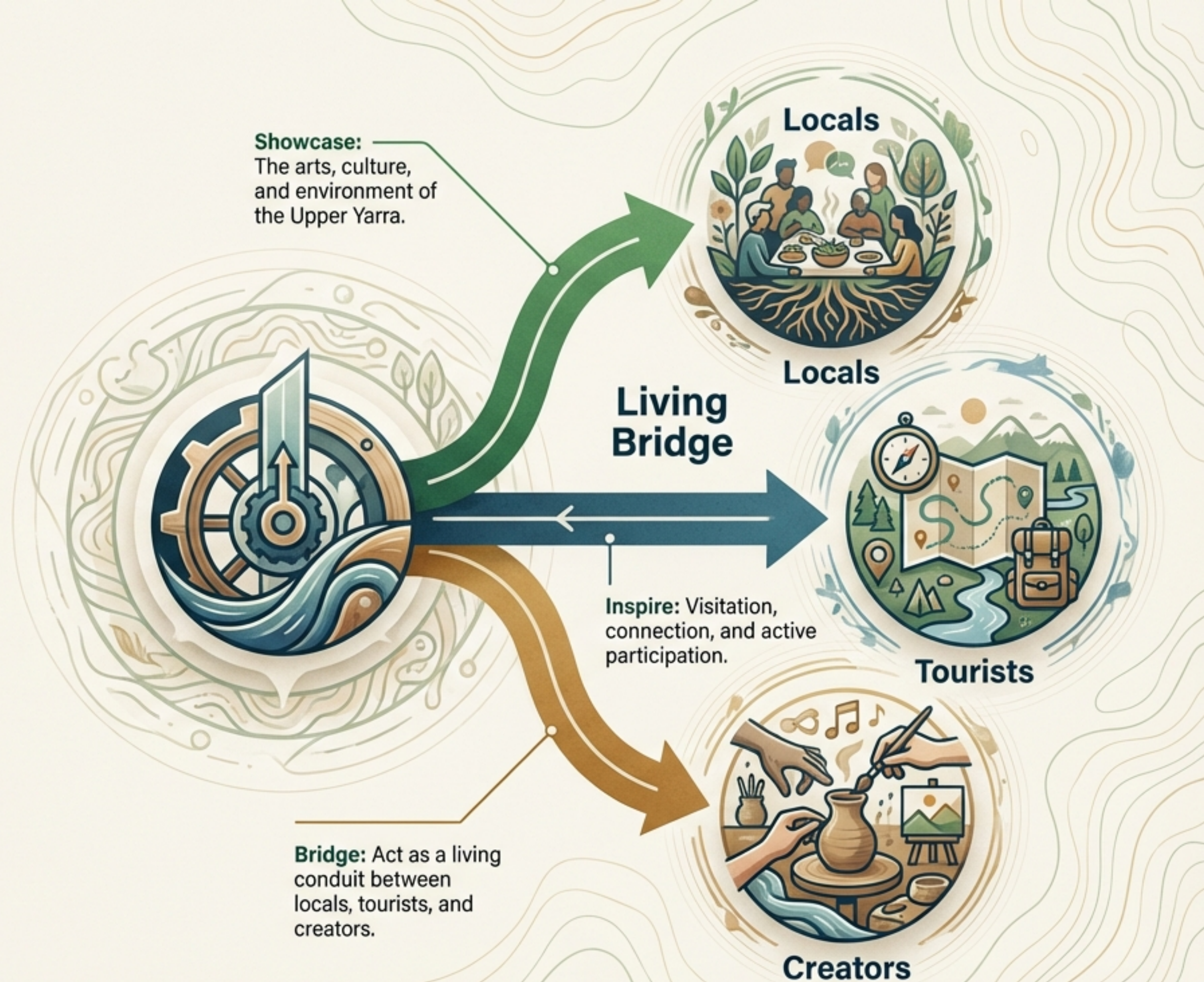


Waterwheel Hub Strategic Plan

Transition, Activation,
Regional Leadership.

The North Star: A Living Ecosystem

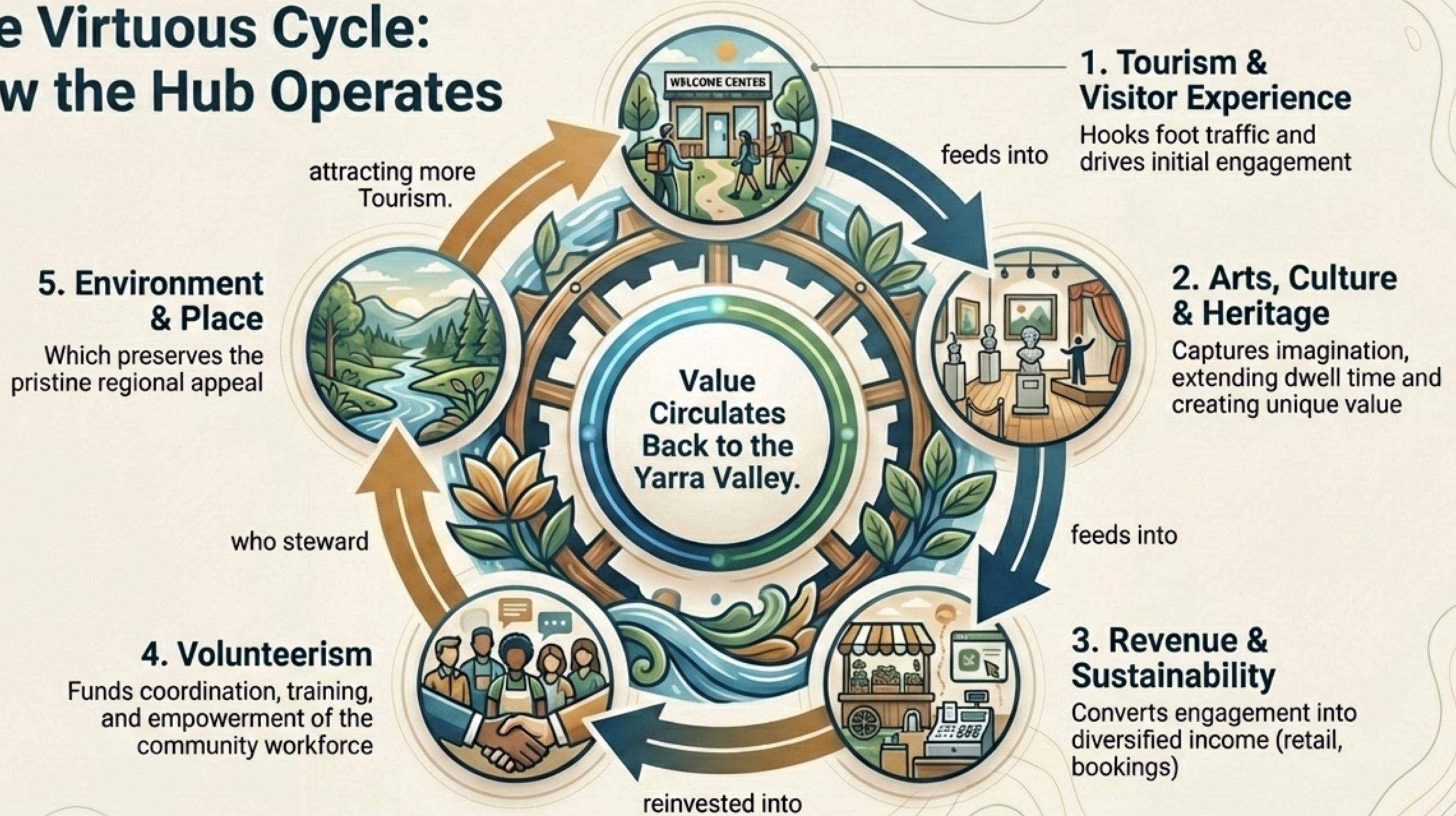
To establish the Waterwheel as a **sustainable, community-led hub** that connects visitors, makers, and local experiences while fostering **creative incubation, cultural expression, and regional resilience.**



The Destination: 3-5 Year Future State

Surviving vs. Thriving	Transition State	Future State (3-5 Years)
Financial Profile	Reliant on single/limited income streams	~\$250K annual revenue with a healthy profit margin
Operational Model	Ad-hoc volunteer operations	Open 7 days, supported by structured volunteers + paid coordinator
Offerings	Basic information and retail	Artisan retail, gallery sales, curated tours, immersive events, local trader showcases
Regional Status	A convenient local stop	Recognised at a state tourism level; a self-sustaining destination

The Virtuous Cycle: How the Hub Operates



The Activation Curve: A 24-Month Trajectory



Pillar 1: Tourism & Visitor Experience

Strategic Interventions



Digital Integration

Placement of Waterwheel QR calendars in local AirBnBs to drive immediate traffic.



Booking Infrastructure

Integration of the BookEasy platform for seamless regional booking.



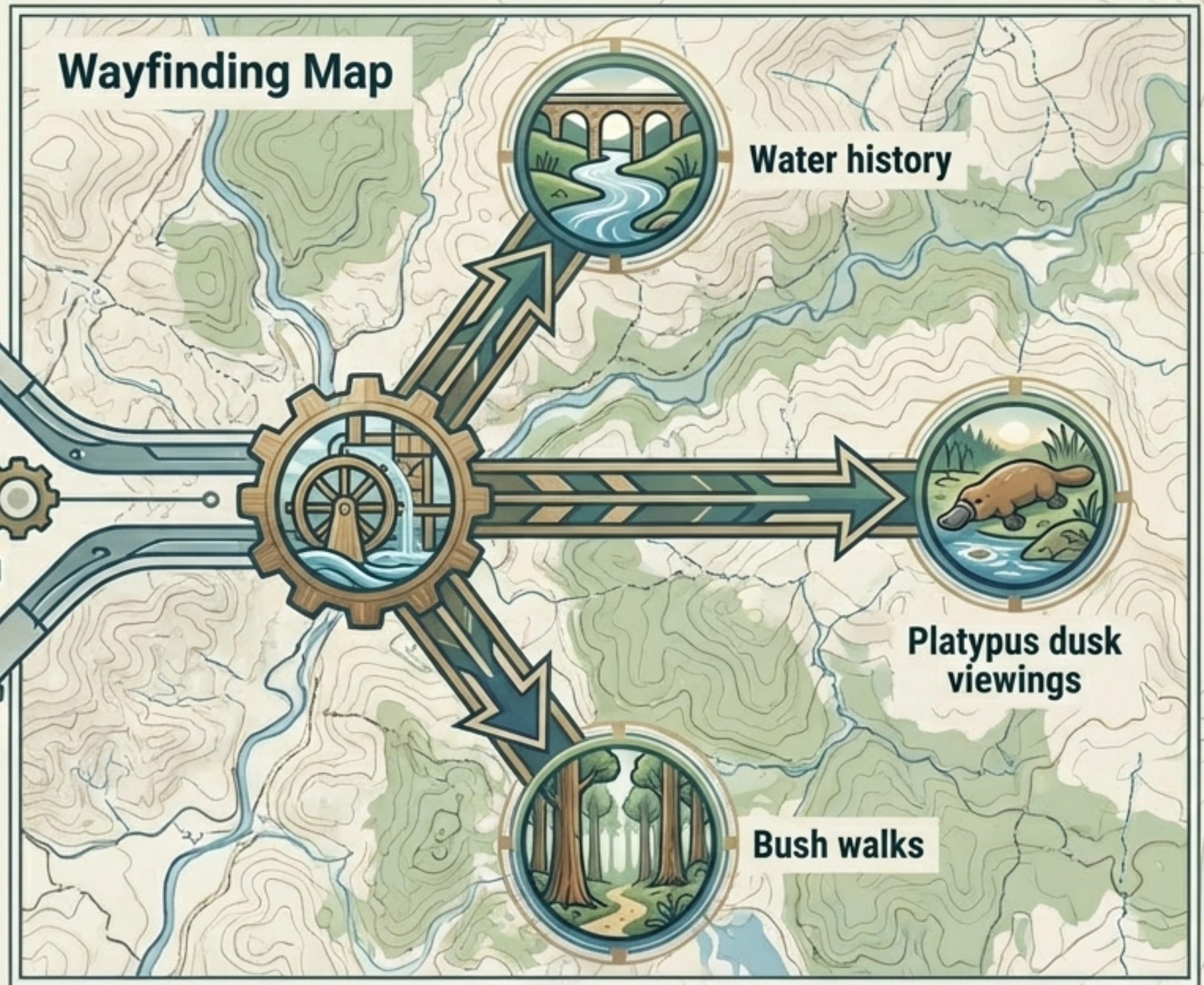
Guided Touring

Development of shuttle bus guided tours to major regional sites (7 Acre Rock, Donna Buang, Ada Tree, sawmill relics).

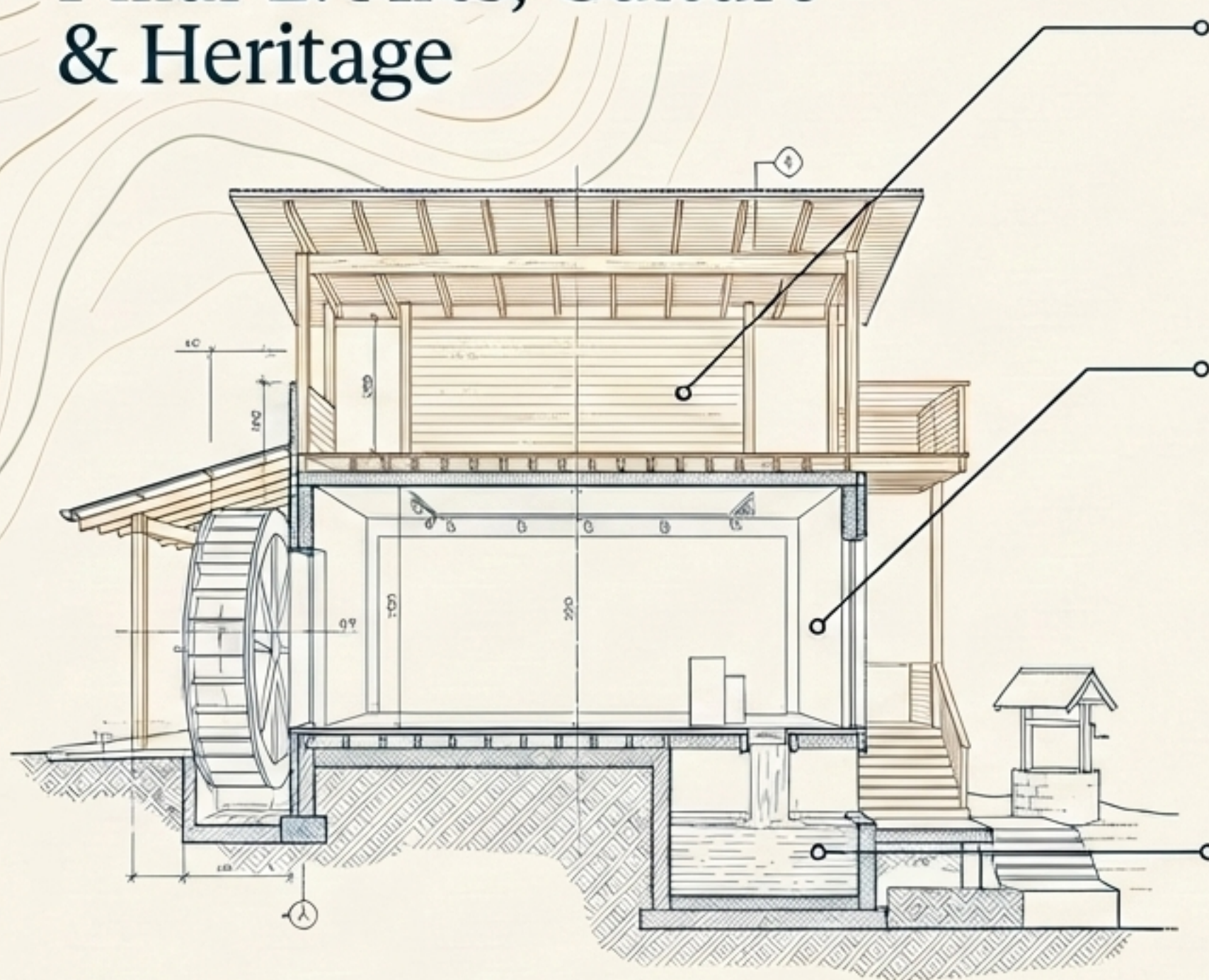


Physical Wayfinding

Implementation of 15 strategic wayfinding signage points.



Pillar 2: Pillar 2: Arts, Culture & Heritage



“Gallery & Deck” Waterwheel building

- The Deck
 - Handmakers markets; wellbeing workshops.

- The Gallery
 - Permanent roster of school holiday programs; collaborative art shows celebrating diversity (e.g., Arts Project Australia).

- The Water
 - Ephemeral art and physical sculptures installed at the base of the steps near the wishing well prospects.

Programming Strategy

Transitioning exhibits to align with the Aboriginal 6 season changes in collaboration with Indigenous elders.

Focus on 'Nature for Healing' and cross-promotion with the YRC arts centre.



Pillar 3: Environment & Place-Based Connection



Community Stewardship

Integrating environmental groups (Landcare, River Keepers, G4W) directly into the volunteer pool to manage the tourist footprint and address issues like pest animals and rubbish.



Nature/Healing Touchpoint



Interactive Learning

Implementation of interactive screens detailing local history, key species, bushfire awareness, and protection protocols.



Immersive Experiences

River walking with the mob; guided 'Hugging Trees' walks; school excursions focusing on the transition from forestry to new environmental stewardship.

Pillar 4: Revenue & Sustainability

Diversified Income Funnel

Top Funnel (Low Risk / Immediate)

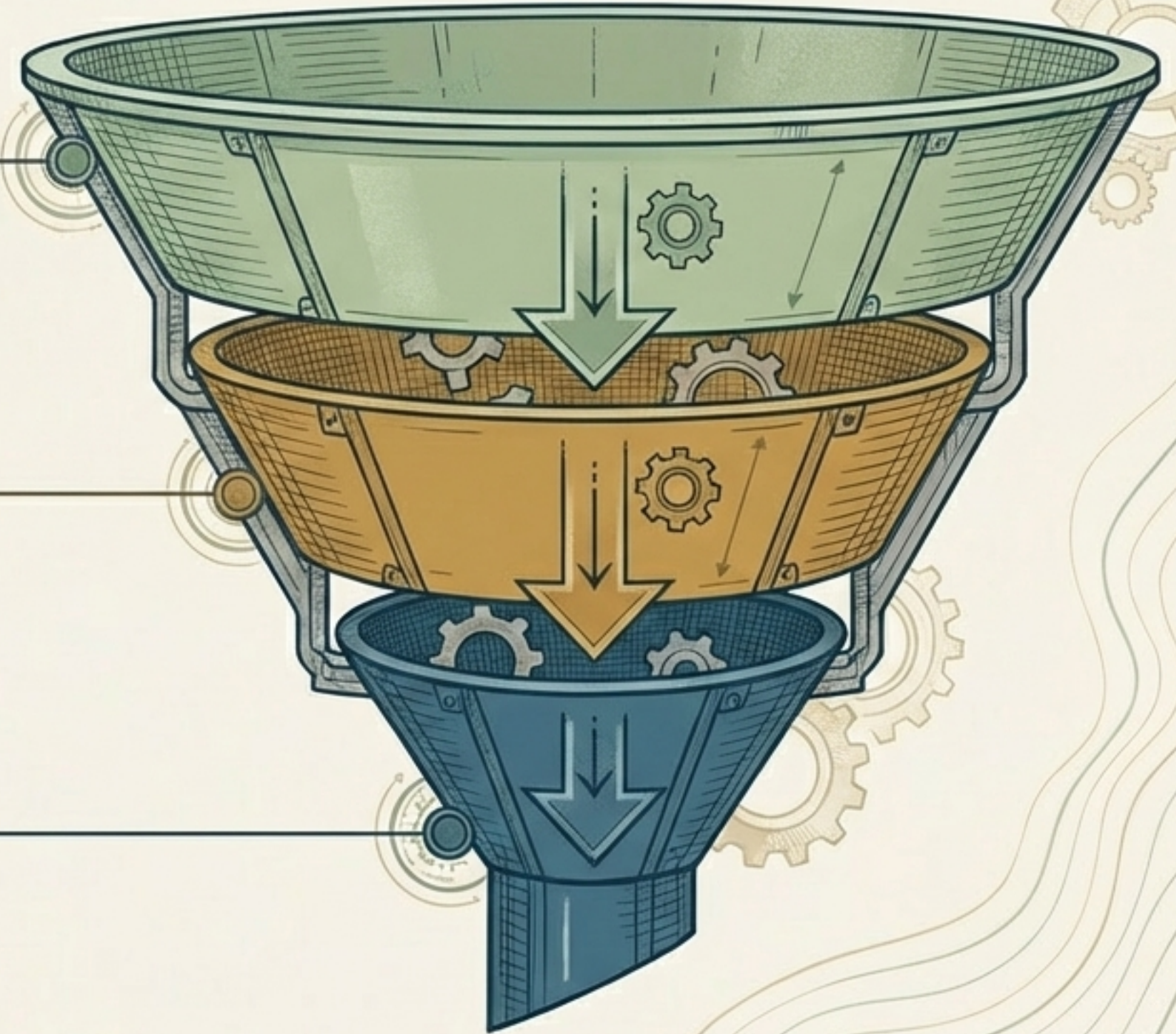
Gallery commissions; Ceda member contributions; BookEasy BnB income streams; parking YRC income contribution.

Mid Funnel (Engagement / Programming)

Mountain bike product sales; outside hirers for events/schools; live workshops; historical merchandise and playable QR video guides (focusing on gold, timber, hydrogeology, and the O'shanassy aqueduct).

Bottom Funnel (High Yield / Flagship)

Guided group tours with lunch and track information; curated eco-talks featuring local wildlife pelts/touch-and-feel displays; major grants (e.g., Bendigo Bank).

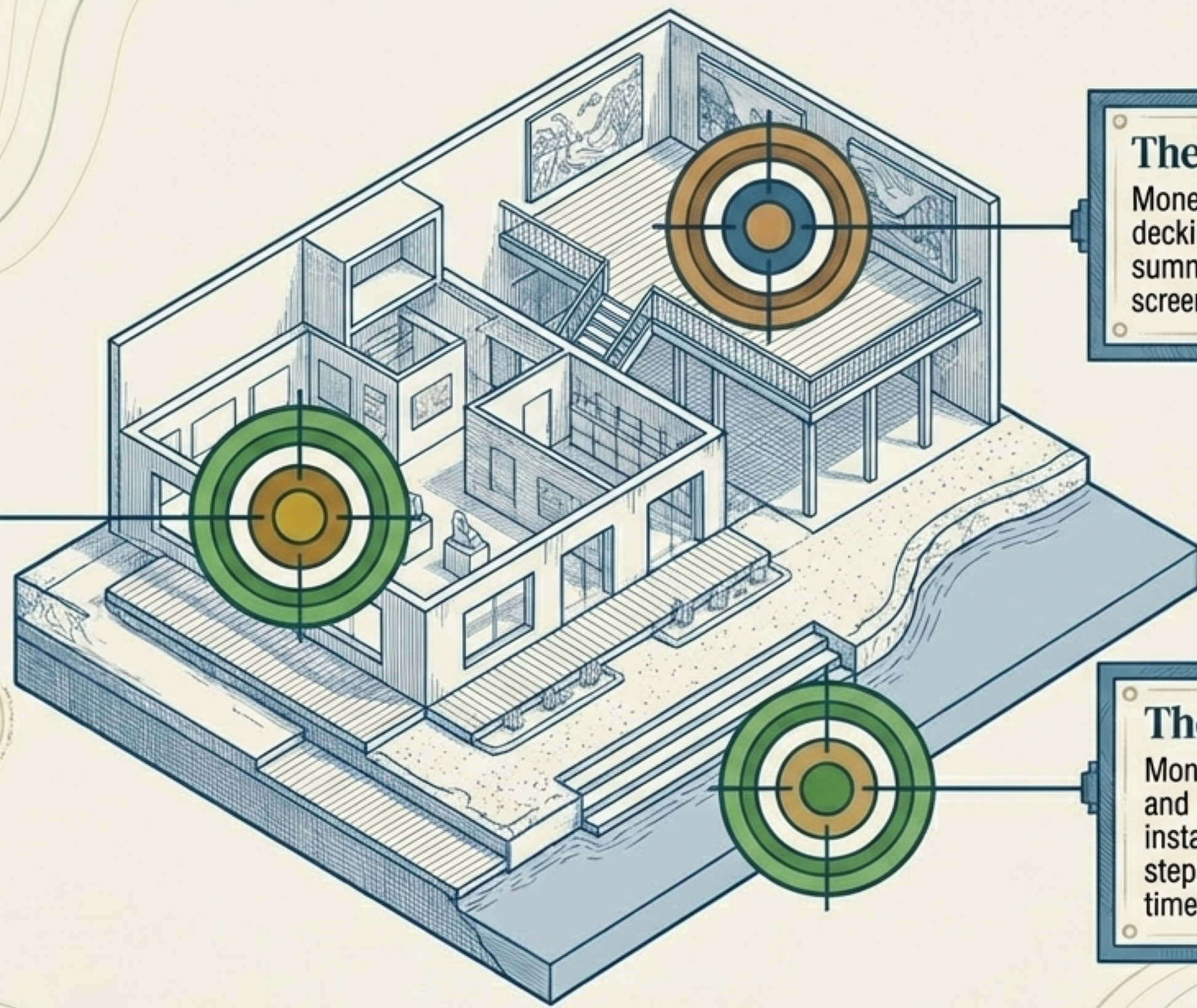


Pillar 5: Vitalising Volunteerism

Volunteer Lifecycle



Activating the Physical Asset

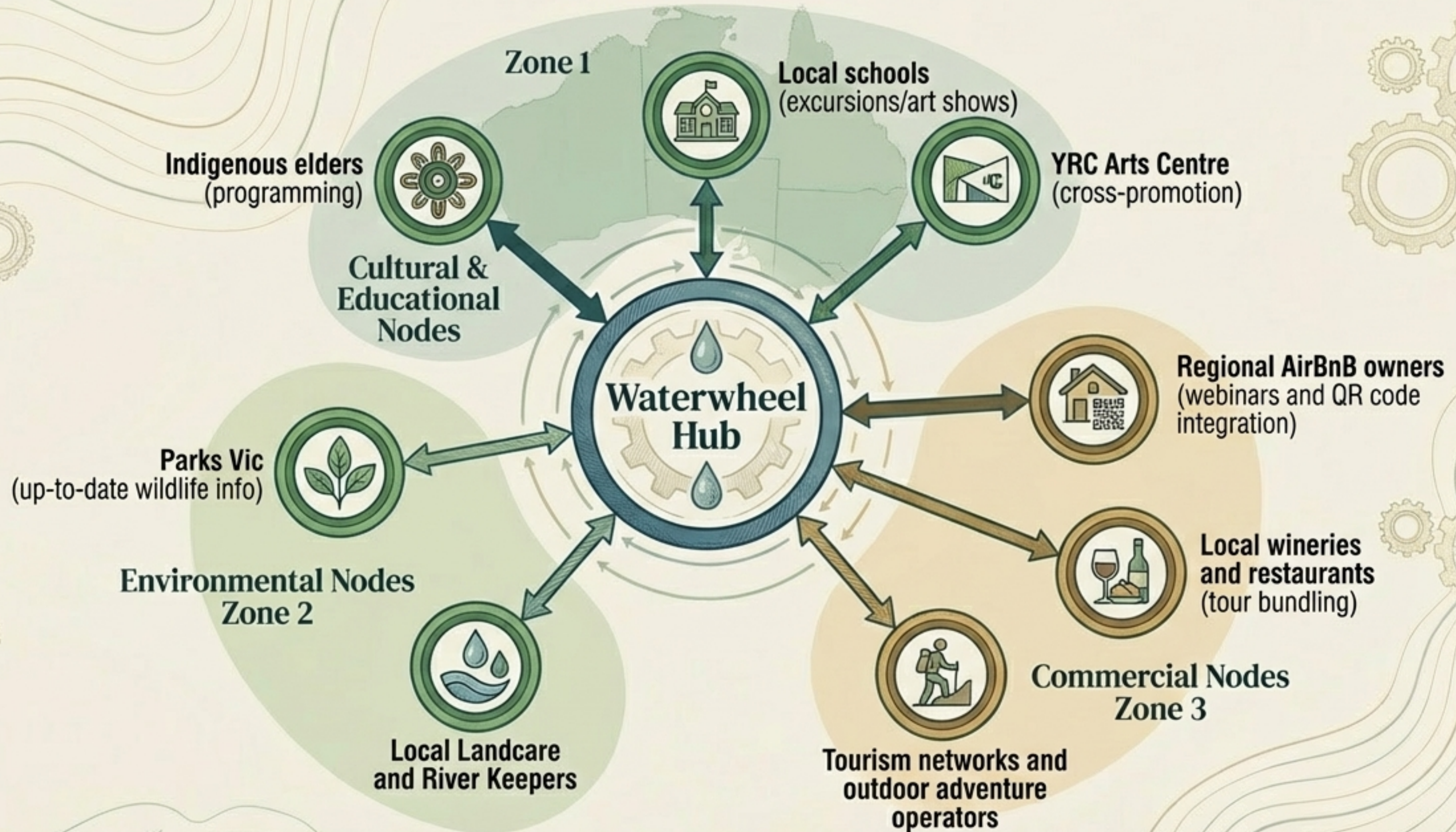


Retail & Gallery Line-of-Sight
Reorganising the internal handmakers and gallery spaces to give volunteers full visibility, preventing theft and mishandling while encouraging roaming engagement.

The Deck & Murals
Monetizing the upper decking near the murals for summer short film screenings and health groups.

The Grounds
Monetizing the bike hub and establishing sculpture installations near the water steps to increase dwell time outside the building.

Strategic Integrations & Partnerships



Governance & Operational Rigor

Operational Continuity

Structural Governance

Transition fully to an Incorporated Association; expand board skill diversity; establish clear MOUs and finalise leases.

Systemization

Implement structured operational systems (Square point-of-sale, robust website directories); clarify the product mix between artisan goods and merchandise.

Human Capital

Introduce the dedicated Volunteer Coordinator role to manage daily operations, allowing the board to focus on strategic regional growth rather than rostering.

Measuring Success: The Dashboard



Financials

Revenue is diversified across multiple funnels, actively growing, and reducing reliance on single grant sources.



Human Resources

The volunteer base expands beyond the current 21, with high retention rates, active engagement in training, and reported high satisfaction.



Visitor Economy

Tourists exhibit increased dwell time on the grounds and higher average spend across retail and bookings.



Cultural Impact

Local creators, artists, and handmakers report tangible financial value and consistent income from hub representation.

The Pulse Point of the Yarra Valley

The Waterwheel is not just a building. It is a living ecosystem where creativity meets tourism, locals meet visitors, and value circulates back into the region. The goal isn't just survival. It is to become the destination.”