



# GW3D

GREATER WHITSUNDAY ALLIANCE  
MACKAY ▶ ISAAC ▶ WHITSUNDAY

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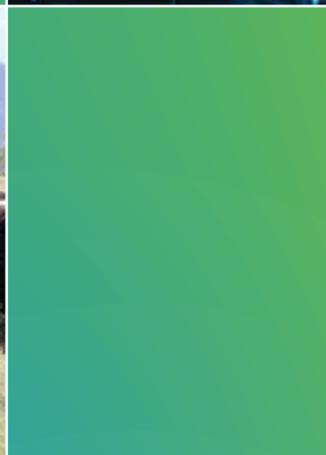


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# ANNUAL REPORT



# GW3 are the future-focused super-connectors that drive sustainable economic growth for the Greater Whitsunday region.

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## Greater Whitsunday Alliance (GW3) creates opportunities for the Greater Whitsunday region to realise its full potential.

The organisation is a strategic and coordinated point of contact for local, national and international networks and advocates for projects and opportunities, from both government and the private sector. Greater Whitsunday Alliance also delivers a range of economic development focused projects and leads economic research to help support and promote prosperity across the broader region.

GW3 is the parent company of C-Res – a cost neutral entity, operating as a social enterprise in some of Australia’s most remote mining communities.

## GW3 drives economic development in the region in the following ways:

### Advocate:

Be a strong voice for economic development opportunities on behalf of the region



### Inform:

Track and consolidate economic development resources and data to inform strategic decisions



### Attract:

Encourage investment, funding and business growth in the region

### Collaborate:

Convene, partner and facilitate alignment of key stakeholders to advance collective objectives



# A message from our Chairperson

**The 2022-2023 financial year has been one of unlocking greater possibilities to ensure the Greater Whitsunday region keeps pace with a rapidly evolving global economy.**

**Few regions in the world can boast the vital inputs to support multiple billion-dollar industries like Greater Whitsunday.**

And it is vitally important that our region adapts to new opportunities to ensure a prosperous future.

Greater Whitsunday Alliance's (GW3) role as the super connectors for the Greater Whitsunday region is linking these opportunities together.

Through collaboration with a range of partners, we are seeking investment in critical infrastructure and job-creating industries, whilst at the same time, focusing on how our region can help solve some of Australia's most complex problems.

A great example of this is our data-driven investment in the Greater Whitsunday Workforce Development Playbook project.

Released in May 2023, the Playbook focuses on ten key 'plays' or projects the region can get behind to assist workforce attraction and retention across the region. The Playbook is an impressive piece of work, it reinforces how quickly the workforce landscape has changed since COVID-19, and how imperative it is for our region to adapt quickly to these changes.

Workforce Development is a key accelerator, along with other accelerators including Digital; Decarbonisation and Diversification; Infrastructure, Energy and Aviation; Water and Research and Analysis. These accelerators are shared across our region's peak industries.

Another iconic project launched this year is the Greater Whitsunday Agtech Hub Portal. The online portal was launched in June and is a central point of reference for growers across the region to better connect with the opportunities agtech can bring to their operations.

The importance of technology and a commitment to supporting our region to embrace innovation and new thinking, is also a central theme for GW3. The work of the Greater Whitsunday AgTech Hub and the launch of the portal is a great example of delivering to the aspirations of multiple workstreams including Workforce Development, Agribusiness and Digital.

The digital vision for the Greater Whitsunday region is: *By 2032, to be Australia's most hyperconnected region that captures sustained global investment for the benefit of Greater Whitsunday communities.* This digital vision was launched along with the very comprehensive Greater Whitsunday Digital Roadmap in March 2023.

This is an ambitious target, and GW3 is continuing to support the Digital portfolio with significant resources for FY24, to achieve outcomes in what is an increasingly complex investment environment.

The organisation has also focused on telling a more compelling story for our region, and over the last 12 months has developed a significant body of articles and video stories celebrating the many success points across our region.

From bamboo building product pioneers, to data engineers and algae innovators, the 'For Greater' section on the GW3 website paints a compelling picture about how our region can lead the way. The team then makes sure these stories make their way to Brisbane and Canberra with their annual delegation program.

The past year has also seen the renewal of a five-year private partnership with BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) where we launched the next phase of our Transformation Region Project to support the long-term economic prosperity of the Greater Whitsunday region.

The partnership is focused on preparing the region for the increasing impacts of technology and diversification opportunities for the region's industries and workforces. The organisation is grateful for the ongoing support from BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA).

GW3 continues to enjoy a positive and productive relationship with our three founding members: Mackay, Isaac and Whitsunday Regional Councils and we would like to thank Mayor Greg Williamson, Mayor Anne Baker

and Mayor Julie Hall, and their respective teams for their ongoing support of GW3.

This year saw the departure of inaugural director Jordan Miller. I would like to thank Jordan for his valuable insight, professionalism and commitment to the organisation and the region. We will continue to ensure our board remains dynamic with a good mix of industry experience, skills and regional representation.

I want to thank the board for their contribution in setting the strategy and direction of GW3 over the past 12 months.

GW3 has continued to be a strong economic development organisation representing the entire region, and its growing influence is testament to the skills and commitment of the Greater Whitsunday Alliance directors and the experienced operational team.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the excellent work done by our CEO, Kylie Porter, and acknowledge the very strong and professional team Kylie has working with her. Since 2017, the organisation has grown to a team of 13 who are committed to see the Greater Whitsunday region reach its potential.

We thank them all for the excellent work they do for this region.

The board and management will remain focused and work diligently to ensure the ongoing success of our traditional sectors, but work equally hard to support and unlock the value in our emerging industries.

Moving into the coming year GW3 will continue to be the future-focused, regional super connectors who identify and promote economic opportunities for the Greater Whitsunday region.

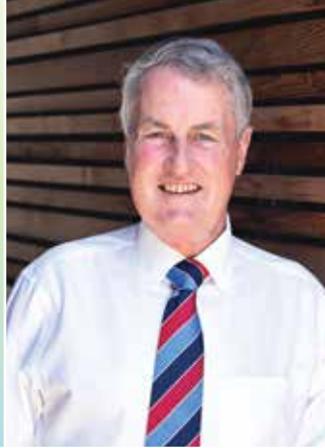
**Our region has a wealth of possibilities that we are ready to unlock.**

**Thank you  
Tony Caruso,  
GW3 Chairperson**





◀ **Jordan Miller**  
January 2017 -  
December 2022



◀ **Mayor Greg Williamson**  
October 2017 - Current



◀ **Carolyn Fritz**  
December 2017 - Current



◀ **Melissa Halliday**  
February 2019 - Current

# 2022-2023 Board of Directors



◀ **Kylie Porter CEO**  
November 2019 - Current



◀ **John Fordyce**  
May 2020 - Current



◀ **Tony Caruso**  
December 2020 - Current



◀ **Asher Telford**  
January 2022 - Current



◀ **Ry Collins**  
January 2022 - Current



◀ **Jannik Olejas**  
March 2021 - Current



GW3 CEO Kylie Porter led a small but mighty delegation from the Greater Whitsunday region to Federal Parliament in Canberra in November 2022.



In January 2023, acting Premier Steven Miles announced the Queensland Government will fund the business case development for Cauldron Molecules, a proposed biomufacturing facility to be located in Mackay.



In September 2022, GW3 visited Mackay Sugar at Racecourse Mill, Cogeneration Power Plant as part of Life Sciences Queensland Bioeconomy Forum site tours.



GW3 launched the Grant and Tender Services Network with the help of Mackay Region Chamber of Commerce in June 2023. The event was all about connecting with grant and tender professionals who have recently graduated from the Grant and Tender Writing Business Program.



# GW3 engaged with stakeholders and the community to identify opportunities to achieve continued prosperity for the region. This year, GW3 connected with all levels of government, attended national conferences and led delegations.



GW3 continued our advocacy by co-hosting the Queensland Budget and Economic Outlook event with the Queensland Treasury, and Trade and Investment Queensland, in June 2023.



Businesses across the Isaac gathered in Clermont as part of Small Business Month in May 2023. At the Showgrounds Pavilion, they listened to Business disruptor and co-founder of one of Australia's leading social enterprises 'THANKYOU', Justine Flynn.



Can you spot a magic wand? In March 2023, GW3 CEO Kylie Porter facilitated a panel of speakers at the Mayor's Breakfast in the Isaac. It was the magic wand that started conversations about new insights and what the future can be for the communities in the Isaac.



Space Agriculture was one of the many future focused Agtech key takeaways from Agrifutures evokeAG. In February 2023, GW3's Agribusiness Specialist Helen Newell led a small regional group to Agrifutures evokeAG in Adelaide.

# GW3 Highlights

**In the past financial year, Greater Whitsunday Alliance has continued to be the lead organisation to drive sustainable growth and promote liveability for the Greater Whitsunday region.**

## Greater Whitsunday Workforce Development Playbook

**GW3 will continue to lead future education and workforce development with the Greater Whitsunday Workforce Development Playbook.**

Launched in May 2023, the Playbook identifies a range of future focused initiatives to create a dynamic and capable regional workforce. This is an initiative of the Mackay Regional Jobs Committee (RJC), which is proudly supported and funded by the Queensland Government.

The Playbook has a focus on reskilling existing workforces into decarbonised jobs; meeting the workforce needs of young people and increasing the agriculture and aquaculture skills pipeline. It also includes a series of initiatives, or plays, that will not only support our region to grow and thrive, but also provide innovative and disruptive solutions

to workforce attraction and retention; reskilling, and meeting the emerging workforce's needs.

With the expertise of Deloitte Access Economics and their research, the Greater Whitsunday Workforce Development Playbook has been created using place-based methodology, including an extensive stakeholder consultation phase.

**The Playbook has ten initiatives across three categories:**

- ✔ Fundamental short-term projects
- ✔ Targeted medium-term and,
- ✔ Iconic longer-term projects requiring significant planning and investment.



## Greater Whitsunday Digital Roadmap

The Greater Whitsunday Digital Roadmap is a pathway to improve digital connectivity, accelerate technology adoption and enhance workforce skills in the region's established industries and emerging growth sectors.

Launched in March 2023, the roadmap supports the Greater Whitsunday region's digital vision to be Australia's most hyperconnected region that captures sustained global investment for the benefit of Greater Whitsunday communities.

GW3 has identified digital adoption and skilling as a key regional accelerator that will deliver enhanced employment outcomes, economic prosperity and close the region's digital divide. A digital future will require a continued focus on foundations like internet and mobile connectivity, speed, reliability and access, whilst also embracing new and emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), drones, Internet of Things (IoT), networks, automation, edge computing, digital twins and advanced robotics.



## Greater Whitsunday AgTech Hub online portal

The Greater Whitsunday AgTech Hub is an online portal to bridge the geographical divide and create connections between producers and agribusiness across the region.

The Hub is hosted by GW3, and is a collaboration between key regional stakeholders to grow the value of agriculture in the region using agtech.

The Greater Whitsunday AgTech Hub portal supports producers and businesses to better understand agtech solutions and connect them with service providers and investors.

**The Greater Whitsunday AgTech Hub portal will also be the place to:**

- ✔ Find local agtech suppliers.
- ✔ See examples of agtech in action.
- ✔ Access resources and source funding.
- ✔ Get involved in the agtech community.



## Greater Foundations

GW3 are building career-based classroom learning with Greater Foundations23, a professional development event for educators across the Greater Whitsunday region.

Greater Foundations23 was held in March at the Resources Centre of Excellence, with the aim of improving educators' knowledge of the wide range of career opportunities available in the Greater Whitsunday region.

This event gave teachers and educators insights from industry leaders about the breadth and depth of future career opportunities available in region, to help empower students to think differently around the jobs on offer in the Greater Whitsunday region.

On the day, 96% of attendees shifted to a confident understanding of local career opportunities after the event, as compared with a 37% starting confidence level.

This project is part of the Mackay Regional Jobs Committee action plan. The Mackay Regional Jobs Committee is proudly supported and funded by the Queensland Government.



# A year at a glance

## ENGAGEMENT

150+

Meetings with key industry, government and community stakeholders

472 PROJECTS

across the Greater Whitsunday region in the pipeline on the GW3 and Regional Development Australia (RDA) Greater Whitsundays Regional Projects Development Register

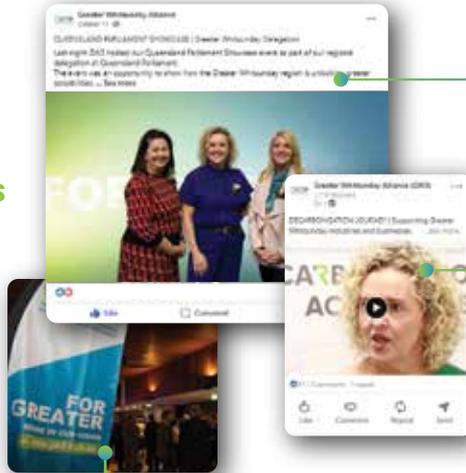
## ADVOCACY

Regional delegations to Brisbane and Canberra, and attended meetings in Brisbane and Townsville to liaise with State and Federal Ministers

## FUNDING

\$776,595.12

secured in project funding for 2022-2023



## MEDIA EXPOSURE

Facebook and LinkedIn combined post reach

108,000 IN A YEAR

Average Post Reach 4,500 A WEEK

Facebook Page Followers 2,100

LinkedIn Page Followers 1,095

40+ Traditional Media News Items

3 FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETINGS

7 BOARD MEETINGS

## Partnership Launch

In March 2023, GW3 and BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) launched the next phase of their strategic partnership – the Transformation Region Project – to support the future economic prosperity of the Greater Whitsunday region.

The Transformation Region Project is a five-year strategic partnership to support GW3’s regional communication and advocacy capacity, and to continue to drive economic growth across the Greater Whitsunday region. The partnership is focused on preparing the region for the increasing impacts of technology and diversification opportunities for the region’s industries and workforces.

The scope of the partnership is two-fold and includes enhancing the organisation’s capacity to effectively advocate, engage, and promote the region and deliver a number of key projects, which will have a positive impact on the region in the future.

Some of the key projects GW3 will deliver as part of the BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA) partnership include focusing on regional workforce development activities, increasing the adoption of technology to drive increased efficiency and productivity across a range of local industries; leveraging regional water assets to value add and create new industry and jobs and, supporting the region to make valuable decisions based on evidence, research and analysis.



# Deliverables



## Agriculture and Aquaculture

Provide a resource to drive the activities and initiatives of the Agribusiness Futures Alliance, which are wide and varied, and be guided by a project plan that has activities linked to the following pillars:

- Diversification of trade opportunities informed by the MIW Agricultural Supply Chain Baseline Study
- Skilling and training development via the Agriculture and Aquaculture Tech Skills Hub, as well as GW3's Regional Jobs Committee
- Adoption of technology through the AgTech Hub and GW3's Regional Digital Roadmap

✔ Successfully launched the Greater Whitsunday AgTech Hub to develop future education, skills and training solutions to support the necessary evolution of the agriculture sector in the region, including the launch of an agtech portal online platform.

✔ Continued collaboration with TAFE Qld, CQUniversity, RDA GW and other stakeholders on the Agriculture and Aquaculture Tech Skills Hub, to identify priority skills development required for the agriculture and aquaculture sector.



## Decarbonisation and Diversification

Continue to lead the Greater Whitsunday Biofutures Leaders Group, comprising of stakeholders with decision making influence, to provide stewardship of regional biofutures strategy development and delivery. Advocacy to key decision makers from both industry and government is a key function of the leaders group.

✔ Development of the Greater Whitsunday Biomanufacturing Blueprint with funding from the Queensland Connects program (an initiative of Department of Tourism Innovation and Science (DTIS)) and led by the Biofutures Leaders Group.

✔ In partnership with the Resources Centre of Excellence, secured a two-year action focused project to deliver

a coordinated regional approach to decarbonisation and diversification.

✔ Development of the Decarbonisation Accelerated Blueprint to underpin a regional approach to decarbonisation, whilst also pursuing new value opportunities.



## Infrastructure, Energy and Aviation

✔ Continue to advocate and support the space launch facility at Abbot Point, north of Bowen, with proponents Gilmore Space Technologies.

✔ Connect and support a range of green energy proponents (solar, wind, hydrogen, pumped hydro) and promote local content opportunities for regional supply chains.



## Mining and METS

✔ Worked closely with the Resources Centre of Excellence on future stages, including the Future Industries Hub and Isaac satellite facility.

✔ Continued to support the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday SME METS Export Hub and enhance Greater Whitsunday development of METS export opportunities.

✔ Invested in research to understand MIW METS supply chain international and companion market opportunities, based on strengths and capabilities.

✔ Continued to grow the region's METS supply chain expertise and technical skills as a highly valuable commodity with strong cross-industry potential.



## Workforce Development

Through the Regional Jobs Committee (an initiative of the Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training (DYJESBT), specific projects supported include:

✔ Socialisation of the Stackable Career Education Program, a regionally focused career module to assist students to identify the current and emerging career

opportunities, to build job readiness across Greater Whitsunday educators and high schools.

✔ Development and implementation of the GreaterFoundations23 professional development event to empower and activate career-based classroom learning for Greater Whitsunday educators.

✔ Completion and launch of the Greater Whitsunday Workforce Development Playbook.

✔ Development of a model to support workers to identify and attain the required skills that allow them to transition between industries, through the Cross Industry Skilling Project.

✔ Enhanced innovation ecosystems to identify new opportunities and sectors for future growth.

✔ Supported the activities of Queensland Future Skills Partnership. The Partnership is a collaboration between industry and training providers to fast-track development of curriculum in technology focused areas to meet regional demand.



## Tourism

✔ Continued advocacy for investment opportunities in the region's tourism infrastructure and support trade developments.

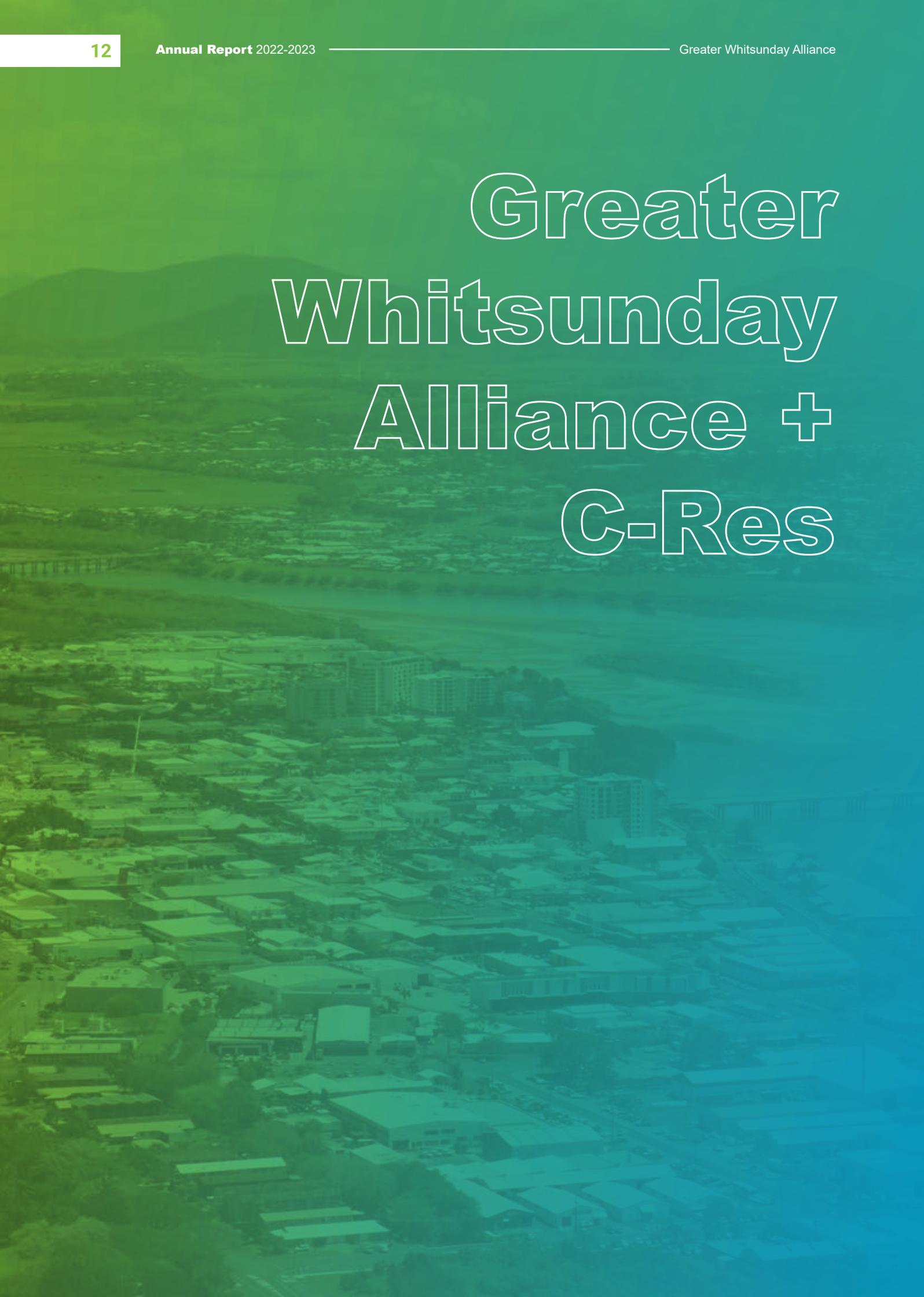


## Digital

✔ Continued support and facilitation of the \$3.5M Isaac Digital Connectivity Project, in partnership with BHP Vital Resources Fund and Telstra, to improve digital speeds in Dysart and Moranbah.

✔ Completion and launch of the Greater Whitsunday Digital Roadmap.

The Greater Whitsunday Digital Roadmap has consolidated and extended on the region's work to provide the pathway to coordinate activities, guide strategic program investment decisions and tap into funding opportunities that ensure the Greater Whitsunday region is globally competitive in an increasingly digital world.



# Greater Whitsunday Alliance + C-Res

## Greater Whitsunday Alliance is the parent company of C-Res – a cost neutral entity which delivers the Local Buying Program (LBP) through a strategic partnership with BHP.

The Local Buying Program is proudly delivered across all BHP Minerals Australia assets in Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia. A Local Buying Foundation (LBF) operates in Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia and is a critical element of the Local Buying Program in each state.

\$1,101M

TOTAL ACTUAL SPEND  
SINCE 2012

\$266M

TOTAL ACTUAL SPEND  
2022-2023

34,772

PAYMENTS TO LOCAL  
BUSINESSES 2022-2023

7.81 days

AVERAGE PAYMENT  
DAYS 2022-2023

## Audited Financial Statement

Greater Whitsunday Alliance invests in its resources to facilitate activities that support the growth and development of industry, business and community in the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region.

GW3's core activity is to drive advocacy efforts and investment in areas that diversify the regional economy; infrastructure development; liveability and supply chain enhancement. GW3 maintained a surplus in the 2022-2023 financial year and received an unqualified audit from independent auditors.

# Looking forward

**Advocacy will continue to form a pivotal focus for Greater Whitsunday Alliance, and the organisation will continue to host and pursue targeted meetings with key decision makers from both industry and government to ensure we are driving the region in a positive direction.**

**As the future-focused, super-connector organisation to drive sustainable economic growth for the Greater Whitsunday region, GW3 will drive economic development in the region through advocating, attracting, collaborating, and informing through our ambitions across key sectors:**

## **Agriculture and Aquaculture**

Support the growth of agriculture and aquaculture in the Greater Whitsunday region through collaboration between sectors; identification of new opportunities; focus on technology adoption and skills development.

## **Decarbonisation and Diversification**

Activate and lead decarbonisation and diversification activities for the region.

## **Digital**

Activate Greater Whitsunday Digital Roadmap recommendations to improve connectivity, accelerate technology adoption and innovation, and enhance digital skills.

## **Infrastructure, Energy and Water**

GW3 will leverage research and analysis to identify gaps and opportunities in infrastructure, energy and water to assist with advocacy and lobbying efforts and link to other Ambitions.

## **Mining and METS**

Attract new investment from other METS related sectors in Greater Whitsunday region based on skills and capabilities of regional METS supply chain and end-of-life mine diversification opportunities.

## **Develop a roadmap for METS sector diversification:**

- Explore non-coal opportunities.
- Horizon sectors including biomanufacturing, defence, aerospace and more.
- Export trade and import replacement.
- Skilling and training development in the mining and METS sector.
- Identify end of life mine site diversification to support economic prosperity.

- Continue to deliver data-driven information that underpins GW3's strategic purpose and role.

## **Tourism**

Invest in research to support collaboration and advocacy efforts for specific Greater Whitsunday tourism challenges and opportunities.

## **Workforce Development**

Deliver multiple strategic workforce development initiatives to ensure a dynamic, responsive and capable workforce that meets the needs of industries now and in the future.





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