Community Choices Champions 2022

## Media release template

Instructions for recipients

1. Use the following template as a base for sharing your story with your local media
2. Update where we’ve indicated. Hint: share how your funding will support your community, the more personal the story, the better. Eg, if you’re painting your Hall, share how that will encourage more people to use the Hall for gatherings
3. Contact your local paper, community newsletter or radio and ask how to best share your Media Release with them

**<<add date>>**

**Media Release**

Thanks to the power of our community, **<<*insert your community organisation nam*e>>** has been named as one of Essential Energy’s Community Choices Champions for 2022.

Community members have voted to provide ***<<insert your community organisation nam*e>>** with a little extra support which will help our group **<<*insert project description>>***.

**<< Insert your own quote here or use our suggestion below>>**

“We feel so grateful to have the ongoing support of our community, and thanks to the **<<*insert dollar amount>>*** funding we’ve received through Essential Energy’s Community Choices program, we’ll be able to continue supporting them back,” **<<*insert your community organisation spokesperson name>>*** said.

The annual Community Choices program allows people across the Essential Energy network to nominate and vote for eligible community groups, like **<<insert your organisation name>>**.

Essential Energy’s Chief Commercial Officer, Justin Hillier said the company is delighted to share the funding between community organisations in its network area.

“We know community groups have been doing it tougher than ever this year, so we hope this news can help give them a lift. Essential Energy people live and work in towns across rural, regional and remote NSW and parts of Southern Queensland, and we see first-hand the difference these groups can make, that’s why we value this opportunity to give back to our local heroes,” Mr Hillier said.

**<<Option to include information about your organisation, including contact details and how people can get involved by donating or supporting>>**

For more information about Essential Energy’s Community Choices Program please visit [www.essentialenergy.com.au/choices](http://www.essentialenergy.com.au/choices).

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**Background**

Essential Energy’s annual program is designed to support a wide range of community-based groups and projects including community halls, that increase social inclusion, assist communities in need and enhance community engagement.

This year, 318 eligible groups across Essential Energy’s network had their causes nominated. With over 113,000 community votes cast, 197 groups are set to receive Community Choices Champion funding.

The 2022 Community Choices program included three categories of funding:

* Standard zone funding – five funding allocations in each of the 20 zones ranging from $1,100 to $2,500
* Small communities funding – two $500 funding allocations for each of the 20 zones for groups who reside in a community with less than 10,000 people
* Community Hall funding – eight $300 funding allocations for each of the 20 zones for Community Halls