

WESTERN REGIONAL BENEFITS FRAMEWORK

CO-DESIGN WORKSHOP SUMMARY | 19 MAY 2026

The Western Region Strategic Partnership (WRSP) is developing a Regional Benefit Sharing Framework on the West Coast. Twenty-three participants representing community, industry, government and the WRSP Steering Committee participated in a workshop to co-design key elements of the framework on 19 May 2026 in Queenstown.

KEY OUTCOMES

Values and principles

Participants discussed the values and principles that should underpin the program. It was emphasised that principles need to avoid vague statements and reflect the voice and character of the community.

- Community voice at the centre
- Local decision-making
- Long-term thinking
- Fair and equitable
- Respect the identity of each town

Prioritising community needs

Participants agreed that community priorities would be identified through the **West Coast 2035 Community Plan** where possible. The process of prioritising needs should be:

- Community-led
- Data-informed
- Fair and respectful
- Accessible to everyone
- Efficient and low-cost to administer

How Could the Framework Work?

Decision-making

A representative structure that includes:

- A voice from each West Coast town
- Industry and Council representation
- Intergenerational perspectives
- Sector-based representation

Possible Committee Structure

Steering Committee

- Industry, government and community representatives
- Sets strategic direction and funding parameters

Community Committee

- Makes funding decisions based on agreed parameters and local priorities

Funding Criteria

Projects could be assessed based on:

- Number of people benefiting
- Return on investment
- Fairness and equity
- Balance across project types
- Community impact
- Deliverability

Governance Options

Existing Organisation

New Organisation

Established systems and experience Purpose-built for the framework

Lower administration costs

Fresh start and independent identity

May face capacity constraints

Requires funding and governance capability

Examples discussed: Cradle Coast Authority, Regional Development Australia Tasmania, Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal, West Coast Council

Learning and Improving

- Annual review and adaptation
- Building local leadership and skills
- Ongoing community involvement
- Maintaining trust and transparency

What does success look like?

Communities trust the process and can see tangible local benefits.

Next Steps

Community conversations will be held in each West Coast town in July 2026 to test and refine the proposed framework.

Contact

Nicci Skerl, WRSP Project Officer