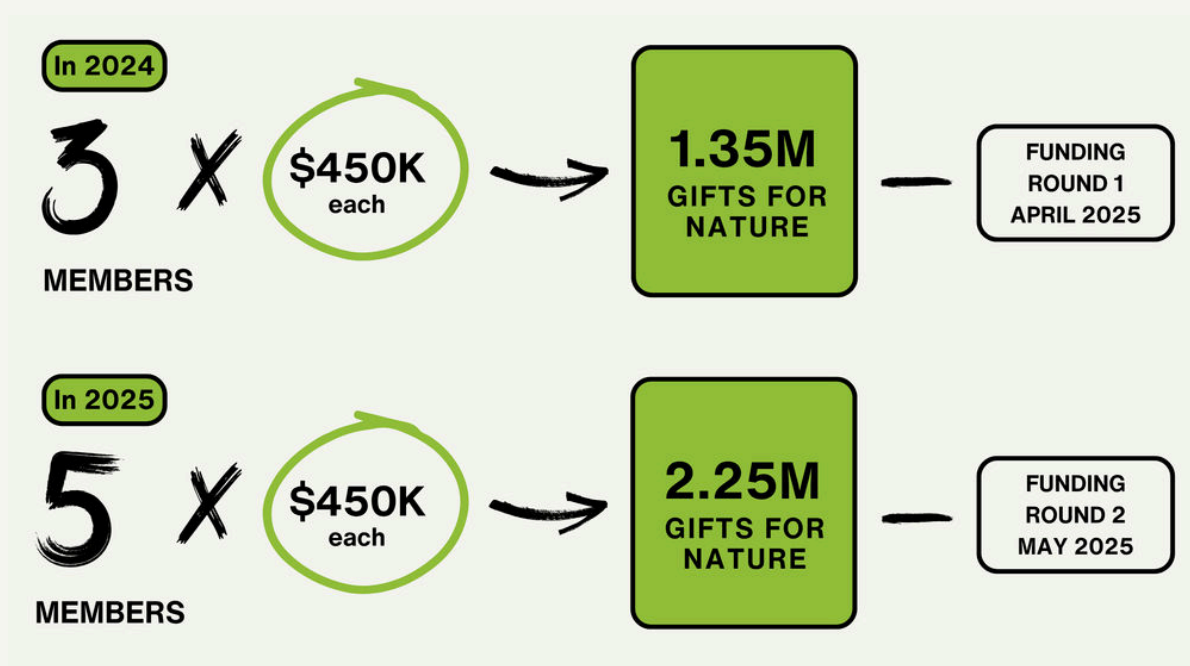
For all members it is an opportunity to be better informed and more strategic in their giving, while offering resources and support to other funders.

Our collective giving process gives members the confidence to give larger amounts to selected organisations, maximising their ability to create impact in this critical decade.



"We all know that the next few years are critical for both climate and nature. By joining Nature Impact Collective last year we've been able to work with like minded philanthropists to pool both expertise and funding to create a bigger and better impact. We're thrilled with the approach and look forward to other families and foundations joining us."

Darrell and Anna Wade
Dawn Wade Foundation



Growing philanthropic funding for nature - land, sea, freshwater, ecosystems & threatened species

GOAL 2

We progress this goal by:

- Finding organisations doing important work for nature, where philanthropic funding will make a difference.
- Supporting those organisations and making our resources available to other funders to facilitate additional support.

Strategic Focus

In 2025 Nature Impact Collective continued our Round 1 focus on freshwater, building upon what we learned last year. For Round 2, we extended the reach 'downstream' to the connected saltwater ecosystems of estuaries and coasts.

Australia's water systems remain a critical issue for nature. Many have endured historic degradation and over-extraction. Pristine water systems are threatened with industrial-scale water extraction. Climate change is a universal threat.

In Round 2, eight organisations were selected, assisting their work in championing the ecological health of Australia's inland waters and coastlines. Three collaborations were supported in this round.

Leverage

An important role of the Nature Impact Collective is to draw attention to the work of selected organisations and encourage other philanthropic funders to provide support. Over the past year our promotional efforts have resulted in the following outcomes:

- One member, the Gum Tree Foundation, gifted an additional \$575,000 to Round 1 funded organisations.
- The Murray Darling Conservation Alliance was supported by at least one new donor.
- A funder with an interest in Tasmania was introduced to Environment Tasmania, resulting in a three year funding arrangement.
- The profile of the Northern Australia Conservation Alliance was raised amongst donors less familiar with the purpose and plans, helping them to raise an additional two years of funding.
- With incubator funding support from Nature Impact Collective, Southern Australia Aboriginal Land and Sea Management Alliance (SAALSMA) has been able to progress discussions with future funders.

Round 2 Funding Stories


Building an ecosystem for success in the Murray Darling Basin

Last year we prioritised the once in a generation opportunity to repair the Murray Darling Basin by supporting two organisations well positioned to influence the Commonwealth Government's review of the Basin Plan:

- The newly formed Murray Darling Conservation Alliance, led by the peak conservation organisations in the states where the Murray and Darling Rivers flow.
- Environmental Justice Australia, who were supporting community groups in the Basin to understand and pursue their legal rights.

In Round 2 we extended support to interconnected stakeholders doing crucial work in the Murray Darling Basin. The Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists has a proud history of identifying and championing needed reform for the Basin. Taking a different approach, the Murray Darling Wetlands Working Group supports private landholders to rehabilitate wetlands and manages the delivery of environmental water.

By funding groups working in different spaces - policy, advocacy, legal and grassroots action - we support an ecosystem of activity working for the same positive outcomes for nature.



“After years of mismanagement, it is clear our biggest river system is sick. Big problems call for strong collaboration.”

*Craig Wilkins, Co-Director
Murray Darling Conservation Alliance*

Murray River © Doug Gimsey

Tasmanian waterways - very loved but under-supported

While funding to protect and repair freshwater and coastal ecosystems is needed across Australia, we strive to identify regions that are slipping under the radar.

The 2024 Tasmania State of Environment Report confirmed the state's waterways are not the 'pristine' healthy free-flowing waterways a visitor to Tasmania might expect. But no organisation in Tasmania had the capacity to focus on the range of approaches needed to make progress for Tasmanian rivers statewide. Our response was to lift capacity by funding both Environment Tasmania and Landcare Tasmania and encourage them to work together to protect and rehabilitate waterways. While early days, we see great potential in bringing together Environment Tasmania's campaigning and advocacy skills with Landcare Tasmania's catchment management expertise and extensive community networks.

Australia's magnificent north

Nature in the north is truly magnificent and Australia is world renowned for our Great Barrier Reef, ancient wild rivers and timeless deserts and savannas. Supporting the newly formed Northern Australia Conservation Alliance ensures greater capacity for environment centres across the top-end to run impactful campaigns and have stronger influence over decision makers.

In Queensland, the UNESCO listed Daintree River flows through tropical rainforests - and cane fields - before emptying into the Coral Sea. The closure of the Mossman cane mill means that cane growing is no longer viable and previously farmed land with strong rehabilitation potential is coming onto the market. Rainforest Rescue has established a large nursery in preparation for this opportunity and our support is helping them build organisational capacity.



“It is fantastic that NIC has supported Environment Tasmania and Landcare Tasmania... Together we can raise awareness of the decline in the state of Tasmania's rivers and secure greater protections for them.”

*James Overington,
CEO, Environment Tasmania*

Rapid River, Tarkine © Rob Blakers



Northern Australia Conservation Alliance is uniting regional organisations to pool our power and scale our impact for nature.

*Kirsty Howey,
Executive Director Environment Centre NT
on behalf of the Alliance.*

Bitter Springs, Mataranka © Glenn Walker



BC Councillor Prof Carolyn Hogg © Uni of Sydney

Building communications capacity Australia-wide

According to research by the Biodiversity Council, the majority of Australians care about nature and believe more action is needed to look after the natural environment. While most Australians rely upon news media for information on nature, they trust scientists and environmental organisations the most. By supporting the science-driven Biodiversity Council with core funding and to establish the Nature Media Centre with partners, we aim to increase awareness of the urgency of nature's plight. This supports all the important work of environmental organisations across the country.

Who we funded in 2024/25

Rainforest Rescue

Rainforest Rescue has been protecting rainforests in Far North Queensland since 1999. Focused in a region recognised with UNESCO World Heritage status, their work has evolved to restore rainforest and wetland ecosystems along the Daintree River.

\$250K

→ salaries, contractors



“We are at a pivotal moment and are primed to scale rainforest restoration in the Wet Tropics, a region that is in transition with the huge potential to transform under-productive farmland back to a flourishing ecosystem. We are working to protect and increase habitat, grow threatened vegetation communities, reduce run off to the Great Barrier reef, sequester carbon and create local jobs.”

Branden Barber, CEO

Environment Tasmania

Since 2004, Environment Tasmania have spearheaded campaigns on important environmental issues for the island, including native forest logging, super trawlers and salmon farming. Their current focus is on marine environments, climate and rivers.

\$225K

→ salaries, project costs



“This funding has been critical in strengthening the core of the organisation and without this Environment Tasmania would not be in a position to run a state-wide Freshwater Campaign. It will also help increase the cohesivity of the state’s environmental movement, by bolstering relations between Environment Tasmania and Landcare Tasmania.”

James Overington CEO

Landcare Tasmania

Landcare Tasmania supports a diverse and growing network of over 250 local groups working to protect and restore catchments across the island, tackling some of Tasmania’s most pressing environmental challenges.

\$225K

→ salaries

“With this investment, we are better equipped to back local leadership, support member-led projects, and build the systems needed for a resilient Landcare movement across Lutruwita/Tasmania. The timing of the Nature Impact Collective donation is amazing, providing crucial flexibility at a pivotal time.”

Peter Stronach, CEO

Murray Darling Wetlands Working Group

Over more than 30 years, the Murray Darling Wetlands Working Group has delivered hundreds of projects, rehabilitating and watering wetlands on public and private property across the Murray-Darling Basin.

\$250K

→ salaries, contractors, org development



“These untied funds allow us to develop and implement two key objectives in our strategic plan. Firstly, to increase our profile and gain access to new sources of funding and secondly, to bring in the science of social impact into our work and understand how we are making a difference to people’s lives and how we can improve.”

Deborah Nias, CEO

Northern Australia Conservation Alliance

Northern Australian Conservation Alliance (NACA) was formed in early 2025 to build collective power and secure lasting protections for nature across the 'top end', uniting four key regional conservation bodies: Environment Centre NT, Arid Lands Environment Centre, Cairns and Far North Environment Centre and Environs Kimberley.

\$450K

→ salaries, project costs, contractors



"This funding arrived at a critical point in the early days of NACA's formation and was game changing, giving the Alliance a sense of confidence and momentum. It created a feeling that others believe in NACA's mission and approach, generating increased focus on developing campaign strategy and activities. We have since raised further funds, in part leveraging Nature Impact Collective's support."

Kirsty Howey, Executive Director
Environment Centre NT

Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists

The Wentworth Group brings together eminent scientists to provide a trusted source of independent advice on solutions-based policy reforms for land and water issues. Since 2002 they have been working to ensure water and land policy reform protects Australia's critical environments.

\$250K

→ salaries



"With a once-in-20-year reform to Australia's water laws on the horizon, this grant has been a game-changer for us, enabling us to expand our team and enhance our capabilities, allowing us to take full advantage of opportunities ahead to secure the health of Australia's largest river system. The untied grant provides us with flexibility to adapt as the reform agenda evolves, and gives us greater confidence in what we can achieve."

- Dr Celine Steinfeld, CEO

Biodiversity Council

Bringing together experts, First Nations leaders and the wider community, the Biodiversity Council was established to address Australia's biodiversity crisis. Originally within the University of Melbourne, they recently transitioned to become an independent organisation and establish the Nature Media Centre.

\$450K

→ salaries



"This support from Nature Impact Collective has been transformative for us, propelling the Council into its next chapter, enabling us to build strong operational foundations and chart an ambitious course forward. It also empowers the Council to pursue strategic initiatives, including working with partners to establish a dedicated Nature Media Centre."

James Trezise, CEO

Southern Australia Aboriginal Sea and Land Management Alliance (SAALSMA)

SAALSMA was recently established by a group of First Nations leaders to bring together First Nations knowledge and strategy to address the unique challenges they face in Southern Australian land and sea management.

\$150K

→ salaries, project costs, org development



"Before this funding, we were a group of volunteers with competing priorities trying to make it work. Now we can employ a professional to take the time to establish SAALSMA properly, laying a strong foundation for culturally-led Caring for Country in southern Australia."

Jack Pascoe, Co-ordinator

Strengthening environmental organisations capable of leading transformational change

GOAL 3

We progress this goal by:

- Selecting organisations that play an important role in leading transformational change for inland waterways and coasts, where our funds can make a significant difference to their capacity and impact
- Empowering selected organisations to allocate funds where and when they are most needed
- Supporting collaborations of environmental organisations.

Nature Impact Collective's core business is identifying great organisations, providing flexible funding they can use to increase their capacity and encouraging them to get on with their important work.

Most organisations receive either 10% (\$225,000 in Round 2) or 20% (\$450,000 in Round 2) of the collective funding stream.

We manage relationships with funded organisations through a series of regular 'touch points', prioritising verbal updates and targeted information provision, consistent with our trust-based approach.

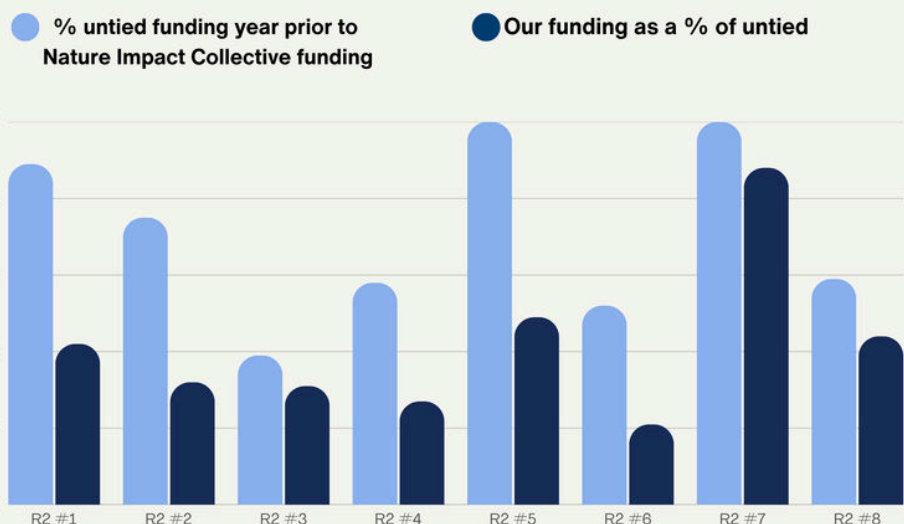
Key Learnings

Organisations need and deeply value access to flexible, untied funding.

The organisations with the highest levels of untied funding tend to be newer, starting up their organisations using philanthropic donations.

Organisations with a broader mix of funding conversely tend to have lower proportions of untied funding, due to them attracting project funding.

Untied Funding



Most of the organisations funded in our first two funding rounds were ‘medium size’ according to the ACNC definition.

Medium sized organisations offer great opportunity for impact, as they have capacity to build upon and we can clearly see the difference our funding makes.

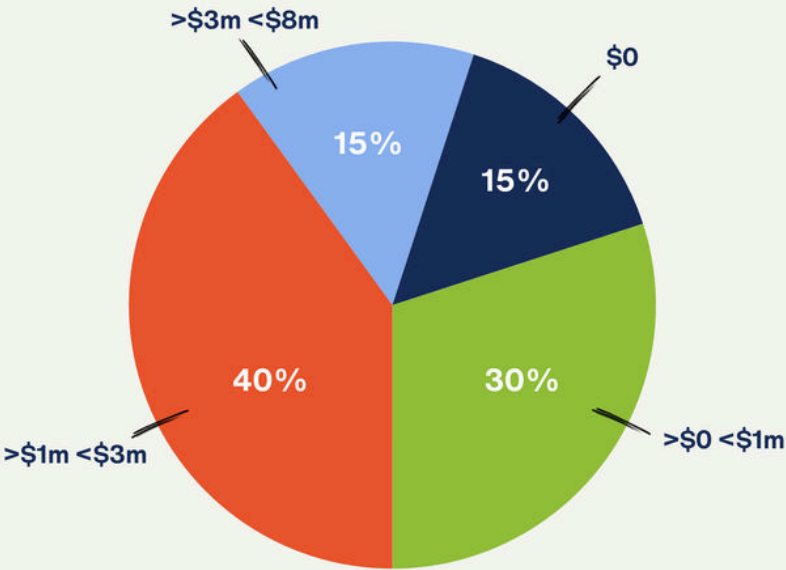
The organisations are most likely to use the funds for salaries.

Round two organisations were asked to indicate how they anticipate allocating funds (with flexibility to change if needed). Using the funds for salaries, core staff and project/campaign staff, was the most common response.

Round one organisations which received funding last year were asked to confirm the main categories they have allocated funding to.
Salaries:

- Country Needs People recruited an excellent candidate to work directly with their Aboriginal partner organisations to support their land and sea management work.
- Environmental Justice Australia expanded its nature program, targeting key systemic drivers of environmental damage including savanna clearing for cotton.

Annual revenue year prior to Nature Impact Collective funding

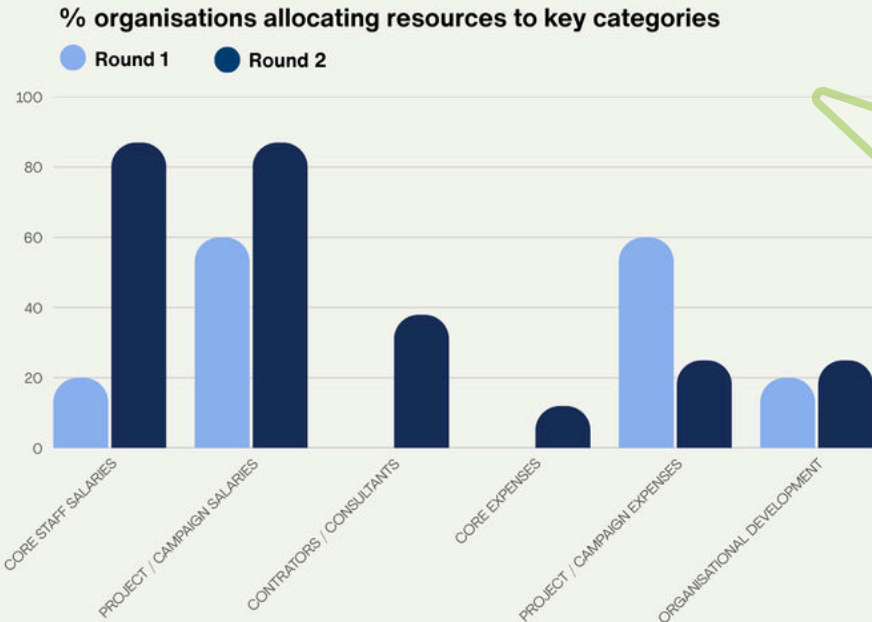


Other project/campaign costs:

- Environment Centre NT were able to work deeply with 13 First Nations clans with responsibility for the Roper River. This engagement led to the creation of the Ropa Woda Governance Council and its advocacy to call for no more extraction licences.
- The Murray Darling Conservation Alliance ran a high profile campaign in South Australia in the lead up to the 2024 Federal Election, demonstrating strong community support for a better Basin plan.

Organisational development initiative:

- Nature Glenelg Trust used Nature Impact Collective’s support to upgrade their financial management system, including training for staff.



We progress this goal by:

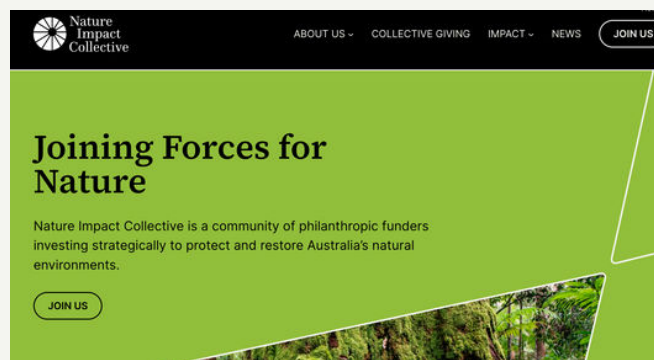
- Achieving and promoting best-practice funding and demonstrating an effective model for working together.
- Constantly evaluating our progress and adjusting our approach, to keep us moving towards this goal.

Communicating our Work

The launch of our website in October 2024 and our LinkedIn profile in early 2025 have both been key to increasing awareness of our work. We share progress on our journey as a unique nature-focused collective giving entity in regularly published blogs focused on:

- Our funding approach, including our strategy and collective giving model.
- Our Collective, including member profiles and reporting back on activities.
- The organisations we are funding and their work.

During the year we introduced a quarterly newsletter, sending the first edition out in May 2025, to keep our growing list of friends up to date.



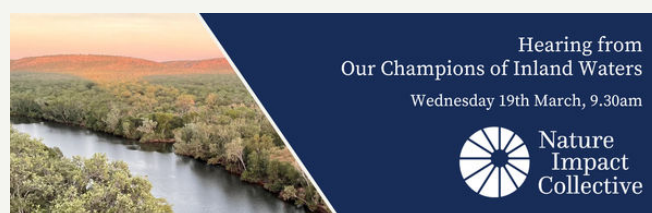
Nature Impact Collective website

Networking and Relationships

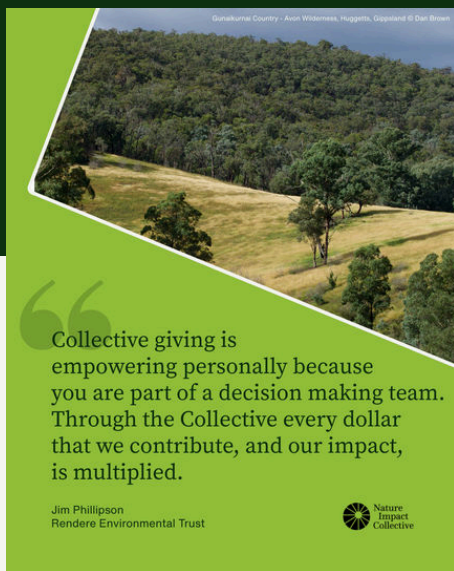
We seek out opportunities to learn and share, within the Collective as well as the broader network. Our members are all active members of the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network and we appreciate the ways Network staff and members inform our giving.

In March 2024 we held our first 'Meet the Leaders' event, in which the leaders of the organisations we had funded in Round 1 were invited to join our Members to talk about the work they are doing, what impact our funding had made, and the future. AEGN members were invited to join this session.

In May we hosted an event in Melbourne to introduce Kirsty Howey, CEO Of Environment Centre NT, and enable other funders to learn about ECNT's important work.



'Meet the Leaders' event with Round 1 funded organisations, March 2025



LinkedIn Tiles, 2025

Collective Process - How We Work Together

We continue to evolve and bed down our collective decision making process. We follow an annual cycle of giving, with members coming together in spring to agree on the funding strategy for the following year. The funding strategy confirms the funding theme (currently Resilient Waterways and Thriving Coastlines) and identifies the key criteria that shapes our giving.

Together, and with help from friends at the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network, we develop a list of potential organisations and undertake research and due diligence to understand their work and suitability for our funding. Leaders of shortlisted organisations are invited to meet our members so we can get to know them better.

The following autumn, members reconvene to select organisations to fund. This year, members donated their share of the collective gift directly to the organisations chosen.

Members are also able to contribute to the ongoing governance and development of Nature Impact Collective's work. All members participate at times in networking events and operations meetings to plan and finetune the Collective's work.

Jim Phillipson, William Crothers and Ella Colley are thanked for their contributions as Directors on the board.

“Nature Impact Collective has opened our eyes to what we can do collectively to make a big difference. The funding round process has been guided by a clear set of goals, with the groundwork done for us. This has meant a big step up in nature giving for us, valuing how our contribution and impact is leveraged further and really pleasing to see organisations receiving substantial amounts in untied giving.”

Rachel Honnery & Michael Cahill
Pademelon Fund



www.natureimpactcollective.org.au

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