



Media Release

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Australia's first Business Renewables Centre to help Australian businesses to switch to renewables

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) has today announced it will help build Australia's first Business Renewables Centre to encourage Australian businesses to make the switch to renewable energy.

On behalf of the Australian Government, ARENA will provide \$500,000 in funding to Climate-KIC Australia, WWF-Australia and UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures for the project.

The New South Wales and Victorian Governments have each provided \$150,000 in funding to the Project.

The Business Renewables Centre Australia will be a resource centre and an online marketplace platform designed to accelerate the purchase of renewable energy by Australian business.

The \$1.74 million project aims to make it easier for Australian corporates and local councils to purchase or procure renewable energy through corporate Power Purchase Agreements. The initiative will establish an online resource centre and a marketplace platform, and will be supported by face to face events for its industry members.

The goal is to help Australian businesses and local governments procure 1GW of installed renewable energy by 2022 and 5GW by 2030.

The Centre draws on the proven model of the Rocky Mountain Institute's Business Renewables Centre in the USA, to provide members with information, a network of energy buyers and project developers, inexpensive training and advice on power purchase agreement requirements.

Last year, ARENA previously released a report on the Business of Renewables which outlined how Australia's biggest businesses were falling behind their global peers in transitioning to renewable energy.

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The report also found that Australian consumers support businesses making the switch, with more than three quarters of Australian consumers surveyed saying they would buy a product or service powered by renewables over one that wasn't.

ARENA CEO Darren Miller said the Business Renewables Centre Australia would have a wealth of knowledge to draw upon.

"The future for energy is a large number of smaller renewable generating facilities often developed by non-generating entities. The Business Renewables Centre will help in that transition in using its vast expertise in running programs, entrepreneurship, innovation, education and other sustainability objectives to make it easier for companies and councils to enter into the renewables market," he said.

WWF Australia CEO Dermot O'Gorman said that the Business Renewables Centre Australia will build on the success of WWF's Renewable Energy Buyers Forum, which now comprises over 230 members organisations, as well as the growth in corporate renewable Power Purchase Agreements in the last 12 months.

"The future of renewables in Australia looks positive because it makes sound business sense. Contracting for long-term renewable energy will save customers money and will support growth in renewable energy infrastructure across Australia," he said.

Climate-KIC Australia CEO Christopher Lee said that the BRC would drive capacity building in the industry.

"We are excited to be collaborating with industry players from small and large scale renewable energy developers, service providers and corporate buyers to build capability across the industry and lower the cost of transactions. Our partners bring a broad breadth of experience and look forward to driving the uptake of renewables," he said.

Professor Stuart White, Director of the UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures said: "There's a lot of interest in renewable energy PPAs, but they're new to Australia and the key decision-makers often lack the information they need. We will be applying a model that's been successful in the US to give companies the tools and resources they need to make the shift to renewable energy."