

Centre for Just Places

Building climate just and resilient communities: Workshop series for Councils and community services

Strengthening capacity and networks across community services, local government and emergency management

The impacts of climate change are already being felt by communities across Australia. Increasingly extreme weather events including heat, floods, storms and bushfires are disproportionately affecting communities experiencing social, economic and health inequities. For example, people with well insulated housing, airconditioning and access to cool green spaces within their suburbs or towns have vastly different experiences of heatwaves than those who do not.

Councils must prepare and plan for climate risks to health and wellbeing. For example, in Victoria there is a legislated responsibility to minimise the impacts on those most at-risk. This means that Councils, together with community service organisations (CSOs), play a critical role in local climate adaptation and resilience planning. This requires Councils to undertake collaborative processes and continuous learning to ensure strategies and services support just and resilient communities.

CSOs work on the frontline supporting people during extreme weather events and play a vital role in building long-term community resilience. But they themselves are vulnerable to climate impacts. Concerns for staff health and safety, power outages and transport delays can limit an organisation's ability to support community members. Evidence also suggests that CSOs are not prepared for the ongoing and worsening disruptions to their services caused by extreme weather.¹ This places the communities they support at even greater risk.

About the workshop series

Over two half-day workshops, Jesuit Social Services' Centre for Just Places will bring Council representatives together with local CSOs, health organisations and emergency management, to develop a shared understanding of:

- Who is most at-risk to the localised impacts of climate change and why;
- The roles and responsibilities of Council, community services, and emergency planners; and
- The strengths, needs and opportunities for these diverse organisations in your area.



The workshop series provides the foundations needed to work collaboratively to design and implement place-based approaches to building climate just and resilient communities.

This includes the opportunity to strengthen cross-sectoral partnerships to enable greater inclusion of community voices in developing climate change plans and health and wellbeing programs and policies.

These workshops draw on extensive research and experience within the Centre for Just Places focusing on climate change adaptation and community resilience planning. The workshops were co-designed with local Councils, CSOs, the Victorian Council of Social Services and RMIT University and have been implemented in five LGAs across Victoria.

“The CSO workshops [...] were a real launching point for our climate adaptation and resilience work. Through those workshops we built strong relationships with organisations in our local community and have been able to reach and support members of our community who would otherwise not have been engaged by Council...

We found the team extremely rigorous, thoughtful, committed and easy to work with and would highly recommend their work to other councils.”

Kirstie Dunn

SENIOR ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMS OFFICER
(CLIMATE EMERGENCY), CLIMATE EMERGENCY &
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT (CITY OF DAREBIN)



Workshop deliverables

- Project scoping and workshop invitation collateral
- Development of workshop structures and resources
- Workshop delivery (x2)
- Evaluation, reporting and follow-up resources

About the Centre for Just Places

Jesuit Social Services is a social change organisation working with some of the most marginalised individuals and communities, often experiencing multiple and complex challenges. Jesuit Social Services established the Centre for Just Places in 2021, with seed funding from Gandel Foundation and the Victorian Government, to enable and support place-based approaches nationally through research, collaboration, engagement and knowledge exchange.

Jesuit Social Services has a deep understanding of place-based inequities through our *Dropping off the Edge* research, conducted over two decades, which examines place-based disadvantage across Australia. *Dropping off the Edge 2021* included environmental indicators, finding that the most economically and socially disadvantaged communities also experience disproportionate levels of environmental injustice, such as heat stress and air pollution.

Our place-based climate justice and resilience work

The Centre for Just Places' commitment to ecological justice places a key emphasis on climate change adaptation and transformative action. Over a number of recent projects, this has included:

- Informing local government adaptation planning and program design across Victoria through capacity building and direct community engagement;
- Guiding local government action in municipal public health and wellbeing planning;
- Supporting community health organisations and CSOs in Melbourne's west to develop a [Collaborative Action Plan](#)² which articulates a shared vision for climate justice; and
- Working with [neighbourhood houses](#) to build organisational resilience and support the emerging needs of their communities.

Contact us

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Endnotes

¹ VCOSS, *A Climate of Fairness: Making Victoria's Climate Change Transition Fair & Equitable* (Melbourne, 2019), 43-47

² Dunn, Katrina, Andrea Wolf, Susie Moloney, David Lansley, Thea Hewitt, Melek Cigdem-Bayram, and Haydie Gooder. *Mobilising Climate Just and Resilient Communities in Melbourne's West: Collaborative Action Plan*. Melbourne: Jesuit Social Services, 2022.