



Media release

20 May 2021

Wandiyali invests solar savings into community programs

Newcastle-based Indigenous community organisation, Wandiyali, has teamed up with world-leading solar solutions provider, Energius, to install a solar energy system on its 900sqm headquarters in Elmore Vale. The installation represents an effort to reduce energy costs, with the opportunity for savings to be redistributed into the centre's many services that benefit the Aboriginal community.

Wandiyali specialises in case management of Aboriginal youth in statutory Out of Home Care (OOHC) and offers advice and support on matters of housing, education, training and employment for Indigenous Australians throughout Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Hunter Region and Port Stephens.

Energius' Sales Director, Thomas Bell, says the solar technology innovator is proud to work with an organisation whose work benefits well-deserving communities. He commented that renewables may have missed out in the Federal Budget but local businesses and other organisations were embracing solar, the world's cheapest form of energy.

“Wandiyali is a great example of how savings from investing in solar can be used not only to improve a company's bottom line but can also create added value for the community,” said Bell.

The transition to solar energy is saving Wandiyali \$30,000pa, with the rate of return on investment sitting at just 2.5 years. In 4 months, Wandiyali's system produced 41.6 MWh of energy, which is the equivalent of watching 346,481 episodes of 'Game of Thrones'.

The community centre's CFO, Vicki Docherty, said the decision to make the switch was a no-brainer once the centre realised how much money could be saved.

“The savings of \$30,000pa are important as we now use that money to go into community programs,” said Docherty.

“We can do a lot with this including little things such as buying i-Pads for kids to assist them with their school work.”



Docherty also commented on Wandiyali's interest in the environmental benefits of renewable energy and stated that the centre was keen to reduce its carbon footprint.

With a background in accounting, Docherty was well aware of the positive impact solar could have on the organisation's budget, especially given the significant rises in electricity prices over recent years. She said Wandiyali reached out to three solar providers after relocating to its current premises, as its decision-makers were cognisant of the need to reduce energy costs immediately due to the large size of the building.

Docherty said the decision to engage Energus for the project was an easy one, as it was the only provider to supply a fully-detailed proposal and come out to meet the team. The project from conception to completion was a relatively quick process, according to Docherty, despite it being complicated by two telecommunication towers having been installed on the property.

About Energus

Energus is the Australian arm of Sunman Energy; a technology company founded by a group of industry veterans delivering the future of Solar. Through the research and development of composite materials, Sunman has successfully commercialized the world's first glass-free, lightweight, and flexible Panel – eArc. Replacing glass completely, eArc brings solar power to markets and applications scenarios that were previously impossible.

About Wandiyali

Wandiyali is a Newcastle-based Indigenous community organisation. Its services operate throughout Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Hunter Region and Port Stephens. Each year Wandiyali assists hundreds of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members through the delivery of its many services, catering for various ages, ranging from birth to elders. The aim of Wandiyali and its services is to 'Keep our Culture Strong', which it does by focusing its services on children, families, strength, culture and community.

For media interviews or information:

Lyn Tuit, Momentum2

Email: Ltuit@momentum2.com.au | **Mobile:** 0405 160 275