



SUMMARY - Eight Step Method to Make a Micro-forest

Tips for success

1. Find some great people to form a volunteer micro-forest team
2. Break the process into small achievable stages
3. Have fun (laugh at yourself first), be imperfect and dare yourself to try something new
4. Celebrate each stage.
5. Plan to do this over 12 to 18 months

Step 1 – Form a Leadership Team

There are 7 worksheets that will help you through this step. If you do one worksheet every week you should have a team by the end of week 7.

Worksheet 1 – Starting conversations in your community

Worksheet 2 – Starting conversations with the wider community

Worksheet 3 – Hold your first meeting

Worksheet 4 – Develop a skills register

Worksheet 5 – Create social media pages

Worksheet 6 – Refine your mission

Worksheet 7 – Gathering site information – uses a site matrix to help you choose best sites

Step 2 – Run a crowdfunding campaign

- Look at the crowdfunding campaigns we've run for the Downer, Watson and Holt Micro-forests on Start Some Good www.startsomegood.com. You are welcome to copy our text, but craft it so it reflects your community
- Craft a compelling story including good photos, video
- Spend at least one day per week promoting/sharing campaign

Step 3 – Community consultation

If you've got to this step, you've successfully raised funds. Congratulations.

- Engage a community facilitator to help run this stage
- Check your local authorities' rules around what is acceptable community consultation
- Organise a facilitation session online or in person (depends on covid) that sets out what the project is about and gives participants ability to make suggestions on other features that could be incorporated into the design, plus they get to vote on most important features. In our projects, we incorporate the top 3 features the community voted on.

Step 4 – Design

- Find out what documents you will need to submit to local authorities before starting the design – they might want a Landscape Master Plan at a certain scale ie 1:200, a Planting Plan, a plant list (includes common names, species names and numbers), Risk Management Plan, appropriate insurances
- Engage a Landscape Architect to prepare the design to local authorities' specifications
- Depending on your climate ie if you are in an area that experiences prolonged droughts or is likely to be hotter and drier in the future, I highly recommend investing in a Water Harvesting Expert and water harvesting design.
- Preliminary designs are presented to community and feedback incorporated into final drawings.
- Start holding conversations with earthworks contractors – it would be good to get them pencilled in to tentatively start. Agree on a rate of payment. For example, for one contractor, we have an agreed amount of \$10,000 to undertake earthworks and water harvesting design. This took around 2 weeks to build because of rain. Whilst constructing the landscape he suggested some large rocks would be great. He could get the rocks and place them for us. This added an additional \$3000 but was completely worth it.

Step 5 – Approvals

- Find out the name and email address of the contact officer you will submit documents to
- You've found out in Step 4 all the documents that the local authorities want so submit them in one package via email
- In your email when you submit the documents ask for how long approval is likely to take. I've found approval in the ACT can take up to 60 days.

Step 6 – Earthworks

- Install temporary fence, toilet and signage about the project
- Letterbox local residents to know earthworks starting shortly
- Landscape Architect to superintend earthworks.
- Take photos

Step 7 – Community Planting

Goal – plant 500 plants per working bee of 2-3 hours with approximately 30 people

- Decide who will manage the community planting – will you outsource this job?
- Have you submitted documentation to local authorities regarding the community working on public land?
- Ideally, the leaders main job is to promote these events, participate on the day (including meet and greet) and organise catering (obviously depending on covid)

Step 8 – Maintenance

The Miyawaki method of dense planting is supposed to be maintenance free within 3 years.

- Set a regular time during the growing season ie 4pm the last Sunday of the month to do a job, like speed weeding. Celebrate after 1 hour.
- Demonstrate good weeding technique (including effective root removal and protecting bodies from injury)
- Buy some sturdy tools that can tackle weeding jobs and mulching jobs
- Identify weeds for your community group so they know what is a weed and what is not a weed
- Is there a house nearby where you can store equipment – like your hoes, rakes etc?
- What will you do with all the weeds? ie compost on site?

NOTES

Edwina Robinson
Landscape Architect and Founder
The Climate Factory
climatefactoryaus@gmail.com
www.climatefactory.com.au

© Edwina Robinson 2022