

30 March 2026

## **\$200,000 grant to build brighter futures for Northern Rivers region**

The Byron Shire's Shedding Community Workshop Inc (Shedding) will receive a significant funding boost of \$200,000 thanks to a two-year partnership with Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation (NPCF).

The grant is the first multi-year partnership for NPCF in the Northern Rivers region and will allow Shedding to enter their next phase of development to ensure more people in their community have the opportunity to discover a passion for tools, hands-on learning and self-discovery.

Shedding workshops offer an all-inclusive, safe environment for the Northern Rivers community to come together to learn and upskill in carpentry, woodworking, joinery and design, while also helping to improve and nurture participants' resilience and wellbeing.

The investment builds on previous support of \$81,000 that was provided by NPCF to help Shedding recover and grow after the 2022 floods. That funding helped to train more than 1000 participants in all carpentry, building and design workshops, host 140 tool training workshops, and educate 165 participants in teaching, leading and wellbeing, as well as host over 950 individual and group wellbeing sessions.

The demand for Shedding workshops has continued to increase following last year's floods, with the 2025 Flood Impact Study undertaken by the Northern Rivers Community Foundation finding that 50 per cent of volunteer-led organisations identified capacity and skills gaps as barriers to contributing to disaster response, recovery and resilience.

By the end of 2025 Shedding had delivered more than 200 of their UpSkill workshops, which is a half-day introduction to the fundamentals of carpentry and building to over 1000 participants. Shedding currently supports over 50 participants on a weekly basis, with trauma-informed training and support in carpentry, building, salvage and repair.

Shedding Founder and Director Sophie Wilksch said the funding will make a significant impact to their organisation and local community.

"Mental health is a primary health concern for many residents across the Northern Rivers region. Shedding's focus is on wellbeing first, using tools as an avenue towards self-empowerment, resilience and community connection," Ms Wilksch said.

"It has been incredible to see the amazing response from people in our community, who want to get involved and be a part of our organisation.

"We are so grateful to Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation for their ongoing support. Their generous contribution will allow us to continue to grow our organisation and invest deeper roots into our communities to help us reach our goal of 20,000 community leaders and members in 2027."

NPCF spokesperson Kirrah McClelland said the Foundation was excited to partner with Shedding Community Workshop Inc as the first multi-year partnership in the Northern Rivers region.

# Media Release



"We are thrilled to continue working with Shedding Community Workshop Inc and support their holistic approach to community needs and wellbeing through hands-on learning," Ms McClelland said.

"Grassroots organisations such as Shedding share NPCF's focus of building safer and stronger communities in a way that is responsive and authentic to the Northern Rivers region.

"It has been an honour to watch Sophie and the team significantly expand and blossom over the last few years and we are really looking forward to seeing what they achieve next."

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## **Media enquiries:**

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## **About Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation**

Since its establishment in 2003, the Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation has provided more than \$27 million to not-for profit organisations and community groups throughout regional NSW, supporting important projects and initiatives aimed at improving community health and well-being for those most in need.