

# Terms of Reference

## Community Reference Group – Collingwood Leisure Centre, Clifton Hill

### Context

Significantly more energy storage is needed for a smooth transition to a renewable energy grid. However, there is no model for how neighbourhood-scale energy storage could synergise with electric-vehicle (EV) charging. For the first time in Australia, this project will explore whether a neighbourhood-scale battery and co-located EV charging station can improve the business case for neighbourhood batteries while improving outcomes for local communities, particularly with increasing EV ownership and rising demand for public EV charging infrastructure.

### About the project

Yarra Energy Foundation (YEF) has received \$750,000 grant funding from the Victorian Government through the *Neighbourhood Battery Initiative* to implement a neighbourhood battery and electric vehicle (EV) charging station.

The equipment will be located near the Collingwood Leisure Centre, 2-28 Turnbull St, Clifton Hill. The site is managed by Yarra City Council and the land is owned by the Victorian Government.

The project is expected to be completed by December 2024. Internally, the project is referred to as Clifton Hill 1 (CH1) and is the first neighbourhood battery in Clifton Hill.

A key intent of the project is to reduce emissions from electricity use (from households, businesses and transport). YEF also wants to explore if profits from the EV charger could be returned to the local community through a 'Community Benefits Fund'.

YEF would like to co-design the scope, governance, and disbursement of the Fund with the local community and relevant local stakeholders.

## Funding objectives

The Victorian Government's *Neighbourhood Battery Initiative* is intended to:

- Support understanding of the full range of benefits that neighbourhood-scale batteries can provide;
- Help to overcome barriers to the deployment of neighbourhood-scale batteries;
- Inform regulatory reform;
- Determine which methods of neighbourhood-scale battery deployment provide the most benefits for the Victorian electricity system; and
- Support the decarbonisation of Victoria's electricity system to tackle climate change.

YEF has received funding from the Victorian Government to

- Implement a neighbourhood-scale battery, co-located with an EV charging station;
- Develop a clear financial model for the operation of a neighbourhood battery and EV charging station;
- Develop a clear plan to trial innovative new tariffs in the low-voltage network to unlock value for energy consumers in consultation with CitiPower;
- Investigate how revenue from the battery and EV charging station could potentially be reinvested or redirected to support vulnerable households (form of support to be investigated through the project); and
- Demonstrate the ability to access multiple value streams, including energy arbitrage and Frequency Control Ancillary Services (FCAS).

## Project aims

Through the project, YEF and partners hope to learn:

- How to design an EV charging system which is efficient, useful, financially sustainable and ideally replicable
- How to design an EV charging software system which optimally manages electricity flows and user interfaces
- How to replicate the successes of the Fitzroy North<sup>1</sup> project while improving our understandings of community battery systems and their implementation

---

<sup>1</sup> YEF installed and launched the first inner-urban community battery in Fitzroy North on 5 June 2022 with funding from the Victorian Government's *Neighbourhood Battery Initiative* (round 1).

- How the implementation of community battery and EV charging systems can be further streamlined for future projects
- How to further develop community engagement work with residents and other stakeholders, and to incorporate their feedback and ideas into the design of the project
- How to improve our communications around equity and energy affordability

Anticipated benefits of the community battery and EV charger are:

- Mitigating 'solar waste' – wasted solar energy which is not used.
- Reducing 'energy inequity' – allowing more people to access renewable energy and install solar.
- Addressing 'export limiting' – blockages in the network restricting more homes from connecting solar to the grid.
- Improving 'energy affordability' – a battery would raise local supply of renewable energy, thus putting downward pressure on local electricity prices, albeit with marginal impact from a single battery, helping to reduce bill pressure for residents and businesses.
- Leveraging economies of scale to deliver shared neighbourhood electricity storage more cost-effectively than individual household battery storage.
- Informing how community batteries could be deployed at scale.
- Providing a scalable, step-change solution to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address the climate emergency.
- Grow the community's trust and understanding of the energy sector, including their ability to participate in the energy transition.
- Deferring or mitigating expensive network augmentation.
- Providing publicly available EV charging to residents and visitors, encouraging the uptake of EVs and the transition from private ownership of internal combustion engine vehicles.
- Providing a viable example for the pairing of a community battery with an EV charging solution.

#### 1. Name of Group

## Community Reference Group – Clifton Hill 1 (CRG)

### 2. Purpose

The CRG will provide insights, ideas, feedback and advice from the community's perspective to the project team at the Yarra Energy Foundation about the proposed community battery and EV charging station installation near **2-28 Turnbull St, Clifton Hill (Collingwood Leisure Centre)**.

The CRG will work directly with the project team to ensure their perspectives, aspirations and priorities are understood and considered in the project team's decision-making.

The CRG will work directly with the project team to help identify or develop potential alternatives and identify preferred solutions.

### 3. Scope

The CRG will provide input about the proposed community battery and EV charging station installation at 2-28 Turnbull St, Clifton Hill (Collingwood Leisure Centre).

**During the Term (see section 4), the CRG is likely to provide input regarding:**

- I. Some operational parameters of the EV charging station, such as the hours of operations and the time limits for parking;**
- II. The principles on which the EV charging prices should be set;**
- III. The principles for a 'Community Benefits Fund', which would redirect profits (if any) back to the local community;**
- IV. Other negotiables to be determined by the project team within the parameters of the grant funding from the Victorian Government**

Note that these negotiable elements above are subject to change. If they change, YEF will inform the CRG and explain the reasons for any changes.

As community batteries are still a relatively new concept, YEF does expect new learnings may require changes in direction or questioning of assumptions throughout the course of the project.

The CRG will provide input to enable the project team to make decisions in accordance with the project schedule and timeline as determined by the project manager.

#### 4. Term

The Term of the CRG is from 11 March 2024 – 26 August 2024. The period of this Term may be amended in agreement between the project team and CRG members.

The project team may request adjustments to the length of the Term if required to enable community input on future decisions about the project.

#### 5. Membership

YEF will advertise for Expressions of Interest to join the CRG to local residents, businesses, and stakeholders.

YEF intends to confirm six-to-eight nominated members to join the CRG on a voluntary basis.

Members may include, but not be limited to:

- Local residents on the same low-voltage network as the battery
- Local residents who live nearby, but who may not be connected to the same low-voltage network
- Representatives of local businesses
- Representatives of Collingwood Leisure Centre (staff or users)
- Representatives of any other relevant local stakeholder that is likely to be impacted directly by the project
- Any other relevant local stakeholder with specific expertise that is likely to benefit the project

Members of the CRG may choose to cease involvement at any time by contacting YEF in writing. This is a voluntary position and members should only be contacted on matters relating to their role as a CRG member. The personal contact details of members will only be used by YEF for the purposes of the CRG within the scope of this project.

The CRG will be limited to a maximum of eight members. Membership and expressions of interest to become a member of the CRG are managed by YEF and at YEF's discretion as the project-lead and recipient of the funding from the Victorian Government.

While not members, YEF reserves the right to invite to CRG meetings observers or guests from relevant stakeholders, which may include from time to time, representative(s) of Yarra City Council, Collingwood Leisure Centre, project partners, contractors or other technical experts to support clear communication of information and issues resolution.

## 6. Responsibilities

CRG members will be asked to participate in at least **5 meetings** with the project team during the Term. Meetings may be a mix of in-person and online, and would be between 60-90 minutes.

Members are required to indicate availability for meeting options and advise YEF if they are unable to attend a meeting with as much notice as possible.

CRG members have agreed to participate in good faith and in the spirit of collaboration with a focus on how the project will deliver outcomes that benefit the wider community, and not exclusively individual households or individuals.

CRG members are encouraged to respond in a timely manner to emails, text and/or phone calls as requested by the project team, such as for organising meeting times or the provision of information about the project.

## 7. Meetings

YEF is responsible for arranging the meetings, including a suitable time and location (including the possibility of online meetings).

YEF will prepare and circulate an agenda and any supporting papers in advance to the CRG and be responsible for chairing and taking minutes.

YEF is responsible for circulating minutes after the meeting (within 3 business days) to the CRG.

For transparency of process and decision-making, YEF will upload meeting minutes to the YEF website so that local residents and community members can access them.

Members and YEF retain the right to redact information in meeting minutes to protect participants' identity, sensitive or personal information, confidential information, Intellectual Property, or any other information YEF believes inappropriate for public access.

As funders of the project, unredacted minutes and meeting records may be provided to the Victorian Government's Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action as part of YEF's reporting requirements.

## 8. Amendment of this Terms of Reference

This Terms of Reference may be amended or modified in writing after consultation and agreement with the project team and members of the CRG.