



**Goulburn Murray  
Community Leadership**

**2026**

# Fairley Program Overview



## Our Journey

Goulburn Murray Community Leadership is entering a new era by expanding from a singular leadership program into a robust learning system designed to connect people, industry, and place, thereby strengthening local communities and enhancing the region's well-being. For thirty years, the Fairley Leadership Program has laid a solid foundation, empowering leaders to address local challenges. Yet, as regional complexities like population growth, diversity, climate readiness, and rising costs intensify, a renewed focus on these key elements is crucial.

Our transformation from a standalone program to a dynamic community development system is centered on:

**Enhancing Community Connections:** By increasing participation, we aim to weave stronger ties among community members.  
**Localised Learning:** Encouraging learning that is reflective of and responsive to the unique needs of our diverse communities.  
**Industry Engagement:** Collaborating with local industries to ensure strategies are relevant and impactful.

By bringing more community leaders into the fold, we can deepen our impact across the region.

## Our Vision

Prosperous Goulburn Murray regional communities driven by locally developed community leaders.

## Our Mission

To be an adaptive organisation that is a catalyst for positive change, cultivating a willing, ready, and able pool of community leaders.

## Our Why

We believe in the power and necessity of community leadership to more effectively address the complex issues and critical opportunities in our region.

## Our Model

The GMCL Community Leadership Model is the foundation for every program we deliver. The model encompasses three key areas of learning and exploration, which we believe to be the core components of what makes a community leader.



**CL** = Community Leader



### Leadership

The development of leadership capacity at the individual, community and organisational level.



### Regional Awareness

An awareness of the strengths, challenges and foundations of our regional communities.



### Mobilisation

Demonstrations of leadership through civic engagement and action in community.

## Our Commitment

At GMCL, we are committed to fostering an inclusive environment where diversity is respected, and every voice is valued. We believe that different perspectives strengthen our communities, and we work to ensure everyone feels welcome and able to contribute meaningfully. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we live and work, paying respect to Elders past, present, and emerging. We recognise their enduring connection to the land and culture, and are committed to supporting reconciliation and inclusion for all.

# Our Region

Goulburn Murray Community Leadership operates across the communities of the Goulburn Murray region, including 10 local government areas, and defined by the intersection between the Goulburn (Warring) and Murray (Dhungala) rivers





## Fairley Leadership Program

The 2026 Fairley Leadership Program is a transformative journey designed to maximise each participant's potential for community leadership. Built for individuals from various sectors and locations across the Goulburn Murray region, the program delivers a unique experience that balances personal growth with community engagement.

The program is dedicated to evolving with the needs of the region, providing a platform for emerging leaders to invest in their communities and drive meaningful change. With a combination of program days and online sessions, the program will be delivered in a hybrid format. Monthly 'reflection' sessions will also be included for independent self-paced learning.

Throughout the program, participants will build essential skills, deepen their regional understanding, and discover opportunities for effective community mobilisation. The Fairley Leadership Program is committed to supporting passionate individuals who aim to enrich the collective well-being of the Goulburn Murray region and wider community.

## Eligibility

Participants are chosen based on their demonstrated community leadership, willingness to contribute, and capacity to apply their skills and knowledge within local communities.

Our aim is to create an environment that embraces diverse perspectives and experiences within each cohort. We take pride in creating spaces that encourage full participation from all members.

We invite individuals from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, multicultural communities, rural and remote areas, as well as those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to express their interest in joining the program.

## Commitment & Inclusions

- **Fairley Leadership Program:** A 6-month journey where participants gather in-person and online for regional exploration and personal development, laying the foundations for the program.
- **Community Action Network:** Workshops where regional hubs dive deeper into community gaps and opportunities, collaborating on impactful, ongoing projects and collecting insights from their community.
- **Regional Mobilisation Summit:** A full-day event bringing participants and broader stakeholders together to build on the region's mobilisation efforts.
- **Closing Intensive & Graduation:** A 2-day event focused on final reflections, consolidation, and a Graduation to celebrate the program's completion.

Participants will travel across the Goulburn Murray region, experiencing its communities and landscapes firsthand. To graduate, a minimum of 80% attendance is required, emphasising the importance of full engagement. Employer support is essential, recognising the program's value to both the individual and broader community.

A Canberra Tour may be offered at an additional cost subject to participant interest.

## Fees

The fee for the 2026 Fairley Leadership Program is \$8,500 plus GST. Participants can be supported through employer sponsorship, scholarships, or self-funding. We are pleased to offer a number of scholarships to help overcome financial barriers to participate, though we cannot guarantee a scholarship-funded place due to limited availability.

Participants may need to contribute towards certain costs, like transport, accommodation (private rooms) or meals during social events.

An additional fee will apply for participants that would like to attend the Canberra Tour.

# 2026 Fairley Leadership Program Calendar

Opening & Launch	4 & 5 March 2026	  
Online Session	11 March 2026	  
Online Session	18 March 2026	  
Place-Based Day 1	25 March 2026	  
Place-Based Day 2	22 April 2026	  
Online Session	29 April 2026	  
Proposed Melbourne Study Tour	4 & 5 May 2026	  
Online Session	6 May 2026	  
Place-Based Day 3	14 May 2026	  
Online Session	20 May 2026	  
Online Session	27 May 2026	  
Place-Based Day 4	29 May 2026	  
Place-Based Day 5	3 June 2026	  
Online Session	17 June 2026	  
Place-Based Day 6	24 June 2026	  
Place-Based Day 7	15 July 2026	  
Online Session	29 July 2026	  
Online Session	5 August 2026	  
Place-Based Day	12 August 2026	  
Online Session	26 August 2026	  
CAN Hub 'Insights' Sessions	September 2026	  
Regional Mobilisation Summit	14 October 2025	  
Closing Intensive	21 & 22 October 2025	  
End of Year Celebration	28 October 2026	  



# Community Action Network (CAN)

The 2026 Community Action Network (CAN) is a new, collaborative initiative grounded in the principles of a communities of practice model. It is designed to bring together participants to address regional gaps and opportunities through community-led projects.

Over a series of workshops, participants will validate community gaps, explore and evaluate potential initiatives for regional benefit, and identify stakeholders for partnership and collaboration. The focus will be on learning and growth, encouraging participants to embrace learning through experimentation and adaptability. The end goal is to create actionable plans that can be refined and scaled for broader regional impact and which produce transferable outcomes.

Workshops will be held across regional hubs, inviting Fairley Leadership Program participants from each region and the wider community to join in this collaborative effort.

- **Hub 1:** Campaspe and Murray
- **Hub 2:** Moira, Berrigan and Federation
- **Hub 3:** Greater Shepparton
- **Hub 4:** Strathbogie and Benalla

The insights identified through these workshops will also contribute to the Regional Mobilisation Summit, where they will become a central focus in discussions on regional advancement and collective well-being.

## Eligibility

Anyone over the age of 18 may participate. We encourage participations who have a demonstrated commitment to community leadership or a genuine desire to contribute, and the ability to apply their skills and knowledge to benefit local communities.

Our aim is to create an inclusive environment that embraces diverse perspectives and experiences. We especially encourage individuals from Aboriginal and multicultural communities, rural and isolated areas, and disadvantaged backgrounds to consider participating in a workshop with their regional hub.

## Fees

There is no fee for participants accepted into the 2026 Fairley Leadership Program to participate in the 2026 Community Action Network. The 2026 CAN is included within the 2026 FLP.

## 2026 Event Date

Insights Sessions

Throughout Sep 2026





## Regional Mobilisation Summit

The annual Regional Mobilisation Summit aims to bring together community leaders and skilled individuals to foster a shared sense of purpose within our community. Its primary goal is to cultivate a shared sense of purpose and collective responsibility for the future of our communities. By focusing on collaboration, practical action, and inclusive dialogue, the Summit seeks to empower participants to address local issues, enhance participation, and prepare for a future where every community member plays a meaningful role.

## Fees

There is no fee for participants accepted into the 2026 Fairley Leadership Program to participate in the 2026 Regional Mobilisation Summit. The 2026 RMS is included within the 2026 FLP.

## 2026 Event Date

**RM Summit**

14 Oct 2026



**Goulburn Murray**  
Community Leadership

## Contact

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## Connect with GMCL

To find out more about who we are and what we do, contact us using the details below or connect with us on social media.

Head to our [website FAQs](#) for more information

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