

Board Communique: June 2019

The Energy Consumers Australia Board met on 13 June 2019

In the final Grants Program round for the 2018-19 financial year the Board received 15 applications for funding, bringing the total for the year to 76 applications.

At this meeting the Board approved the following grants for advocacy projects.

- AP 1020 – Tasmanian Small Business Council, *Consumer perspectives on interconnector and transmission investment* (\$265,000)
- AP 1022 – Community Housing Industry Association Victoria, *Creating a shared power grid* (\$25,000)
- AP 1023 – Better Renting, *Healthy homes for people who rent* (\$19,584)
- AP 1033 – Environment Victoria, *Boosting consumer advocacy to improve housing energy performance* (\$122,142)
- AP 1034 – Council on the Ageing Australia, *Energy Advocacy National Workshop* (\$19,980)

The 36 advocacy and research projects funded through the Grants Program in 2018-19 have focused on the need for key changes in energy markets, to improve long-term outcomes for consumers, including:

- improving energy affordability for consumers, particularly so that those on low incomes or with vulnerabilities have comfortable homes and small businesses can be competitive;
- identifying and responding to the needs of energy consumers in an evolving retail energy market by providing them with information and tools that empower them to make energy choices appropriate for their individual circumstances;
- building the capacity of advocates to participate in, and influence, policy processes and outcomes;
- supporting consumers with expert resources to engage effectively with energy network businesses, to shape revenue proposals that meet consumer expectations for expenditures to be prudent and in the long-term interests of consumers (not one dollar more than necessary, not one day earlier than needed); and
- ensuring that consumers have a voice in the processes considering the design and planning of the future energy system, to optimise investment on in the home and the business, as well as across the energy system.

The Board again thanks all applicants for the effort in preparing their applications in a highly competitive grants program.

The Board noted the impact of the advocacy and research projects that were completed in 2018-19. Advocacy funded by Energy Consumers Australia has been influential in:

- securing changes to improve the energy performance of homes, and energy bill outcomes, in particular for people who rent;
- the importance of unlocking consumers' flexibility in their energy use, and the case for a wholesale demand response mechanism currently being considered through a rule change; and
- providing new insights into the distributional impacts of electricity network peak pricing.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Director Governance and Corporate on 08 9220 5500 or executive@energyconsumersaustralia.com.au if you would like to discuss the Communique further.