Community Resource Centres

are the answer
to Government's Reform Agenda

Community Resource Centres operate in 105 regional and remote communities across Western Australia. They have the capacity to strengthen the foundations of regional communities simply by providing a place to belong. They are an asset to Government, with existing infrastructure in place to deliver Government services to the regions.

#morethanjustasmartphone
#smallinvestmentbigimpact
#strengthinplace
#saveourcrcs

Western Australian
Community Resource Network

Your local connection

Linkwest
Community Learning and Development

Linkwest
A: 7/37 Hampden Road, Nedlands WA 6009
T. (08) 9485 8929 or 1800 818 991
E. office@linkwest.asn.au
www.linkwest.asn.au

Strengths of the CRC Network

A network of 105 local communities across regional WA

Linkwest wishes to partner with WA State Government to enable CRCs to keep meeting the economic, social and civic challenges facing regional WA communities. Our strength is that we have unparalleled reach into local regional communities.

Partnerships with service providers, for example Indigenous Business Australia, community legal centres, employment service agencies and Universities/TAFE.

Video conference technology and infrastructure in place in every CRC used to communicate throughout the network, deliver government services, and allow partners to deliver services to the location disadvantaged community.

CRCs promote regional economic development, providing employment opportunities for skilled workers and providing traineeships.

Partnerships with emergency support services to grow local resilience and local capacity to respond to emergencies and disasters.

Centres provide safe, trusted, neutral places where everyone is welcome.

On average, 50-100 people a week are in contact with an individual CRC.
Young people, elderly, people with disability, parents, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Each centre with at least 7 significant partnerships and established connections with business, local government, service providers and community leaders.

Community Resource Centres support WA's extraordinary and unique regional communities by:

- Providing place based, grass roots, community led hubs
- Empowering local people
- Engaging community members from all walks of life
- Building community relationships
- Providing access to government services in regional WA
- Partnering with like-minded organisations to provide services to regional WA

Our **Requests**

Linkwest and the CRC Network request that the past investment by both state government and local communities since 1991 is valued and built upon to ensure the sustainability of the service and to address the needs of local communities.

Do not cut funding

The current funding level ensures the sustainability of individual CRCs and the program that supports them.

In 2009, funding was increased from approximately $20,000 per CRC to $100,000 per CRC per year. This was an acknowlegement of the pivotal role CRCs play in regional WA, and provided the opportunity for CRCs to expand their services to better meet the changing needs of their communities.

- It ensured increased professionalism of staff and capability of boards. Building of skills, and participation in training, volunteering and employment increased.
- It also ensured staff were paid a fair wage under the SCHADS Modern Award, which included an Equal Remuneration Order (as CRCs were previously understaffed and staff were paid below minimum wage).
- The move also acknowledged additional regional/remote operating costs and technology was improved (e.g. Video Conference capability).

In fact, the need for CRCs is increasing and therefore funding needs to increase

- Digital disadvantage has increased, as more and more services go online.
- People of low socio-economic background, senior citizens, people with a disability, and job seekers are at a significant disadvantage in regional areas due to travel limitations and a varying degree of ability to access online services.
- There is a rising incidence of mental health issues in regional communities, particularly in regard to loneliness and social isolation, and an increased need for suicide prevention initiatives.
- More frequent extreme weather events means an increased need for community disaster resilience.
- CRCs compensate for the decrease in small business development organisations in regional areas.

Review the CRC Network

The review can:
- Provide a Strategic Framework for the program, which builds a better regional WA.
- Evaluate the level of funding based on community need and the ability to be sustainable.
- Create an asset map of existing services and service delivery, to identify gaps and overlaps of services to ensure fairness and consistency statewide.
- Identify how CRCs can help meet the State Government's Reform Agenda.

Small **Investment**
Big Impact

Better use of local assets, increased civic, social and economic participation and improved public health and wellbeing

$11.2 million a year – around **$100,000 per CRC** – from State Government helps build social connections and increase community and personal resilience in 105 regional communities

$1.8 million a year for traineeships - to date, 497 regional / remote people have had the opportunity to be upskilled by the CRC network.

CRCs **employ 395 people** in regional and remote WA
74% of households in regional WA had accessed the CRC at some stage in the past two years
Over **1,000 volunteers** support the CRC Network
87% of CRCs are located in towns with populations of **3,000 or less**

Tapping into the **unrealised potential** of the **CRC Network**

CRCS are ideally positioned to:

- **Support the Government Reform Agenda**. CRCs can be better utilised to meet recommendations of the Service Priority Review:

  Recommendation 2 – Improve the **quality of engagement with the community** to enable a sharper focus on its needs.

  Recommendation 4 – Increase **online service delivery** to provide multiple channels for delivering transactional services.

  Recommendation 5 – Improve the **coordination of service delivery** in the regions.

- **Support the recommendations of the Sustainable Health Review**, by providing infrastructure for regional telehealth services, and delivering preventative health programs.

- Identify and **implement a whole of Government Video Conference strategy** which will enable better service delivery to regional WA (eg. Parenting programs, health education, mental health).

- **Reduce travel and accommodation costs to government** through use of the VC technology.

- **Codesign the delivery of multiple government agency services** into regional WA.

- **Build local leadership capacity** through the delivery of capability training and volunteering support through the VC platform.

- **Provide a network for research and data collection** of regional community needs.