

Community Batteries

May 2023



Community batteries are an innovative solution to help use more solar energy locally, allow more solar onto the local network, support wider renewable energy adoption and prepare for increasing electricity use from electric vehicle charging.

We are excited about the potential to deliver community batteries in six eligible locations within our network area.

What are we doing?

The Federal Government has announced funding to install up to 400 community batteries across Australia, including specific locations for their initial funding round. We are applying to deliver community batteries in the six eligible locations in Ausgrid's network area.

We want to hear from the local community on the proposed site, how they can get involved, and get feedback on the artwork for the battery should we be successful in securing government funding.

Who is Ausgrid?

Ausgrid is the largest distributor of electricity on Australia's east coast, providing power to 1.8 million customers. We are responsible for the substations, powerlines, underground cables and power poles (the grid) that spans 22,275 square kilometres throughout Sydney, Central Coast, Newcastle and the Upper Hunter.

Right now, we are preparing the grid for a world where renewables play a major role in the power mix, with more and more households, businesses and communities locally generating, using, and sharing electricity.



Benefits of a community battery

Batteries are key to supporting the energy system as we rely on more renewable energy sources such as solar and wind. Community batteries in particular can further provide benefits in the local area they are connected to, allowing more rooftop solar and more electric devices such as electric vehicle chargers to be connected.

- A stronger grid will reduce the need to limit (curtail) solar exports and help customers maximise their solar investment.
- Helps share more solar within the local area, including with non-solar households.
- Creates a positive impact on wholesale electricity prices that could eventually flow through to reduced retail customer offers.
- Helps to regulate voltage on the network and improves network quality in the local area.
- Offers a flexible alternative to traditional poles and wires investment and helps lower network costs.
- Access to an online information hub where the community can see how much energy was stored and used daily.





During the day, excess solar is stored in the battery via the grid



Stored energy can be drawn from the grid during high energy periods or the evening



Communities can learn about the battery and how it operates daily

How community batteries work

Community batteries are connected to the local distribution network which services nearby residents and small businesses. The battery stores and distributes electricity from the local grid to share with the local community and wider energy system.

Community batteries are uniquely placed to increase the community's use of local solar energy, allow more customers to install rooftop solar, provide extra energy during peak times when customers charge their electric vehicles, and deliver services to the wider energy market that puts downward pressure on wholesale energy costs.

Do we need to sign up to participate?

There is no sign-up process and individual households do not directly participate in the battery. Community batteries are a shared asset that offers the local community a stronger network and better solar hosting capacity. This means the network can support customers exporting more solar to the grid and increases the renewable energy available.

We know our communities are interested in understanding what the community battery is doing and how this impacts on local emissions. We will be setting up an online information hub where community members can see how the battery is helping their area.

Will we receive credits for our solar?

We are not proposing to have a direct storage credit scheme for customers near the community battery. However, customers will continue to receive their solar feed-in from their retailer for solar exported to the grid and we are interested in discussing how the community battery can support the local community more broadly.

What do we need to do?

We are interested in your feedback to inform the community battery project. **We invite the community to 'Have Your Say' before 26 May 2023.**

You can visit our website to see the proposed battery locations and provide your thoughts on how the community can get involved and artwork concept for the battery.



Ways to share your feedback:

Online: <https://yoursay.ausgrid.com.au/>
or scan the QR code.

More information

Call: 1800 995 674 – Monday to Friday 9am to 4:30pm

Email: sharedbattery@ausgrid.com.au

Post: Ausgrid Community Battery Project
GPO Box 4009 Sydney NSW 2001.

