



# OUTWARD BOUND AUSTRALIA

**Case for Support  
New Communal Centre Tharwa, ACT**

# NEW COMMUNAL CENTRE - A SHARED VISION

## Outward Bound at Tharwa – a new vision as an outdoor learning campus

A stone's throw from Canberra, on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River and the doorstep of the mountains, Tharwa has been our home since 1978. Our 11 hectare property was set up with 'make do' facilities to house our staff and equipment and provide a national base from which to support our expeditions.

Nearly 50 years later, in the wake of the Black Summer bushfires and COVID, we realise it is time to re-imagine our home at Tharwa, fulfilling its potential as an outdoor learning campus. The vision is to transform the site, expanding our outdoor adventure experiences with hands-on bushcraft activities and improved campsite facilities. It will offer cabin accommodation to extend the inclusivity of Outward Bound's reach and create more resilient options when climatic conditions are severe.

A masterplan developed in 2021 by award winning Sally Draper Architects and TCL Landscape Design provides the blueprint for the site. Already over the last 2 years we have invested \$1.5m in refurbishing the old farm sheds to become an inspiring learning space as bushcraft workshops for our participants, including an indoor function centre and a woodfire pizza-making oven. We have also created a new logistics & vehicle hub for our gear, equipment and catering, upgraded toilet and shower amenities, and renovated our program operations office.

Central to realising the vision is a new Communal Centre to create dining and gathering facilities for 140 to match our cabin capacity. This will replace the small, sterile dining facilities in the 'admin block', that began life as a mining demountable in the 1960s. It is the most pivotal, largest cost part of the transformation. With \$2.2m of grant funding, a \$1.4m investment from Outward Bound and \$250,000 already secured from generous philanthropists, we are on the cusp of realising this project, if we can meet our fundraising goals.

 "So many Outward Bound magic moments of learning, reflection and connection happen while sharing a meal. The new Communal building will provide the missing link experience to fulfil the potential of the Tharwa campus as a special place for outdoor adventure learning."

*Loren Miller, Co-Chair and Executive Director*

### Design for the New Building





## A new communal building

The Communal building will become the heart of the campus for Outward Bound participants, crew and the broader community. It will be a central gathering point for meals, events and end of program celebrations. It will also host the National Centre for Outdoor Risk and Readiness (NatCORR), an Outward Bound initiative to help the outdoors sector to prepare for the impacts of climate change. The Communal Building will serve as a catalyst for connection, dialogue and shared experience, fostering community, collaboration and engagement with the environment.



## Versatile Design

The building will be composed of three linked pavilions. The main central pavilion will provide a large dining and event space – with integrated indoor and outdoor decks accommodating dining for up to 140 people. Adjacent to this will be a welcoming reception (the 'Yumalundi' Lounge in Ngunnawal language), a smaller meeting area and administration space. Kitchen and amenities will form the third pavilion. The design thoughtfully accommodates a range of activities, offering flexible spaces that can be easily adapted for different purposes and different seasons. The separation of uses into zones allows each to be developed to efficiently meet functional needs whilst capturing an appropriate spatial and ambient quality. Importantly it allows the building to appear as a series of modestly scaled pavilions nestled quietly within the landscape.

### Legend

1. Communal Centre - Current Project
2. Student accommodation
3. Community participant accommodation
4. Cottage
5. Staff accommodation
6. Kirby Hill
7. Possum shed
8. Challenge shed
9. Expedition/distribution shed
10. Workshops/shed
11. WC/Shower block - new
12. Lake - enlarged
13. Outdoor kitchen - covered courtyard
14. OPS office
15. Undercover distribution area

## New Master Plan



Proposed Ground Level Floor Plan  
Outward Bound Australia  
NatCORR Communal Centre  
25 Nunn Road, Tharwa ACT  
Date: 17/03/2024  
Date: 25/05/24  
Drawing: TMSI

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## Inspiring Atmosphere

The Centre will be designed to create a space to foster a sense of wonder, appreciation and stewardship of the natural world. The building design and orientation embraces the bush landscape views in two directions – looking out to Mt Tennent and the beckoning ranges, and opening vistas to engage with the bushland and outdoor activity areas towards the Murrumbidgee River.

The design features rustic natural materials, textures and colours that blend with the bush and are respectful of the land as Ngunnawal and Ngambi Country. The galvanised iron pavilion reflects design inspiration from the iconic woolsheds that adorn the historic Cuppacumbalong Homestead and neighbouring sheep station landscapes.

The provision of usable sheltered outdoor space is pivotal to the building design. Seamless integration between indoor and outdoor areas will allow an easy flow onto external decks, with access to shelter or sun when needed. A rustic stone fireplace will provide a central focus for the space and an inviting and cosy gathering point. Natural textured materials will give a warm, earthy quality to the space that echoes the bushland setting.

The Communal Building will embrace technology as a means of enhancing communication and collaboration, when appropriate. It will be equipped with audio visual and communication systems to facilitate learning, presentations, workshops and virtual connection with other locations. Technology will be discretely integrated into the space to maximise utility without compromising the earthy charm of the spaces.



## Environmental Credentials

Sound passive design principles inform the orientation and arrangement of spaces within the Communal Centre. Extensive north glazing maximises the opportunity for winter sun with summer shade provided by overhanging roof canopies and a vine covered pergola. High level lantern glazing will result in even natural light by day and provide an effective night purge system for summer heat extraction. Ceiling fans will assist with summer cooling, redirecting high level heat downwards in the winter. Slow combustion fires will provide efficient winter heat. Solar cells will produce power to service the commercial kitchen and administration areas.

The external skin of the building is designed to minimise combustibility with galvanised iron cladding and minimum projections and gutters. A sprinkler system to the roof will assist in minimising building damage from bushfires, noting that an evacuation policy applies to the campus as a whole, and the building is not designed to act as a fire refuge.



## Design and Construction Program

The building planning and design is near completion and we are aiming for our partner Ethical Construction Projects to commence construction in January 2025.

With the new Communal Centre operational by 2026, our goal is to annually host 6,000 participants, by reaching 20,000 participant days across 100 programs by 2030. This materially expands Outward Bounds reach and impact in a tangible, long-lasting way.

**We need your support!**

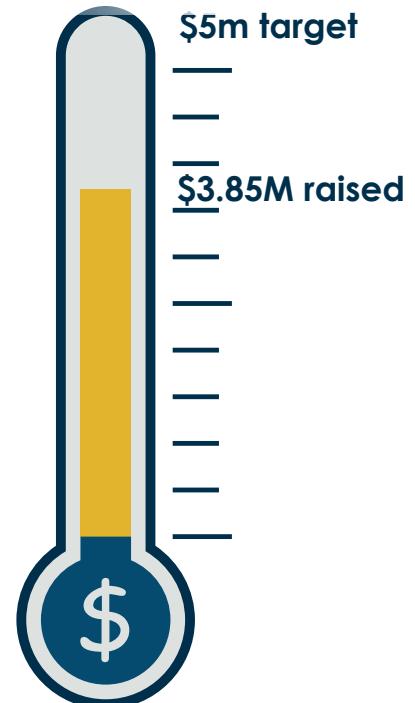


## Funding Opportunities

This is a rare opportunity to make an enormous impact on developing Outward Bound's facilities to be fit for future generations. The importance and time critical nature of this fundraising campaign is fundamental to success. **We are seeking the help and support of the generous Outward Bound community to realise this strategic goal.**

With the funding opportunity\*, comes naming recognition opportunities:

- **Building and dining hall** naming with donations in the order of \$1m
- **Outdoor deck and BBQ area** naming with donations in the order of \$500k
- **Seminar and meeting rooms** for donations in the order of \$250k



\*Tax deductible donations are possible through the Australian Outward Bound Development Fund.



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