



ANNUAL REVIEW

DECEMBER 2022



Education changes lives. And families. And communities.



HEATHER WALKER - GRENFELL
Bachelor of Education student.

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Country Education Foundation of Australia (CEF)
is a national 'for purpose' organisation helping rural and regional youth access post-school education, training and jobs through grants, scholarships, support services and resources.





OUR MISSION

To promote and enable further education, career and personal development opportunities for rural youth, through community-based encouragement and financial assistance. To help close the participation gap which exists between country and city students.

**Since
1993**

7366
Grants and
scholarships

\$15,267,913
In financial support

OUR VISION

Vibrant and thriving rural and regional communities where youth (16-25) of any background or ability can access the services and resources they need in order to fulfil their personal potential and contribute fully to the communities in which they live and the broader society.



OUR BOARD



(From L - R): Nick Burton Taylor AM - Chairman, Julia Burton Taylor OAM - Secretary, Judy Brewer AO - Patron, Juliet Petersen - Chief Executive Officer, David Smithers AM - Treasurer, Paula McLean - Director, Katie Walker - Director, Dougal Geddes, Director, Peita Burton Taylor - Director.

OUR TEAM



(From L - R): Sarah Washbrook - Administration & Support, Lisa Carrick - Partnerships & Community Engagement, Juliet Petersen, - Chief Executive Officer, Deb Carrol - Finance Manager, Emma Burns - Students & Education Partnerships, Xanthe Long - Projects & Operations, Nicole Wright - Impact & Communications, Donna Roberts - Finance Support & IT Systems Management.

Absent: Accounts Support - Jane McMillan.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

"While continuing to deal with the residual challenges of COVID-19 the year has been marked by consolidation and measured growth."



As an organisation we have focused on improving the support to our 44 local foundations, so they can operate more efficiently and successfully. The compliance obligations imposed in today's world has meant that we have been required to invest in policies and procedures that meet all our respective obligations. Whilst on the surface not a particularly exciting endeavour, it has involved considerable investment by the Board and the CEF team.

Without doubt, the highlight of the year has been the appointment of our new patron Judy Brewer AO. Judy has long been associated with the Foundation through her husband, The Hon. Tim Fischer AC, who was a long serving and committed Patron. Judy brings a wonderful enthusiasm and pragmatism to living and working in regional Australia which is truly inspirational. Her introduction at the Alumni Awards in Canberra highlighted her affinity with our mission and her empathy for the youth of our regions and the challenges they face. We are incredibly thankful for her agreement to be involved.

The Alumni Awards were not only an opportunity to showcase the achievements of our recipients but provided a clear reminder to our volunteers as to the value of their work. The increasing profile of and participation in the event is a measure of the maturing nature of our organisation which turns 30 this year. Celebrating our growth over this period, combined with the ambitious plans to grow our footprint and sustainability, becomes the focus of our energies at present. This is a remarkable journey from the first community foundation established in 1993 in Boorowa, NSW.

It is widely acknowledged that the mental health and well-being of Australia's youth, particularly those in the regions, has been greatly impacted by the pandemic years. To provide vital support to the young people with whom we work with, we have introduced a service providing access to psychologists and counsellors for those who require it.

The past year saw the holding of a biennial gathering of volunteers in Canberra. To witness the diversity of

our volunteers, bound together by common purpose is always an inspirational experience, and this event was no different. The gathering of some 50 people from across the network all with a range of ideas on how to make ourselves more valuable was thought-provoking. All agree there is a need to expand our geographic coverage which hopefully sees us moving further into Victoria and Queensland before we seek opportunities in Tasmania and Western Australia. Much of this ambition forms the basis of our strategic plan, which can only be fulfilled if our fundraising endeavours can be achieved.

The team under the leadership of Juliet Petersen continues to thrive in our own premises, based in Orange, NSW. We now fully occupy the building that we moved into two years ago. The commitment the team exhibits when mixed with their professionalism shows in the level of engagement now recognised by Government, but most particularly our communities and alumni.

We are indebted to our treasurer, David Smithers AM, who has guided the financial growth and stability of the organisation. Our endeavours are directed to 'future-proofing' ourselves against potential adversity and challenges. Our financial stability served us well during the COVID period, where we retained all our staff and the momentum of our activities. This financial capacity will enable the next phase of our growth.

As always, I express my heartfelt thanks to those in the CEF family, who continue to share our concern for young Australians striving to find their way through education and vocational experience in the regional and remote areas of the country. Their financial and moral encouragement has sustained us through challenging times, and it is never taken for granted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Burton Taylor'.

Nicholas Burton Taylor AM
Chairman

CEO'S MESSAGE

"2022 was a year that saw us tip the \$15 million mark in direct financial support for rural and regional youth since inception."



I feel like I say this every year, but it is true that one of the greatest things about working at Country Education Foundation of Australia are the young people we support.

Without a doubt, it is our students who inspire us, who know no boundaries and whose determination to fulfill their goals is so powerful that they'll let nothing stand in their way. Studying courses ranging from a Bachelor of Natural Environment and Wilderness to Counter Terrorism and Furniture Restoration, we know that by enabling their access to tertiary study, our rural and regional communities are, and will continue to be enriched, for generations to come.

For several reasons 2022 was a significant year for us. It was a year that saw us tip the \$15 million mark in financial support for rural and regional youth since the first grant was awarded in Boorowa in 1993. It was a year that affirmed in our minds that we really were changing lives. And families. And communities. We grew to understand in an even more meaningful way, 30 years on, that there is an overwhelming obligation to represent ourselves on a broader national stage, and commit to growing our impact with unprecedented and ambitious goals so that more regional youth can unlock their full potential. Importantly, as an organisation, we are excitedly aware of our capacity and commitment to do just this.

Last year alone, CEF provided a massive \$2 million in financial support for grants and scholarships, services, and resources.

A mentor pilot program was conducted utilising resources from across the CEF family with ambitions to upscale the program to the wider community. We expanded our accommodation scholarship opportunities, always aware of the exorbitant costs and drain this places on regional students' financial resources. For the first time, we invested in a vital media strategy to not only raise the profile of the organisation, but to become a louder voice on important issues that face our students and communities which delivered invaluable exposure for CEF.

This year was particularly special as we were able to come together in person in many ways across our network. We held university morning teas with our students who relished the opportunity to meet others from regional backgrounds. We celebrated the achievements of our alumni with a night of awards. We workshopped and socialised with our volunteers at the national committee conference. And we warmly welcomed our Patron Judy Brewer into her role, whose passion for education and community is unrivalled.

We know that none of what we do happens without meaningful collaboration with our volunteers, partners, donors, the Board and staff.

My sincere thanks go to our dedicated Board of Directors for their strategic guidance. Your wisdom and foresight have ensured the ongoing success of CEF and importantly, greater support for the young people in the communities in which we work. Thanks also goes to the extraordinary team at national office. These achievements and successes would not have been possible were it not for them. And without question, the most important and heartfelt thanks goes to our volunteers. Their compassion and dedication inspire and drive all that we do.

As we look ahead, it is with a strong sense of confidence that our strategic priorities of supporting more students, across more regions with greater resources will be realised.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juliet Petersen". The script is fluid and cursive.

Juliet Petersen
Chief Executive Officer



HARRY TIERNAN - COOTAMUNDRA
Bachelor of Medical Science graduate.

OUR PATRON

The Board of Directors and staff of Country Education Foundation of Australia (CEF) were delighted to announce the appointment of Judy Brewer AO, as the organisation's Patron.

Asking Ms Brewer to assume the position of Patron was an obvious and natural choice for CEF founder and Chairman, Nick Burton Taylor as she shares her late husband's dedication to improving educational outcomes and has a passion for rural and regional Australia. She is also an accomplished professional and devoted advocate in her own right.

Ms Brewer is the wife of the late Hon. Tim Fischer AC, who held the role of CEF Patron for more than 15 years until his passing in 2019. The position has remained unfilled until now, making her appointment particularly special. The evening was made even more significant with members of her family in attendance.

In welcoming Ms Brewer to the role, Mr Burton Taylor described her as 'fearless in nature,' going on to say, "We are so pleased the country girl who is imbued with such wonderful values of regional Australia and country living, and such empathy with our constituency has agreed to continue this work," as he addressed the small gathering.

In 2013, Ms Brewer became an officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for distinguished service to people with a disability, particularly those with Autism Spectrum Disorders, to refugees living in rural areas, to women, and to education.



For over 25 years, Ms. Brewer has been a high profile speaker, writer and advocate on issues relating to education, autism, and family carers. She has been actively involved in an executive capacity for many related organisations over this time. Her professional background encompasses a range of positions from working as a parliamentary advisor, to management roles and as a Lecturer in Business and Economics at both La Trobe and Charles Sturt universities. She was also Pro-Chancellor of Charles Sturt University for the Southern Region until 2020.

"He (Tim) loved his involvement with Nick, Julia and the team at CEF, and so it was not a difficult decision for me to continue his role as Patron when honoured with the invitation to do so."

Judy lives on her farm at Mudgegonga in North East Victoria. This property has been in her family for over 150 years, and she is deeply connected to the land and the community. She knows living in regional areas can limit educational opportunities for youth but has also experienced and seen firsthand the benefits grants and scholarships can have. "They not only change one life but have the potential to flow on to change the circumstances of a web of families in a very permanent way," she says.

Ms Brewer says of her late husband and the CEF Patronage, "I cannot guarantee that I will be as dynamic (as Tim), but I do promise to be as passionate. I am greatly looking forward to playing a part in the future of such a valued and vital organisation."

OUR IMPACT

653

Grants and
scholarships

\$3,063

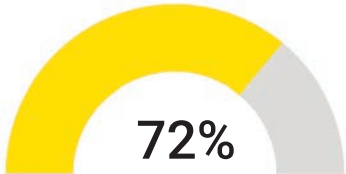
Average support
per student

\$2,000,154

In financial support



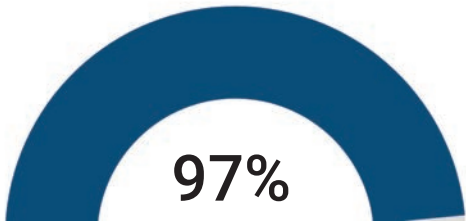
2/3 students **ARE**
INTERESTED in being involved
with CEF



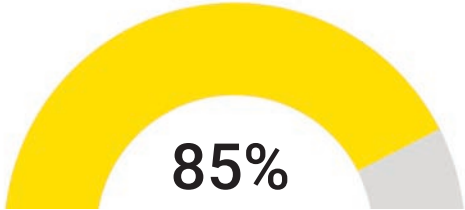
Of students hope to take their
EDUCATION BACK
to a regional area



1/3 students supported
by CEF were **MALE**



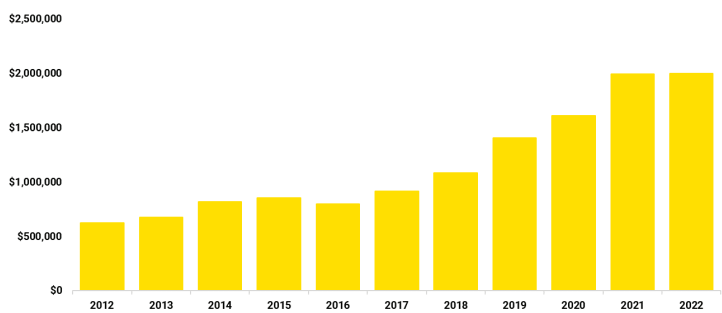
Of students said CEF support was
IMPORTANT or **VERY IMPORTANT**
to starting or continuing study



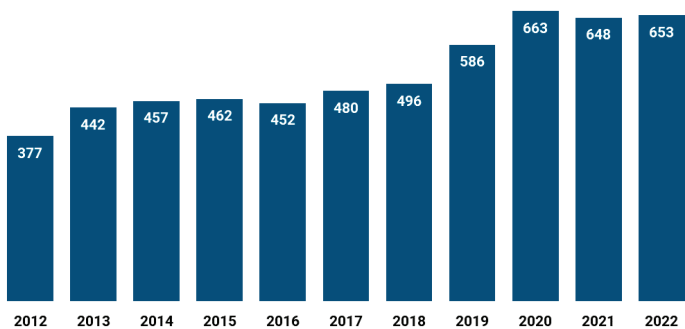
Of students were
HIGHLY SATISFIED
with their local foundation

OUR GROWTH

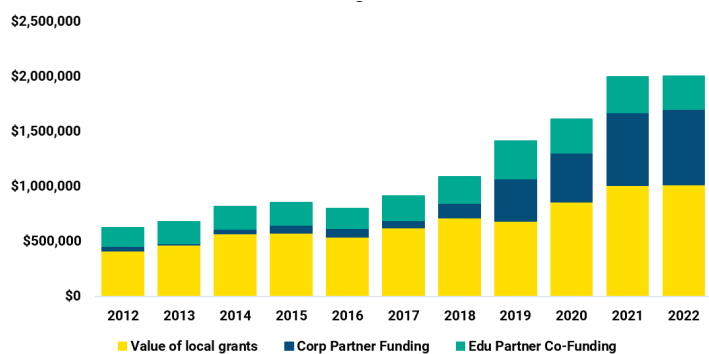
2022 was a year of consolidation for CEF, while still maintaining a commitment to growth, and increasing the support we provide to rural and regional youth in accessing post-school education.



Direct financial assistance



Number of students supported



Types of funding received



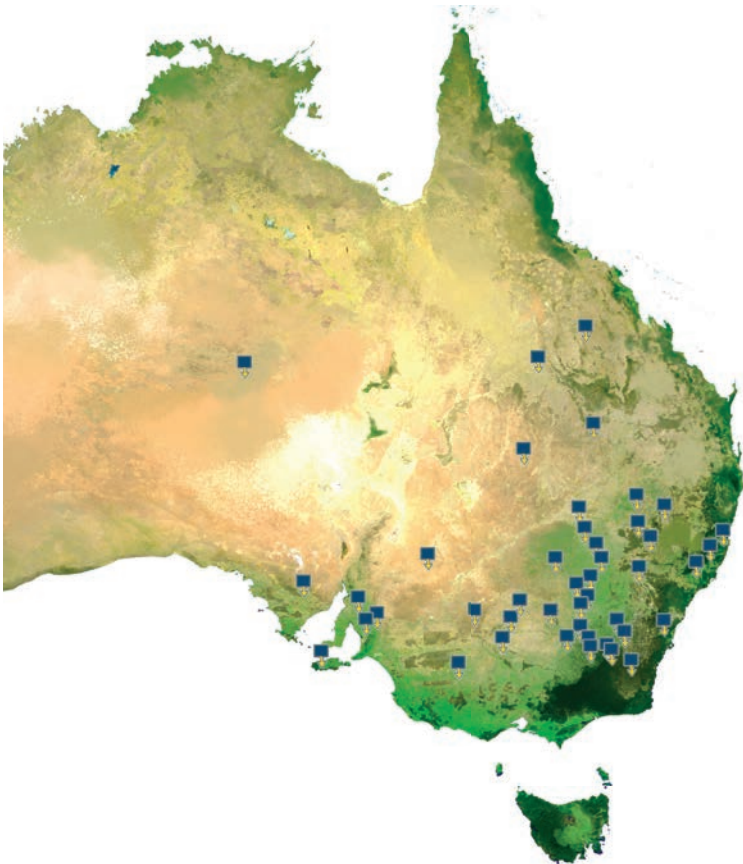
OUR LOCAL FOUNDATIONS

The success of CEF is driven by our community based model. In 2022, CEF was represented in 44 communities across five states and territories.

Every rural and regional community is different, and our unique model allows volunteers to run their foundations in a way that works best for their own town or region. We believe there is no substitute for the intimate knowledge they have of their own people and communities when it comes to making the biggest impact.

This community-led model successfully identifies students who need additional encouragement or who are most at risk of falling through the gaps.

The success of this model is thanks to the dedication and passion of our volunteers.



NEW SOUTH WALES

- Balranald
- Boorowa
- Braidwood
- Broken Hill
- Canowindra
- Coleambally/Darlington Point
- Coonamble
- Cootamundra
- Cowra
- Edward River
- Gilgandra
- Goulburn
- Great Lakes
- Grenfell
- Griffith
- Gulargambone
- Gunnedah
- Gwydir

- Hastings
- Harden
- Macleay Valley
- Merriwa
- Moree
- Namoi
- Nyngan
- Orange
- Shoalhaven
- Snowy Monaro
- Temora
- Walgett
- West Wyalong
- Yass
- Young

QUEENSLAND

- Blackall Tambo
- Clermont
- Maranoa
- Paroo

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

- Clare Valley
- Eudunda
- Kangaroo Island
- Kapunda
- Kimba

NORTHERN TERRITORY

- Central Australia

VICTORIA

- Warracknabeal

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the champions of what we do, what we believe in, and how we connect with local community to make the greatest impact.

More than 415 active volunteers work tirelessly throughout the year with their communities to raise local funds and awareness of CEF.

Each year they receive applications from local youth needing support to pursue post-school education. They assess the applications, interview candidates and award grants to those most in need of help to achieve their goals.

Our CEF recipients know their foundations have confidence in them, and this is just as important as the financial support provided - in many cases even more so.

Value of local grants awarded by our foundations:
2021 = \$1,010,285
2022 = \$1,012,850

2022 Local Foundation Highlights:

- CEF Merriwa 20 Year Anniversary
- Shoalhaven Education Fund 10 Year Celebration
- Classic Wallabies Out West with CEF Coonamble
- Braidwood and District Education Foundation Melbourne Cup Day
- Hastings Education Fund Charity Golf Day
- CEF Grenfell Muster Dinner Fundraiser
- The Hilltops Ramble with CEF Young

**Over
415
Volunteers**

**More than
21,580
Hours worked**

**Almost
\$1,000,000
In unpaid work given to
support regional youth**



JUSTIN IS A VOLUNTEER JUGGERNAUT

Justin Fleming from Boorowa is 'all in' when it comes to community involvement, and CEF is one of his passions. Always smiling, up for a chat and willing to lend a hand, Justin is a perfect example of what a volunteer – and a person – should be.

We cannot think of a better choice for our 2022 Katie Walker Outstanding Service Award.

'Juggernaut' is defined as a huge, powerful, and overwhelming force. When it comes to community involvement and volunteering, Country Education Foundation of Boorowa Chair Justin Fleming is exactly that.

The Katie Walker Outstanding Service Award is an honour awarded for volunteers in recognition of the wonderful work they do with CEF. Justin Fleming has been part of CEF for eleven years, serving as Chair of the Boorowa foundation for ten of those years.

There is no question he has served CEF outstandingly during this time however it would be remiss of us to not acknowledge his numerous community memberships in order to paint a true picture of what an outstanding volunteer he is.



Justin has been President of the Boorowa Rugby Club for the past 10 years and has overseen its growth with increased sponsorship and community involvement.

During this time, more than \$100,000 has been raised for charity. He is currently a board member of the Boorowa Ex-Services Club, Boorowa Early Education Centre and treasurer of Boorowa Rotary.

This is a great honour! I wasn't expecting it. There are so many other worthy candidates! I have thoroughly enjoyed supporting CEF and the young people of Boorowa.

Justin was nominated for the award by his local foundation who say: 'His leadership is evident in the manner in which he supports CEF applicants. He looks at applications in a fair, consistent and genuine manner. He goes above and beyond to ensure students of Boorowa gain the chance to benefit through education and gain a CEF grant.'

So committed to the mission of CEF and supporting the youth of Boorowa, Justin took a grant recipient into his home while the student completed their education.

Justin regularly participates in CEF fundraising events, at both a local and national level. Most recently he was integral to the success of the 2021 Derby Day lunch in Boorowa and the Cocktails event at Boorowa showground.

At a national level, Justin has been Master of Ceremonies for our 'Friends Event' and perhaps most notably, is one of the driving forces behind CEF's most successful fundraiser, the Pig Push.

"Justin's commitment to the Boorowa community is evident in how long it takes him to walk down the main street, as everyone wants a chat with Flemo!"
Charlotte Boyer
CEF Boorowa Secretary

PIG PUSH

In 2015, he and fellow committee member Richie Fleming (no relation), came up with the idea of pushing a giant paper-mache pig from Boorowa to Orange to raise funds for and awareness of CEF.

It took almost two years of planning and a huge effort from Justin and Richie to get the Pig Push underway.

The event finally came to fruition in March 2017 with Percy the Pig making the journey from Boorowa to Orange. The event raised \$60,000 and importantly increased the charity's national profile.

The fundraiser was publicised with Prime News reporter and past CEF Boorowa grant recipient Jelisa Apps, and Channel Nine also airing coverage of the Pig Push.

The event was such a success that in 2018, CEF Boorowa, again led by Justin and Richie, arranged to push Percy the Pig from Orange back to his home in Boorowa, this time raising just over \$50,000.

Make a difference and volunteer today.
cef.org.au



This is a great honour, and well deserved, as Justin consistently puts in a huge effort for CEF Boorowa. It's incredible that with so much on his plate Justin still manages to go above and beyond for our community.

Richie Fleming
CEF member, Pig Push co-founder
& business partner at Fleming Property Services



CEF National Conference

After a false start in 2021 thanks to the pandemic, we were excited to hold our volunteer national conference on the 22nd October at the Vibe Hotel in Canberra.

The day was packed with information and ideas, creating a wonderful feeling of collaboration in the room.

Reconnect. Recognise. Realise.

Support from a generous philanthropic partner organisation allowed CEF to:

- Subsidise volunteer travel and accommodation
- Pay for conference room hire and catering
- Provide conference bags and collateral
- Host a Friday evening networking event

The day was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the incredible volunteers we have – those who work passionately, tirelessly and without asking for recognition or reward to support our rural and regional youth.

We were also officially able to recognise Margaret Carey from Grenfell and Justin Fleming from Boorowa, our respective Katie Walker Volunteer Outstanding Service award recipients for 2021 and 2022.



"Great mix of presentations and discussions - thoughtful, inspiring and all useful. Great opportunities to share the nitty gritty."

Attendees heard about education partnerships and university pathways, the success of the CEF pilot mentoring program, and were introduced to an new mental health initiative to provide much needed support to our students.

There were information sessions on all things CEF led by the national office team, including discussion and breakout sessions on running a local foundation and fundraising ideas and even the opportunity to get creativity flowing with storytelling!

A special thanks goes to the following presenters who gave their time, knowledge and expertise on the day:

- Dr. Lara Drew, University of Canberra
- Rizwan Khan, Australian National University
- Richard Austin, Mutual Marketplace
- CEF recipient Brodie Taylor
- Sharon Richens, Altius Group
- CEF patron Judy Brewer, AO

Our volunteers really are the heart of what we do. To spend time together, and to witness their commitment and passion is a true privilege and we are grateful they choose to be a part of our organisation.

"I thought the conference was excellent, thought provoking, optimistic and a reflection of a lot of hard work being done by all the team."



“Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain.”
Volunteering Australia



Postcode should be no barrier to reaching full potential

We work with partners, donors, supporters, volunteers and communities at local and national levels. From the grassroots to the corporates, all to help our rural and regional youth to fulfill their potential.

We also aim to be a voice for regional youth. To raise awareness of the challenges they face in participating and completing post-school education. We advocate for change, working toward the equity in educational access, opportunities and support they deserve in order to be successful, contributing members of society.

"I had resigned to the fact that I wouldn't be able to afford university and I would need to take a break from study. I had accepted this and given up."

Aiden - recipient

This scenario is too common for rural, regional and remote youth. There is no doubt students from rural, regional and remote areas face unique and significant challenges in aspiring to, accessing and undertaking post-school education.

The issue of equity in education for rural and regional students has long been studied by tertiary institutions, governments and independent organisations. Despite this, those who grow up in our regional areas undertake and complete tertiary education at rates far lower than their metropolitan counterparts.

In major cities more than 48% of young adults have a degree, compared to just over 20% in regional areas;

92% of those in the city have achieved a year 12 or higher education, compared to only 79% in regional locations

Without question, geographic isolation is the most significant barrier to education regional youth face. Combined with additional challenges a complex multifaceted problem is apparent, one that drastically hinders educational participation and achievement.

Many regional young people need to relocate to undertake higher education. This substantially increases the associated costs for students and their families. So much so, that over 60% worry about the financial impact of education before they even start their journey. This worry is heightened when over 1/3 of these students also come from low socio-economic backgrounds, and finance quickly becomes the reason youth forego education.



It is important to note that nowadays regional youth are acutely aware of the financial burden further education places on families and are determined to support themselves. Unfortunately, this is not easy to do.

Almost 51% of students who applied to CEF for financial support were unsure of or ineligible for Government support. Because of this, many students who must work to pay for their education and living costs 'just get by.' Compromising the time and effort given to study means suboptimal results, often causing students to question their abilities, damaging their confidence and self-belief and leading to early departure from their studies.

The reasons for this are varied and complex including generational attitudes towards post-school education – over 1/3 of CEF applicants are 'first in family' to undertake tertiary education; a strained regional education system limiting access to appropriate education and dedicated careers support and a lack of available and understandable information on post-school options, largely fuelled not only by the geographical but also the digital divide.

Finally, the importance of family and community are values intrinsic in regional youth, so it comes as no surprise that 41% worry about leaving home, family and friends. Not only are they required to leave those they love and the safety of home to pursue their dreams, they are forced to establish new support networks in unfamiliar settings, often with people who don't understand the difficulties and displacement their situation presents.



The Australian Federal Government has stated that in the next five years, 90% of jobs will require a post-school qualification of some description. Given the statistics and the continued, seemingly relentless, challenges regional youth face when seeking to obtain such qualifications, the need to raise awareness and support access and opportunities has never been more vital.

CEF was established around a kitchen table in Boorowa, NSW in 1993. Fast forward to 2022, and there are now 44 community-based CEF local foundations operating in regional communities across five states and territories. Since that first meeting, the organisation has provided more than \$15 million in support to over 7300 students.

Still at the heart of CEF's work are volunteers. More than 415 community members fundraise and support the educational endeavours of their regional youth. This unique model works and has driven CEF's continued success. We believe there is no substitute for the intimate knowledge and lived experiences of the people within a community, and this is the reason we are committed to our 'grassroots' approach. Our aim is to continue to grow. To establish more local foundations in new geographic locations across the country, and to engage more passionate and dedicated volunteers so we can help even more students achieve their potential.

This growth would not have been possible without the local committees and volunteers who are the backbone of CEF. Their knowledge and commitment ensures CEF can provide the most deserving students a helping hand to achieve their goals."

Katie Walker – Founding Director and volunteer

The small national office team is based in Orange NSW and provides assistance, resources, guidance and additional funding to our local foundations and volunteers to ensure they are sustainable and can continue to do what they do best.

"The most valuable thing is knowing that my community is behind me. That the community places trust in their young adults in achieving their dreams."

Emma - recipient

Important to our work is supporting students through the critical transitional period after finishing school. The period where everything changes extremely quickly, and when they are at most risk of disengaging from education and employment. It is not just the financial assistance that makes this transition easier, it is the community belief and support, mentoring, information and connections to others from regional areas that make the difference.

"Giving back to the community is an important way of showing respect and gratitude to those who gave me the chance and opportunity to get where I am."

Raymond – recipient and volunteer

This 'all round' support continues throughout their studies and after with the CEF Alumni program. The positive effects are clear. Over 90% of students supported by CEF complete their post-school education and training, well above the national average. Most find employment in their chosen field, and 2/3 of CEF recipients want to be involved with the organisation as a result of their experiences. This is testament to the resilience, passion, dedication and 'country spirit' of our people.



As an organisation with almost 30 years' experience in supporting the education of our regional youth, our mission remains the same as it was around the kitchen table way back in 1993: to promote and enable the further education, career and personal development opportunities for rural youth through community-based encouragement and financial assistance.

Author:

Nicole Wright
Head of Engagement, Media & Impact

OUR SUPPORTERS

In addition to the efforts and dedication of our volunteers, our work is made possible through corporate, philanthropic, community and pro bono partnerships. We all share a passion for education as well as inspiring and empowering our youth in rural and regional communities. CEF receives no government funding, relying on the generosity of such organisations and local and national individual donors. Whether it is passion for education or connection to the land, this support changes lives. And families. And communities.

CORPORATE & PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS

- Allan & Gill Gray Foundation
- Audi Foundation
- Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand
- Eureka Benevolent Foundation
- Findex Community Fund
- IEC Advisory
- MH Premium Farms
- Packer Family Foundation
- Protrust Ltd t/as Profield Foundation
- SELX
- Stirling Pastoral
- Stranfield Foundation (The Vernon Foundation)
- The James N. Kirby Foundation
- The Loder Foundation
- The McLean Foundation
- The Raymond E. Purves Foundation
- The Snow Foundation
- The Trustee for the William McIlrath Charitable Foundation
- The Zagora (Clifford) Family Foundation
- Thyne Reid Foundation
- Tilt Renewables
- Waratah Education Foundation

PRO BONO PROVIDERS & COLLABORATIVE ORGANISATIONS

- Boyce Chartered Accountants
- Country Universities Centre
- Origin Energy Foundation
- Region Media
- Sydney Business Lawyers Pty Ltd
- WIN TV Network

2022 PRINCIPAL PARTNERS



Thank you to our longstanding and new major donors for your much needed support in 2022.

- Anonymous Donor
- AWKID
- Benevity (Australia) Pty Ltd
- Burton Taylor PPF Foundation
- C & G Grubb
- C Powell
- Charles Warman Foundation
- D & I Smithers
- E Plaskitt
- Estate of the Late Clare SM Connell
- E Wheeler
- Future Generation Australia
- Good 2 Give
- Kennards Hire Foundation
- Lennon Family Endowment
- Millett Family Foundation
- NSW & ACT Bushfire - Sandhurst Trustee
- Rick & Judy Foundation
- Riverview School P & F
- S Maple-Brown
- The Alfred & Jean Dickson Foundation
- Wilson Asset Management Pty Ltd



SHANNON BEST, GRENFELL
Bachelor of Nursing graduate.

EDUCATION PARTNERS

Just like CEF, Australian universities are committed to improving educational access and opportunities for regional and rural youth. In partnering with these institutions, we work together to increase the participation and completion rates in higher education of our students.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Education partners pledge an annual sum of financial assistance for CEF students. This funding is distributed as 'co-funding' to students attending their university who have received a CEF local grant. This funding provides direct, additional monies to students to assist with costs such as accommodation, travel and textbooks.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Through these collaborations, students are provided opportunities to connect with other CEF recipients at their university and with rural and regional specific services. Education partners also sponsor online CEF resources to ensure as much information and inspiration as possible is provided to encourage the uptake of post-school education.

ACCOMMODATION SUPPORT

With the cost of living continuing to increase significantly, affordable accommodation is becoming increasingly difficult for regional students to access. We are excited to offer a number of scholarships thanks to tertiary accommodation providers who recognise this challenge, and have stepped up to help ease the burden.



\$264,395

In co-funding
allocated

\$34,923

In accommodation
scholarships

\$299,318

Awarded in co-funding

2022 EDUCATION PARTNERS



ADDITIONAL FUNDING

CEF Extra is a bespoke scholarships program providing additional financial support as well as personal and professional opportunities to rural and regional youth within the CEF geographic footprint.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING FUNDING

Approximately 1/3 of regional students choose Vocational Education and Training (VET) study such as TAFE, apprenticeships and short courses.

In addition, regional communities continue to face significant shortages of qualified vocational and trade workers.

This training can be more attainable and affordable than university study and helps to address the lack of quality workers in our regions. It is also an option that means a student can stay closer to home.

For the second year, this funding is providing the same financial support to our VET sector students that our university students have benefitted from for many years. We are extremely grateful to an anonymous philanthropic organisation who has invested in this initiative because of their belief in our regional youth.

NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS



CEF Extra is a bespoke scholarships program providing additional financial support to rural and regional youth within the CEF geographic footprint, as well as personal and professional opportunities such as:

- Work Experience
- University placement support
- Mentoring
- Industry networking
- Employment opportunities

The program and offerings aims to provide students, and supporters, with something 'extra,' knowing that our youth need support beyond the financial.

Uniquely flexible, scholarships are negotiated and implemented by CEF National Office and can be managed at the community level via our volunteers and local foundations right through to full management by the team at the national office. This approach ensures we are able to best provide for our partners, while still staying true to our community-based model.



29
Local
foundations

84
Students
supported

\$128,143
In co-funding allocated



26
Funding
partners

69
Students
supported

\$375,330
Awarded in scholarships

ALUMNI AWARDS

Country Education Foundation of Australia (CEF) announced the winners of the 2022 Audi Foundation – CEF Alumni Awards during an in-person cocktail event at Vibe Hotel Canberra on Saturday 22nd October.

After two years of online events due to the pandemic, the excitement to celebrate the achievements of regional youth was clear with 55 nominations and more than 140 people in attendance.

CEF Alumni Program Manager Emma Burns says the response to this year's event was overwhelming. "We are humbled that the opportunity we provide to recognise our past and present recipients has been so well received. Volunteers, nominees, family and friends were so excited to attend, the room was filled to capacity. This response shows just how valued our rural and regional youth are by our communities."

CEF have partnered with the Audi Foundation since their establishment in 2017, supporting rural and regional youth to access post-school education and are thrilled to have the foundation sponsoring the Alumni Awards as they celebrated five years of operations.



"The calibre of winners and nominees, both past and present, is a testament to what an Australia that has fully achieved educational equity for rural youth would look like."
Elise Prior, 2022 Alumnus of the Year

2022 Audi Foundation - CEF Alumni Award Winners

Alumnus of the Year

Elise Prior, Kapunda High School Centenary Foundation

Community Alumni Champion

Katie Jayne O'Brien, Braidwood & District Education Foundation

Young Achiever

James Anderson, CEF Grenfell

Rising Star

Ayisha Fearnside, Kapunda High School Centenary Foundation

Launching Stars

*Jayden Reid, CEF Central Australia &
Corrin Paepke, Kangaroo Island Education Fund*



“ Having seen the incredible achievements of tonight’s winners and the passion they inspire in their communities, we are proud to support CEF and the alumni awards.”

Paul Sansom, former Audi Foundation Chair



Excellent Elise Shines and Inspires

Our Alumus of the Year is unquestionably community-minded and caring, with a myriad of volunteering and support roles to her name, and has an enviable intellect.

Elise Prior graduated from the University of Adelaide with High Distinctions in her Bachelor of Psychological Science and First Class Honours, achieving a Grade Point Average of 7.00/7.00 for both degrees. Elise was also recognised as the highest scoring student in numerous courses throughout her tertiary studies.

She is already the published co-author of two peer-reviewed journal articles, a recipient of the 2019 Adelaide Graduate Award, and was selected to deliver the Valedictorian address for her graduating cohort.

These achievements alone make Elise the perfect choice for the 2022 Audi Foundation – CEF Alumna of the Year title, but there is more to her story.

"I went from enjoying a view of crops and sheep (and certainly no people!) to a view of hundreds of people (and certainly no sheep!)."

At just thirteen, she contracted a chronic illness that affects almost every aspect of her functioning – immune system, cognitive function, muscles, joints, and more. Since school, she has approached education and her life with tenacity, not allowing illness to stop her from pursuing her goals. She completed year 12 over two years and then went on to university, moving away from home and to what she describes as a 'tiny apartment' in Adelaide's central business district.



Along with her stellar academic results, she was incredibly involved with university activities and determined to support and improve the experiences of other students – not surprising given her aptitude and passion for psychology.

Elise explains that for her the move was not only necessitated by geography, but by her condition: "The long commute to university from my family home would have been unmanageable."

She says support from the Kapunda High School Centenary Foundation and CEF not only helped with paying for her little apartment, but with travel costs for her Mum to assist with the daily tasks she struggled with, just as she had done since Elise became unwell more than a decade ago.

Elise was surprised by how quickly she adjusted to her new living arrangements, but like many regional students who relocate, still experienced homesickness, saying, "I even used Google Street View to digitally 'return' home and take a 'walk' down my dirt road!"

Living in the city centre and near the university meant Elise could focus her limited energies on study and be involved in campus life – and she made the most of this, as she always manages to do.

"Combining study demands with the management of my chronic illness was incredibly challenging, but I was determined to achieve, and I aspired to undertake tertiary study."

"I would like to thank Kapunda High School Centenary Foundation chairperson Barry Vogt, secretary Anne Hornsey, former treasurer Clyde Hazel, and former Kapunda High School principal Kristen Masters for providing extra support during my time at university."

She was an Academic Tutor/Mentor for Wirritu Yarlur Aboriginal Education, a Peer Assisted Study Sessions Leader, a Student Ambassador, and a Peer Mentor. She served as a student representative on various academic committees, and was the Vice-President and Secretary of the Psychology Students' Association as well as the Adelaide University Rural Health Alliance Psychology Representative. This commitment to others saw her nominated for the 2018 Vice-Chancellor's Student Volunteer of the Year Award.

As a young country woman who longs for that dirt road to home, adores a sunset, and seeks out the opportunity to help others, Elise says she was honoured to be able to use her education to assist ACT for Ag last year, an organisation that aims to improve the wellbeing and resilience of farmers, farming families, and rural communities.



"Resilience and perseverance were essential for me, along with the physical and emotional support of my mum and my fiancé."

She explains, "I developed accessible, evidence-based online and print resources and tools to build the psychological flexibility of rural communities. I also contributed to designing and delivering interactive wellbeing workshops to rural Australians." She says the experience with ACT for Ag was "incredibly fulfilling, and allowed me to foster my passion for combining psychology with public health."

Now, having graduated after six years of study, during which there were times she almost had to withdraw due to ill health, she is excited to be putting her education into action once again. She is starting her career in a flexible and inclusive workplace that will support her and provide opportunities to learn and flourish, as a Data Analyst at the Australian Bureau of Statistics, within the Graduate Development Program. "It has been exciting to enter the public sector and assist government, businesses, and communities in making evidence-based decisions for the betterment of Australian society!"

"I am the first in my family to graduate from university. I appreciate my unique position of privilege, considering that many people never get the opportunity to acquire tertiary education. I endeavour to use the full power of my education to make a difference in the world."

Elise reminds us all that we can achieve our dreams with courage and perseverance... and a little help if we are willing to ask for and accept it, no matter what we face. Most importantly, she shows us that nothing can diminish the intelligence, kindness, and abilities we possess – that even when dealing with the most difficult of circumstances, those wonderful qualities can and will shine if we let them.

STUDENT CONNECT ACTIVITIES

In collaboration with our education partners, we have started facilitating morning and afternoon teas for CEF supported students on various university campuses.

These on-campus events create a sense of connectedness for our students, reducing the isolation, homesickness and loneliness they might feel as a result of leaving home and moving to the city.

They also provide the opportunity to connect with university equity staff, ensuring they have a point of contact and have the support they need to successfully transition to post-school education.

Thank you to the following CEF education partners for helping to make these experiences possible for our rural and regional youth:

- University of Canberra
- The University of Adelaide
- The University of Newcastle
- Australian National University
- University of Sydney
- Macquarie University



STUDENT EXPERIENCE CAMPS

Student experience camps and open days give year 11 and 12 students the opportunity to experience campus life and get a feel for university first-hand.

Open days and experience camps run in conjunction with our partners are fully scheduled, chaperoned and immersive.

Such experiences can be very important in helping students decide what to do and where to go after school.

They are fully funded for students, including travel, accommodation and social events. For many, it can be the first time away from home, on an airplane or seeing the ocean.

These collaborative offerings ensure regional youth can access opportunities that will inform their decision without any financial burden – something we know they are already acutely aware of.

Thanks to the following education partners, more than 40 regional students attended experience camps in 2022:

- University of Sydney
- Macquarie University
- University of New South Wales



ASPIRATIONAL INFLUENCERS

Our CEF Aspirational Influencers are made up of current and former grant recipients who have decided to give back to CEF in a special way. They visit schools, attend events and participate in promotional activities on behalf of and for CEF.

They are just as passionate about the benefits of further education as we are and coming from rural and regional areas themselves, they understand first-hand the unique challenges.

These young, talented people volunteer their time, working with us to connect with students and communities, showing them what is possible and more importantly, how to make it happen.

We thank our Aspirational Influencers, who are inspiring the next generation of regional youth.

Activity Highlights:

- Participation in regular program meetings
- Designs for the inspirational merchandise of a CEF branded cattle tag key chain and trucker cap
- Top tips documents, videos and content provided for online inspiration hub
- Hosting student engagement university events
- Sharing stories and participating in media opportunities
- School visits and supporting community events
- Attending CEF network and fundraising events



Jorja Waring-Bryant,
Griffith



Cody Logan,
Orange



Saul Brady,
Great Lakes



Lily-Anne Chapman,
Far West NSW



Lachlan Barrett,
Coonamble



Heather Walker,
Grenfell



Michael Ison,
Braidwood



Meagan Dampney,
The Namoi



Madeline Davis,
Yass

STUDENT RESOURCES

Finding the right information can be difficult for rural and regional youth when they are deciding what to do after school. Our online resources are designed to break down barriers, helping connect students with services, support and advice they need to unlock their full potential.

"MAKE IT POSSIBLE" INSPIRATION HUB

Research shows one of the best ways to connect with young people is through the words of their peers.

Thanks to principal partner, Waratah Education Foundation, this FREE online resource not only informs and inspires post-school options, but includes everything our youth need to survive and thrive as students AND adults.

And of course, the resource contains plenty of helpful hints, tips and advice from our amazing CEF students and alumni.

The updates replace the 'CEF University Survival Guide,' with the resource supporting ALL post-school endeavours.



www.cef.org.au/make-it-possible

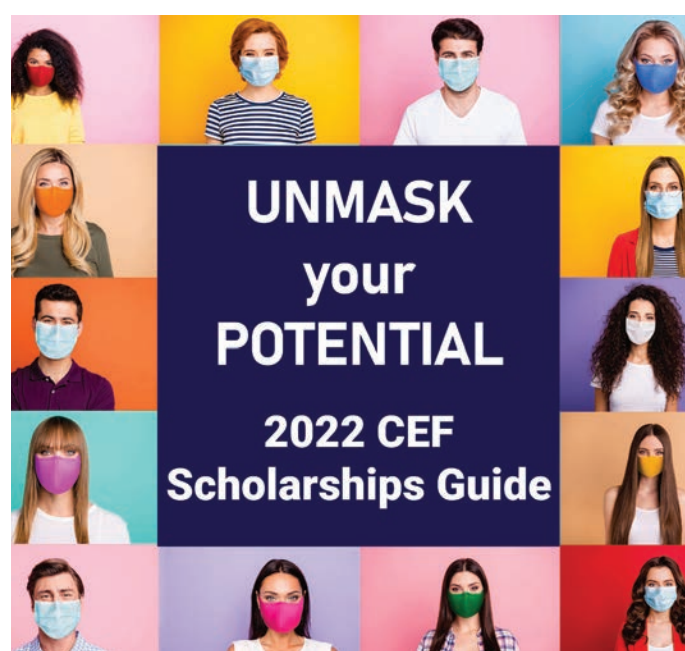
CEF SCHOLARSHIPS GUIDE

The CEF Scholarships Guide is an online resource updated annually, and is a leading source of tertiary scholarships for rural and regional families.

The 2022 CEF Scholarships Guide featured grant and scholarship listings on a purpose-built platform, searchable by state, institution and keywords.

Complimentary listings in the guide are offered to all education partners, in addition to key charitable and not-for-profit listings as well as paid listings.

Including tips for a successful application, a fun quiz and blogs written by successful scholarship applicants, this free resource provides students with the information and motivation to apply for assistance.



www.cef.org.au/scholarships-guide

If you would like to contribute to or sponsor one of our student online resources, contact Nicole by email, nicole@cef.org.au or phone 1300 652 144.

USE OF FUNDS

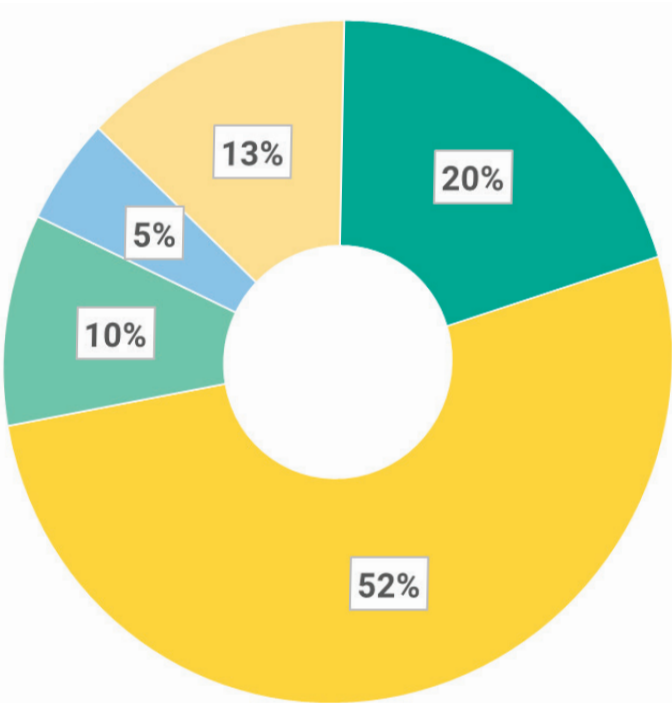
Accountability and transparency is very important to CEF. When you choose to donate your hard earned money to CEF, we want you to know how it will be used, and assure you it will be used in the best possible way to achieve maximum impact and positive outcomes for rural and regional students and communities.

CEF national office holds DGR1 tax deductibility status. We are registered members of the Fundraising Institute of Australia (FIA) and undertake the required annual financial audit, conducted by Boyce Chartered Accountants.

We are a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), as are the majority of our CEF local foundations.

During 2022, CEF continued to raise funds for investment in the education of rural and regional students.

The costs of operations have been carefully managed throughout the year.



STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS - 52%

Direct financial support is provided to students in the form of 'non-cash' grants. Grant money is provided to students in the way of reimbursement for goods or services purchased directly relating to study or paid on invoice direct to a supplier e.g. for a new laptop the student cannot afford to pay for upfront.

ADVOCACY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION - 5%

Costs associated with being involved in and promoting education equity for our rural and regional students.

STUDENT RESOURCES & SUPPORT - 10%

Funds directed to CEF developing student resources and support programs – the Scholarships Guide, Make it Possible Inspiration Hub and the CEF Alumni Program. This also includes the costs of maintaining relationships with education partners, supporting committees, providing other resources for members of the CEF family, and staff time associated with student, scholarship and committee support.

OVERHEADS - 13%

Overhead expenses of the CEF national office include administrative staffing, IT & other running costs. This is essential to ensure good governance and business operations that can continue to support local CEF foundations, volunteers and students.

RESERVES - 20%

Funds on hand to improve the long-term sustainability of the organisation.

Overhead expenses across the CEF network were restricted to just 13% of income.

ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATING COSTS

There are often misconceptions about charities and administration costs.

It is important to know that many charities cannot operate without paid staff and other operating expenses. These costs are not separate to our overall mission or the impact we make, in fact they are vital to what we do.

For more information about charity operating costs and their importance, the ACNC, Australia's governing body for charities, can provide some excellent information.

CEF ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

One of the things we are most proud of is that we outsource very little work. Our small, passionate team are multi-skilled, and have learnt many new skills to enable us to operate in this way.

90% of our data, research and systems work is done in-house.

Most importantly, all the words, design, images and content you see or hear comes directly from our students, alumni, volunteers or one of our dedicated staff members, who are just as passionate about our mission as you are.

These are the things we do spend money on – they make it possible to support our volunteers and students.

- Staff salaries
- Professional development
- Insurances
- Phone, internet and electricity
- IT costs – these include website hosting, software packages and licences
- Travel for donor and partnership meetings, both current and potential
- Travel to visit and engage with CEF local foundations across regional Australia
- Fundraising for and promotion of national and local foundation events and initiatives
- Facilitating and supporting volunteer and student engagement in our work

"All charities spend money on administration – without it, they wouldn't be able to operate and pursue their charitable purposes. Many costs can't be easily isolated from a charity's 'direct' service and set aside as 'administration'. For some charities, delivering a service consists of a wide range of connected activities which incur a range of costs – each crucial for the overall service delivery."

Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission



FINANCIALS CONDENSED

1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

COUNTRY EDUCATION FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA LTD

	2022	2021
Funds we raised		
Donations to program funding	2,919,000	2,496,000
Donation to build our future	510,000	350,000
Income from funds invested	166,000	76,000
Other income	235,000	241,000
	<hr/> 3,830,000	<hr/> 3,163,000
What we spent		
Scholarships & funds distributed to regional foundations for students	2,031,000	1,678,000
Student resources	29,000	32,000
Other programs to support students	296,000	237,000
Advocacy and community education	179,000	137,000
Fundraising events	8,000	-
Fundraising, accounting and administration	482,000	359,000
Depreciation, amortisation	25,000	24,000
	<hr/> 3,050,000	<hr/> 2,467,000
Fair value gains (losses) on our investments	(22,000)	167,000
Retained for ongoing initiatives	758,000	863,000
What we own		
Cash	1,136,000	906,000
Investments	2,795,000	2,141,000
Property plant & equipment	1,232,000	1,245,000
Other assets	32,000	33,000
	<hr/> 5,195,000	<hr/> 4,325,000
Liabilities	763,000	651,000
Our net assets	<hr/> 4,432,000	<hr/> 3,674,000

On 26 February 2020, CEF was granted permission by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) to change its financial year from a year ending 30 June to 31 December.

In addition to the income reported in the condensed financial report, our network of 44 foundations individually raise money to support their local beneficiaries.

To read a copy of Country Education Foundation of Australia's full audited financial statements visit www.cef.org.au



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