

Noosa research taking action on climate change and the rise of eco-anxiety

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation (NBRF) is funding \$10K to support a new Central Queensland University eco-anxiety research project in the Noosa Shire.

The research aims to understand why young people, aged 18-35, suffer ongoing feelings of hopelessness and despair about the future due to climate change, and how they can overcome their concerns by taking action.

Recent statistics show that 75 percent of young Australians think their future is frightening, and 84 percent said they were worried about climate change.

Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation Chair, Rowan Rafferty said this research could help provide answers on ways to improve wellbeing within our community.

“The Noosa Biosphere Reserve has recently experienced climate change evoked environmental disasters, from bushfires to severe wet weather, which are likely to have a detrimental impact on the mental health and wellbeing of citizens, in particular our young people,” said Mr Rafferty.

“Our Foundation is proud to work with partners in supporting this research project to help better understand how positive action and engagement can contribute to improved mental health.”

Along with supporting partners, Noosa Council, Zero Emissions Noosa, Greenfleet, and Noosa Landcare, NBRF’s funding will enable the 12 month long project to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention program to decrease levels of eco-anxiety.

Led by Annie Nolan, PhD Student at Central Queensland University, the project team will engage 150 participants and evaluate the impact of their pro-environmental behaviour on their levels of concern.

“Data collected through Headspace Australia has found a sudden spike in the incidence of emotional distress in people aged 18-35 was directly related to mounting anxiety about catastrophic global climate events,” said Ms Nolan.

“Tree planting is a positive action that can be undertaken relatively simply but is often overlooked in its importance in the fight against climate change.

“This study aims to find out whether participants’ concern is changed as a result of participating in a tree planting event, which aims to plant enough trees to offset their car’s carbon emissions,” she said.

The tree planting event will run during March and April. The event will not only be helping to assist the Noosa community reach its target of zero emissions by 2026, it will also aid in the revegetation and restoration of native habitats for wildlife.

To register your interest in the upcoming Noosa tree planting event, visit fb.com/noosabiospherereserve or email anne.nolan@cqumail.com.

Ends.



Media enquiries

For more information, interview or photos, phone Alison Cooper, NBRF media liaison on mobile 0416 288 054 or email to alison@alisonjanecommunications.com

About Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation

The Noosa Biosphere Reserve Foundation (NBRF) is a not-for-profit organisation established by the Noosa Shire Council in 2015 to support projects and ideas that align with the aims of the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme. In 2007, the Noosa Shire achieved global recognition for the high values of its natural environment with the designation of our Shire as the Noosa Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). www.noosabiosphere.org.au