READY COMMUNITIES

Year 1 & 2 Program
2024-25

March 2024

evolve NETWORK

University of Southern Queensland

Rural Economies
Centre of Excellence

GEN AUSTRALIA

READY COMMUNITIES

We acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional custodians of the land and Elders past and present.

Through our deeply transformative work we acknowledge the endorsement and permission of each community and its Elders is an essential precursor to our work.

We work with great respect of the cultural landscape, the knowledge and skills of the community and the dreams of the people we serve.

Social Impact
In The Regions

Introducing the founding partners

Ready Communities was founded by Kerry Grace and Dr. Chad Renando in 2023. While both founders agree there are excellent place-based initiatives found across Australia, few incorporate both community and economic development in their framework.

The combined experiences of the founders enables integration of community and economic development portfolios to maximise the impact of siloed initiatives and enhance established long-term place-based methodologies.
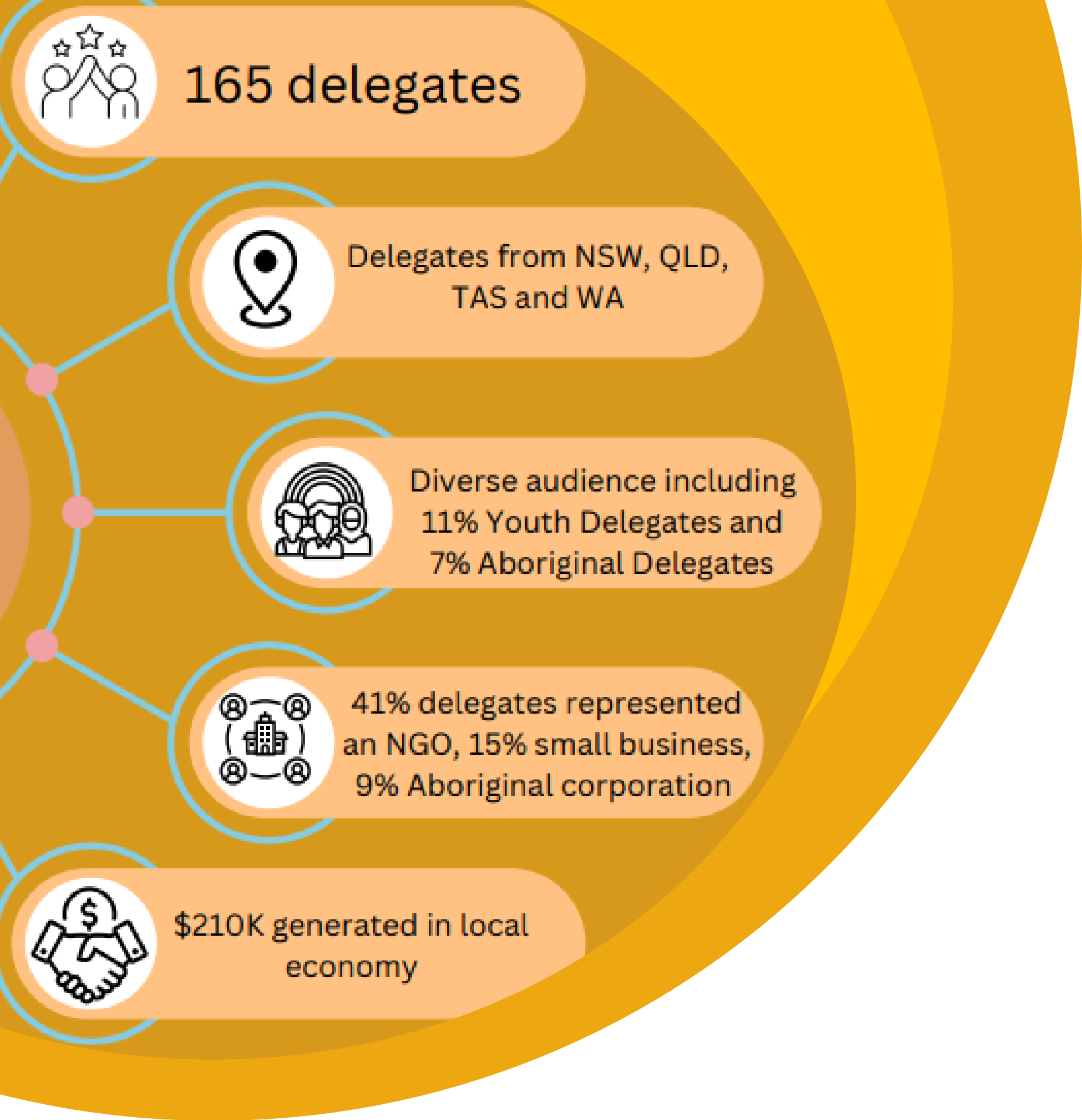
Kerry Grace

Through her company, Evolve Group Network (est. 2004) Kerry has delivered a broad range of work including strategic planning, program delivery, vocational education, social enterprise development and events for NGOs, Aboriginal Corporations and government.

Between 2016 (to 2023) Kerry held the role, Director of Regional Development for Regional Development Australia Mid North Coast and Norfolk Island.

Dr. Chad Renando

Chad has over 30 years' experience in leadership positions in the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors in the United States and Australia. Following his role leading an award-winning incubator in 2017, Chad focused on understanding and supporting place-based initiatives to address systemic contributing factors to resilience in rural communities. His passion integrates his roles as a Research Fellow (Innovation Ecosystems) with the Rural Economies Centre of Excellence at the University of Southern Queensland, his work mapping and measuring systems through not for profit Startup Status, and as General Manager with the Global Entrepreneurship Network Australia.

165 delegates

Delegates from NSW, QLD, TAS and WA

Diverse audience including 11% Youth Delegates and 7% Aboriginal Delegates

41% delegates represented an NGO, 15% small business, 9% Aboriginal corporation

$210K generated in local economy

Social Impact
In The Regions

The first Social Impact in the Regions (SIITR) conference was held in Coffs Harbour in September 2023. The event attracted 165 delegates from NSW, QLD, TAS and WA.

The SIITR audience are regionally based changemakers who work or volunteer as not for profit managers or board members, social entrepreneurs, social impact investors and policy makers.

Social Impact in the Regions was always intended to be is more than a conference. It is a regional social impact movement.

Social Impact in the Regions (SIITR) 2024 will be held in Kempsey, NSW between 4-6 September.

In 2024 we expect 300 delegates representing small NGOs, Aboriginal Corporations, community groups, government and philanthropy. Our audience will live and/or work in regional Australia and have a genuine interest in creating social impact in regional communities.

While the estimated economic output of SIITR 2024 is $810K the social impact will reach deeply into the community via the Ready Macleay program which commenced in January 2024.

The SIITR conference is the focal point of the two-year Ready Macleay program, the first of the **ten-year** Ready Communities national program.

People local to the Macleay will participate in the conference as delegates, workshop facilitators, guides, hosts and local mentors.

The 2024 SIITR program showcases Ready Macleay through the delivery of experiential learning at the conference across the 2024 Ready Macleay themes: Youth Futures, Housing, Agricultural Communities, Creative Industries and CBD Activation.

After SIITR24, the Macleay will become the first legacy community enabling a range of capability and capacity development opportunities.

The Ready Communities program will continue to scale to a further 15-18 communities over ten years.

Minimising what doesn't work

- Fly in - fly out community and economic development
- Short and sharp activities with no local relevance
- Engaging 'at' and not 'with' community
- Economic development sans social capital
- Siloed approaches

Building on what does

- Existing place-based initiatives
- Whole of community approach
- Embedded learning - just in time approach
- Deep community engagement
- Integrated community and economic development approach
- Support to align funding and enable local collaboration
- Support to pursue positive action, not just solve problems

24 months of local impact

READY COMMUNITIES

READY MACLEAY

Mapping

Ready Macleay starts with a comprehensive map of community assets, policies, funding.

In progress

Focus areas

A range of community engagements identify five focus areas. The five areas are then utilised as a means to engage local community members in the program.
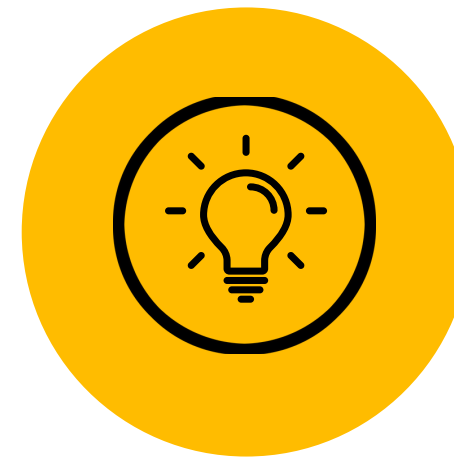
Complete

Activations

Feb: Community Conversations resulting in action and ownership

May: Embed learning; Define specific programs, projects and opportunities

July: Inform SIITR and prepare for future investment

In progress

Capacity and Capability

Delivery of skill sets aligned to focus areas.

Delivery of core competencies including: community facilitation and consultation, event management, community engagement. Activate local angel investors.
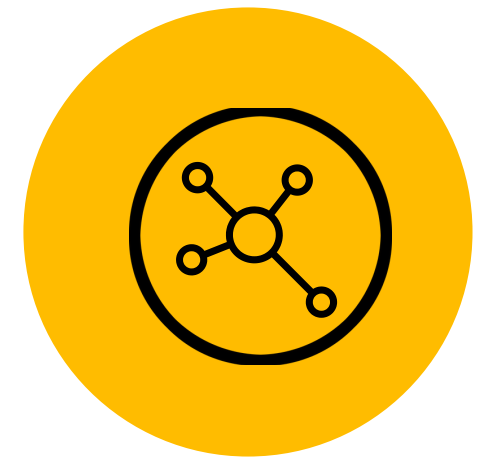
In progress

SIITR

Social Impact In The Regions

Local engagement in community event.

Pride in hosting national event SIITR.

Establish community foundation

Planning

Legacy

Twelve-month support and connection with national alumni and next SIITR community.

Support backbone organisation. to continue building capacity and capability.

Planning

2024 themes, Macleay Valley NSW

Ready Macleay will:
- Provide a platform for diverse community members to come together, build new relationships and collaborate
- Explore synergies between community and economic development
- Better understand how policy impacts the community
- Learn to catalyse the voice of the community
- Develop industry clusters
- Address community challenges through community action
- Identify a range of initiatives that will be delivered throughout the 24 month program and beyond
- Highlight opportunities for regional investment
- Provide experiential learning activities at Social Impact in the Regions
- Provide practical community feedback to relevant policy makers and industry bodies
- Create common threads between Ready Community Regions
- Integrate and enhance related programs and initiatives in community

Delivery

| January | February | July | September | Oct 24-Dec 25 |

Initial Engagement

Activities
Community meetings with key stakeholders.

Outputs
- Local engagement
- Determine first iteration of key themes.

Resourcing
- Local coordinator

Impact
- Local engagement

Measurement
- Meetings
- Level of engagement
- Funding committed

Mapping

Activities
- Desktop research.
- Input to Startup Status mapping software.
- Interviews with key local stakeholders.

Outputs
- Local mapping and gaps analysis
- Local funding map

Resourcing
- Startup Status licence

Impact
- Clarity

Measurement
- Mapping complete
- Baseline collaborative partnerships

Engagement

Activities
- Community meetings Feb, May and July

Outputs
- Identify theme champions
- Identify theme activities

Resourcing
- Local investment for community events

Impact
- Engagement

Measurement
- Attendance
- Engagement
- Identified activities

Activation

Capability Development

Activities
- Activities identified by theme
- Training identified by theme

Outputs
- Activities
- Learning opportunities

Resourcing
- Local and national investment in theme activations

Impact
- Local activities (community defined KPIs)

Measurement
- Community defined

Social Impact
In The Regions

Alumni Activities

Activities
- Visiting mentors
- Local mentors activated
- Involvement in next SIITR

Outputs
- Activities
- Learning opportunities

Resourcing
- Local and national investment in theme activations

Impact
- Connection within community and external to
- Collaboration

Measurement
- Community defined

What makes a Ready Community?

- Communities in transition
- Population under 50,000
- Existing backbone organisation
- Existing collaborative structures and assets
- Conference capacity (NOTE: The conference focuses on community assets and does not require a function centre)
- Engagement from key community leaders in community, government and industry

Investment opportunities

	READY COMMUNITIES	READY MACLEAY	Social Impact In The Regions
Scope	National	Macleay (NSW)	Macleay (NSW) / National
Stage	Seed	Activation	Delivery
Investment Impact	Model development	Direct community impacts	Direct community Impacts
Direct Beneficiaries	Program capacity to scale	Macleay community	Regional Social impact and local community

Investment opportunities 2024/25

Ready Communities
National program

Investment
- Ready communities model development
- Evaluation (university)
- Administration
- Marketing
- Operational expenses

Anticipated outcomes
- Program frameworks
- Delivery in Macleay
- Evaluation years 1/2 Macleay
- Delivery year 1 (program 2)
- Evaluation Program 2, Year 1

Investment $300k-$500k

Ready Macleay
Program 1

Investment
- Theme leader
- Activation (initiative) seed funding
- Incidentals, events and community engagement

Anticipated outcomes
- Initiatives delivered
- Community engagement
- Cluster development

Investment $50k-$100k

Social Impact in the Regions

Investment
- Venue hire
- Key note speakers
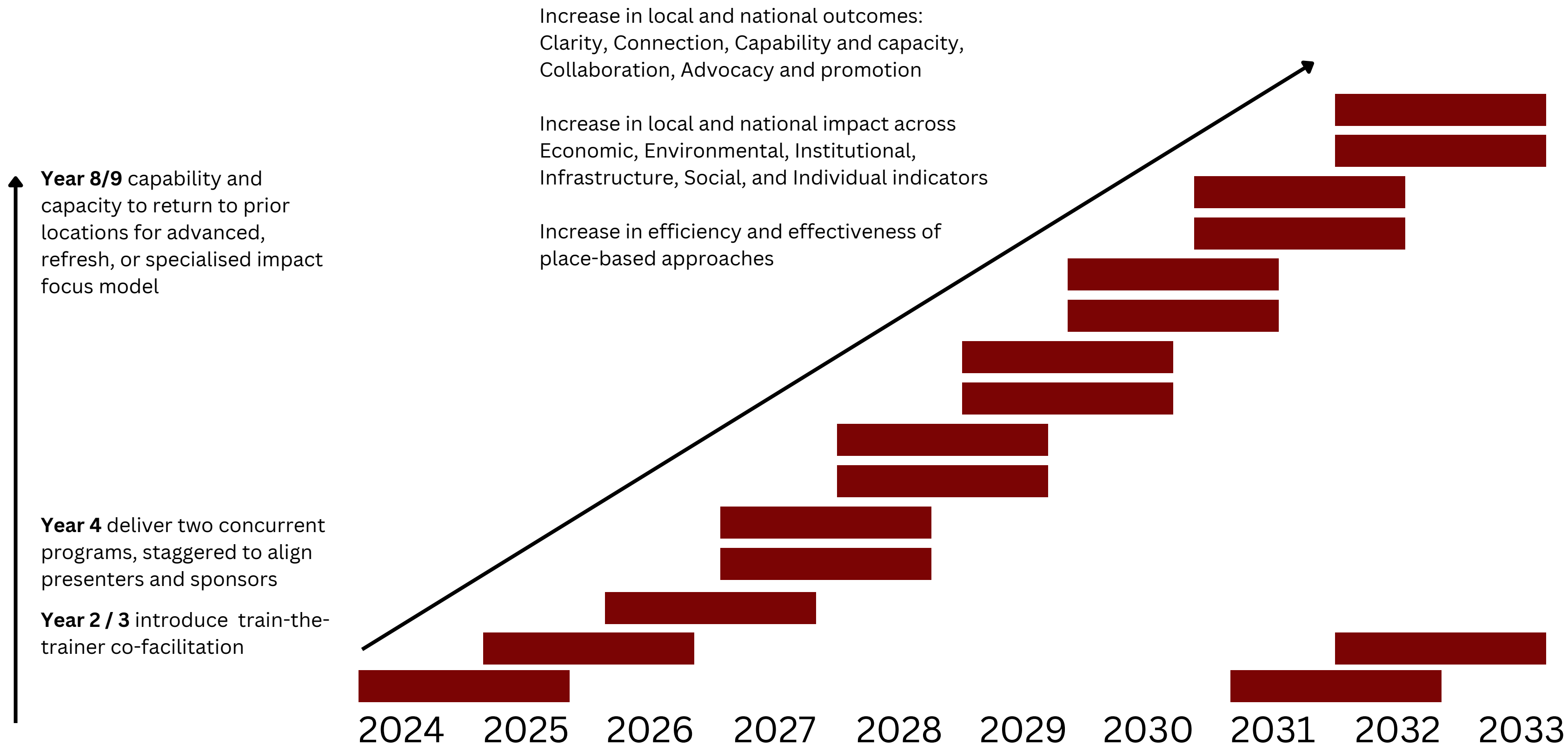- Functions
- Bursaries
- In-kind, involve representatives of partnering organisations as guests, mentors and speakers

Anticipated outcomes
- Connection among delegates
- Deeper understanding of place-work for partnering organisations
- Connection with the Macleay
- Economic impact in host community (min $800k Output)
- Relocation of skilled staff to host community

Investment $20k-$60k

Impact and scale

Increase in local and national outcomes:
Clarity, Connection, Capability and capacity,
Collaboration, Advocacy and promotion

Increase in local and national impact across
Economic, Environmental, Institutional,
Infrastructure, Social, and Individual indicators

Increase in efficiency and effectiveness of
place-based approaches

Year 8/9 capability and
capacity to return to prior
locations for advanced,
refresh, or specialised impact
focus model

Year 4 deliver two concurrent
programs, staggered to align
presenters and sponsors

Year 2 / 3 introduce train-the-
trainer co-facilitation

2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031 2032 2033

Contact Us

We look forward to hearing from you

📞 (Kerry) 0404 88 7473

📞 (Chad) 0479 117 101

🌐 www.socialimpactintheregions.com.au

✉️ kgrace@evolvenetwork.com.au

READY COMMUNITIES

Social Impact
In The Regions

evolve NETWORK

University of Southern Queensland

Rural Economies
Centre of Excellence

GEN AUSTRALIA