

## Social Enterprise Finance Australia

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# SEFA snapshot

## New outreach centre for Wiradjuri youth

Wagga Wagga Local Aboriginal Land Council has used a SEFA loan to convert a derelict building to a youth outreach centre for Wiradjuri youth.



‘The need is great, and now with the support of SEFA we are able to achieve our goal of creating new opportunities for empowering our youth.’

Lorraine Lyons, CEO Wagga LALC

To run a successful youth outreach centre, Lorraine Lyons, CEO of the Wagga Wagga Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), knew she would need a safe and inspiring space. The building chosen was ideal because it was a historical meeting place. But it was also in a derelict state. SEFA’s loan helped to repair and renovate the building.

Located on Docker Street, the building now houses the youth centre, as well as boxing and fitness facilities. It is also home to the Wagga Wagga LALC headquarters and artwork, stories and pictures of the people who used to meet here line the walls.

The Wagga Wagga LALC oversees culture, heritage and social housing, and qualified mentors guide Wiradjuri youth towards healthier lifestyles. Part of that was to develop the Warragirri Boxing and Youth Centre, which is run by a qualified boxer and four young people who earned their certificates in fitness and health through partnerships with employment agencies in Wagga Wagga. The centre has also acquired a gym full of fitness equipment, and a group of volunteers built a boxing ring. Cultural camps are also expected to be added to list of activities offered.



Initially the LALC will partner with Centacare, utilising the facility and the qualified trainers to bring troubled children in off the streets. The local Court Magistrate Michael Antrum has visited the centre and could direct offenders to attend programs there as an alternative to bail or bond conditions. ‘He’s really keen on a referral system, so when kids hit his court, he can refer them to us before they get into more trouble,’ said Lorraine.



### What SEFA says

Supplying capital to assist with the refurbishment of a culturally significant building that will act both as a headquarters and recreation centre aligns with the missions of both SEFA and the Wiradjuri people.