## Renewable Bushfire Resilience Energy Node Proposal

#### Proposal

Indigo Power is proposing to work with bushfire affected and at-risk communities across North East Victoria to ensure residents and emergency response teams have access to a local public location with electricity, during future disasters. Working across 4 local government areas with remote/isolated communities in bushfire prone regions, we will work with the Victorian Government to install solar on local halls. We will create an energy node at each hall, with the hall feed-in solar supplying customers in the local community energy hub during normal times. Each hall will have a battery to build in resilience if the grid goes down in times of emergency.

**Funding requested $70,000.**

* Wage for project coordinator: $30,000
* Batteries: $40,000

#### Context

Community halls are vital meeting centres for regional communities. We have seen after the bushfires across our region past summer that they are also a centrepoint for refuge and recovery. It is vital that these community meeting centres have access to energy, even if the grid goes down.

The Victorian Government is currently running a program to install solar on public buildings across regional Victoria. There is funding $9.2m to be distributed across the whole of Victoria. There are approximately 260 eligible halls across the Hume region. Indigo Power is proposing to project manage the installation of solar panels and batteries across the region, while focussing on up to 10 strategic halls that can become nodes and support at-risk communities in times of natural disaster.

This would require Indigo Power to employ a part-time project manager to work on the project for 6 months. The project manager would work with the Hall committees, local community energy groups and Victorian Government to roll out the project and build up to 10 nodes across the region. Indigo Power is proposing to use the $40 000 in infrastructure funding to leverage $80 000 in funding from the Victorian Government for battery funding. Managers of DELWP Hume Region have been approached, and are supportive of using the funding to create energy nodes.

#### What is a ‘node’

An energy node is a source of power when grid supply power is down during an emergency. It consists of a bespoke energy generation and storage system installed on a refuse site within a community. The system would be sized to have sufficient solar generation to cover daytime loads and charge a battery, which would be backed up with a hard wired, auto-start diesel generator.

The system will be designed to cover both day to day use and emergency supply. At times when the site is not being used, it will supply members of the local community energy hub.