

AAEE NSW Local Government Strategic Action Plan 2020-23



Strategic fit with [AAEE NSW Strategic Plan](#)

Implementation of this local government strategic action plan will help the chapter achieve Goal 1.1 (Deliver and support high-quality and effective programs for sustainability educators).

Aim

This strategy will ensure that AAEE NSW can effectively respond to the specific needs of local government educators and ensure its ongoing relevance to this sector.

Objectives

- To identify key areas of program delivery to meet identified needs of local government educators
- To identify potential models for delivery of the strategy
- To identify funding and cost recovery models to fund the strategy and its programs, and provide an income stream for AAEE NSW

Background

Currently, Local Government (LG) makes up around 30% of the AAEE NSW membership (including corporate and individual members). This strategy is largely informed by the 2020 AAEE NSW survey of Local Government environmental educators, and to a lesser extent the AAEE NSW member's survey of 2015. Based on these surveys, current non-members of AAEE would consider joining or re-joining if they could access more professional development opportunities at discounted rates and if more services met their needs. Implementation of this strategy would therefore not only help better service and retain existing LG members but is likely to increase membership of this sector.

Needs

Table 1 prioritises LG needs based on responses received in the 2020 and 2015 surveys. The resulting top five needs were:

1. Case studies
2. LG content, training and learning at conferences
3. Link Local Government educators with environmental education research
4. Link LG educators with the State Government programs - eg: 5 million trees for Greater Sydney
5. Networking with other environmental education professionals in your region

It should be noted that the survey data contains more needs classified as "Low" than those listed. These have been excluded in order to produce a concise document that addresses the highest needs. Should the AAEE NSW executive wish to explore additional actions to those identified in the Table 1, the survey results should first be consulted to ensure they were not already identified as a low priority need.

Barriers

In addition to the needs the following barriers should also be addressed when developing content, programs and activities for LG:

1. Lack of resources (financial, time, physical) (53%)
2. Making meaningful connections with residents/community (48%)
3. More knowledge/skills needed (access to good training/PD) (35%)

(Note: Numbers in brackets throughout this document indicate what percentage of 2020 survey respondents identified the barrier or need.)

Professional development needs

The responses to the following questions into the professional development needs of LG educators should inform the actions of AAEE NSW's LG strategy.

“Personal knowledge & skills I would like to gain/improve”:

1. Understanding and utilizing emerging technologies to engage local communities (64.38%)
2. Connecting with first nations peoples in culturally appropriate ways (56.16%)
3. Social media use and analysis (56.16%)
4. Developing community leaders (51%)
5. Adult education theory and practice (48%)

“Program knowledge & skills I would like to gain/improve”:

1. Adapting education programs to social distancing restrictions (60%)
2. Program evaluation techniques (59%)
3. Best practice environmental education project development (58%)
4. Adapting education programs to acknowledge the climate crisis (56%)

“Sector knowledge & skills I would like to gain/improve”:

1. Engaging the business community (58%)
2. Engaging residents/individuals (56%)
3. Developing and supporting community sustainability networks (45%)

Implementing and funding the LG strategy


AAEE NSW could address the top five identified needs with relatively low capital and resourcing demands. These should be acted on as a matter of priority.


In the 2020 survey, “pay as you go” was the most popular option selected (39%) to access additional services aimed at Local Government. Charging an additional subscription fee to access a "Local Government package" was less well received at 26% and almost as many (23%) believed their Council would be unlikely to pay for any additional services. Some were unsure of which option would be the most palatable to their Council and others mentioned tight budgets and the need for value for money to be demonstrated for additional services to be funded. A “pay as you go”, fee for service model, possibly subsidized by grants, sponsorships and other income streams, is therefore considered the best approach to implement the high priority actions identified in this strategy in order to respond to the needs of local Government in a meaningful way.

Table 1: AAEE NSW Local Government Action Plan

#	LG Need	LG Need Priority	AAEE NSW Action	Resourcing Requirement	AAEE NSW Action Priority	Timeframe
1	Case studies	High	Work with selected respondents to LG survey to develop case studies	Low	High	2020/21
2	LG content, training and learning at conferences	High	Develop a dedicated LG conference stream. Attract LG speakers to conferences	Low	High	2021/22
3	Link Local Government educators with environmental education research	High	Network with Universities to promote their LG relevant education research to AAEE NSW members	Low	High	2020/21
4	Link LG educators with the State Government programs - eg: 5 million trees for Greater Sydney	High	Work with State Government to effectively communicate their relevant LG programs to AAEE NSW members (eg: regularly featured in our newsletters)	Low	High	2020/21
5	Networking with other environmental education professionals in your region	High	Support RSENs, deliver Green Ed drinks and other face to face and online events and networks	Low	High	2020/21
6	Directory of sustainability education consultants and providers	High	Complete and promote "Sustainability Connect" to LG members	Low - Medium	High – Medium	2020/21
7	Mentoring support for schools in your LGA to help them roll out their sustainability projects	High	Deliver through Sustainable Schools (SS)	Low - Medium	High – Medium	2020/21
8	Help managing teacher environment network	High	Run network through Sustainable Schools (SS)	Medium	High – Medium	2021/22
9	Professional development workshops (see professional development needs above)	High	Deliver training similar to previous "Leadership for Sustainability"	Medium	High – Medium	2021/22
10	Research focused on Education for Sustainability in Local Government, community change, adult education etc	High	Develop research projects in partnership with universities	Medium	High – Medium	2021/22 (funding dependant)
11	Research into best practice community behaviour change	High	Find and promote existing research and engage consultants or universities to undertake research	Medium	High – Medium	2021/22
12	Networking with Local Government run community environment centres (if you have one)	Medium	Establish online network	Low	Medium	2022/23
13	Accredited qualification in environmental education from AAEE NSW	Medium	Develop qualification with a Registered Training Organisation and deliver training	High	Low – Medium	2022/23 (funding dependant)

Needs in Table 1 have been prioritised using the following scoring matrix:

AAEE NSW Resourcing requirement 

LG Need 

	High	Medium	Low
Low	Low	Low-Medium	Medium
Medium	Low-Medium	Medium	High - Medium
High	Medium	High – Medium	High