

Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group

Meeting Date: Monday, 27 May, 2024

Location: Orchid & Osprey Training Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra

Time: 4.00pm

Please note: Council's Code of Meeting Practice permits the electronic recording and broadcast of the proceedings of meetings of the Council which are open to the public. Your attendance at this meeting is taken as consent to the possibility that your image and/or voice may be recorded and broadcast to the public.

Agenda

1. **Meeting Conduct Statement**
2. **Acknowledgement of Country**
3. **Apologies**
4. **Confirmation of Minutes**
 - Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group - 18 March 2024..... 1
5. **Declaration of Interests**
6. **Presentations**
 - EG24.9 CEO Address - Robyn Stevens
 - EG24.10 Economy Overview from Shoalhaven Transactional Data - Localis Data Company - Robbie Dalton
7. **Reports**
 - EG24.11 Advocacy and Growth - Staff Update5
8. **General Business**

Membership

Mayor

All Councillors - maximum of 3 voting (1 from each ward) to be determined at each meeting

Ms Anna Finch – Human Resources

Ms Brenda Sambrook – Tourism

Ms Holly Pastor – Education

Mr Iain Chalmers – Human Resources and Small Business

Mr John Lamont – Manufacturing

Ms Kaye Morris – Education –

Ms Michelle Bishop – Tourism

Mr Robert Crow – Tourism

Ms Sandra Gray – Small Business Operator

Quorum: Half + 1

Note: Any non-voting Councillor in attendance at any of the above Committees may act as an alternate voting member in circumstances where achievement of a quorum is required, noting that this doesn't apply when quorum specifies the quorum to require community member attendance.

Role and Purpose

- Inform the development, implementation, and review of council economic growth strategies
- Providing advice and make recommendations to Council on matters relating to business and economic growth in the Shoalhaven.
- Provide advice and recommendations on key advocacy opportunities to support business growth in the region

Delegated Authorities

- Make recommendations on actions and priorities
- Provide feedback on economic growth key issues or growth opportunities
- Appoint suitable representatives to fill casual vacancies
- Research contemporary methodologies to achieve advocacy, business growth and economic development.
- Inform and recommend policy for business growth
- Partner and liaise with other Council Advisory Groups on key issues as required

MINUTES OF THE SHOALHAVEN ECONOMIC GROWTH & ADVOCACY GROUP

Meeting Date: Monday, 18 March 2024
Location: Orchid & Osprey Training Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Rd, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

The following members were present:

Mr John Lamont – Manufacturing - Chairperson
Clr Matthew Norris - Voting Councillor Ward 1 (Remotely) – Left 5:01pm
Clr Patricia White - Voting Councillor Ward 3
Clr Mark Kitchener – Alternate Ward 3
Clr Gillian Boyd - Alternate Ward 3 (Remotely)
Ms Anna Finch - Human Resources (Remotely)
Ms Brenda Sambrook - Small Business Operator (Remotely)
Ms Michelle Bishop – Tourism
Mr Robert Crow – Tourism
Ms Sandra Gray - Small Business Operator (Remotely) – Joined 4:19pm

Others present:

Mr Paul Mitchell – Representative for Member of Gilmore (Remotely)
Ms Bron Hewson - Regional NSW (Remotely)
Mr Lou Matthews – Service NSW (Remotely)
Mr Matt Dell - Milton/Ulladulla Business Chamber (Remotely)
Ms Natalie Harker – Kangaroo Valley Chamber of Tourism & Commerce (Remotely)
Mr Danny Payne - Huskisson Chamber of Commerce & Tourism
Ms Joanne Payne – Observer
Mr Lester Radford – Culburra & District Chamber of Commerce (Remotely)
Mr Kym Heffernan – Culburra & District Chamber of Commerce (Remotely)
Ms Kate Dezarnaulds – Berry Chamber of Commerce & Tourism
Ms Coralie McCarthy – Acting Director City Futures
Mr Ryan Schulter - Senior Economic Development Officer
Ms Kristy Mayhew - Tourism & Economic Development Manager
Ms Lisa Brown - Business & Events Coordinator

Ms Coralie McCarthy assumed the Chair and asked the members present if there were any nominations for the role of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.

Mr John Lamont was nominated for the position of Chairperson, and Mr Robert Crow for Deputy Chairperson. No further nominations were received and Mr John Lamont was declared as Chairperson, and Mr Robert Crow Deputy Chairperson.

Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Clr Watson, Clr Wells, Lindy Pitt, Laurie Koster, Jemma Tribe, Courtney Butler, Ross Popplewell and Fiona Hatcher.

Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group held on Wednesday 13 December 2023 be confirmed, and the Minutes of Wednesday 18 October 2023 be updated to include an apology from Ms Brenda Sambrook.

CARRIED

Declaration of Interests

Nil

PRESENTATIONS

EG24.1 Presentation - B2B Economic Development Website

HPERM Ref:
D24/35194

Ms Kristy Mayhew - Tourism & Economic Development Manager, presented to the Group regarding the new Shoalhaven City Council Economic Development Website. The information presented is attached to these minutes.

REPORTS

EG24.2 Advocacy and Growth - Staff Update

HPERM Ref:
D24/20518

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group receive this report for their information.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group receive this report for their information.

CARRIED

EG24.3 Action Update

HPERM Ref:
D24/67907

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group:

1. Accept and receive the Action Table Report for information.
2. Consider the following actions complete and remove from the Action Table:
 - a. EG23.8 - Additional Item - Tourism Signage
 - b. EG23.17 - Additional Item - Job Data Snapshot - Presentation by Sandra Gray
 - c. EG23.16 - Additional Item - Shoalhaven Economic Development Strategy - Desktop Review Progress - Report Back
 - d. EG23.15 - Additional Item - Six Cities Vision - Invite Greater Cities Commission
 - e. EG23.14 - Additional Item - EV Charging Stations - Presentation from Councils Lead

Sustainability Officer

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group:

1. Accept and receive the Action Table Report for information.
2. Consider the following actions complete and remove from the Action Table:
 - a. EG23.8 - Additional Item - Tourism Signage
 - b. EG23.17 - Additional Item - Job Data Snapshot - Presentation by Sandra Gray
 - c. EG23.16 - Additional Item - Shoalhaven Economic Development Strategy - Desktop Review Progress - Report Back
 - d. EG23.15 - Additional Item - Six Cities Vision - Invite Greater Cities Commission
 - e. EG23.14 - Additional Item - EV Charging Stations - Presentation from Councils Lead Sustainability Officer

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS

EG24.7 Additional Item - Financial Sustainability Report - SEGA Feedback

The Group resolved to formalise the feedback below for Council to consider when making decisions relating to CL24.68 - Financial Sustainability Monthly Report.

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group (SEGA) requests Council consider the following feedback in decision making:

1. SEGA recognises the economic importance of the visitor economy to the City of Shoalhaven and the role events play in driving the economy. As such, SEGA does not support:
 - a. the re-introduction of fees to business, including to outdoor dining, as per business paper recommendation Report CL24.68 Financial Sustainability Monthly Report.
 - b. any reduction in funding to community events and recommends the continuation of the community donations program, this is against the recommendation in the business paper Report CL24.68 Financial Sustainability Monthly Report.
2. To consider business fees and charges fairly across the city, such as retail displays and the use of Council assets by the community, i.e. retail are charged a fee but dining is not.

EG24.5 Advocacy Brainstorm

**HPERM Ref:
D24/35183**

The Group participated in an interactive Advocacy Brainstorm activity to indicate priorities in relation to a number of Economic Growth & Tourism related projects in the Shoalhaven. The results are attached to the Minutes.

EG24.6 Business Chamber Updates

**HPERM Ref:
D24/75597**

The Group received an update from Business Chamber and Government representatives present at the meeting. Information provided by Bron Hewson – Regional NSW, is attached to these Minutes.

EG24.8 Additional Item - Update - Office of the 24 Hour Economy Commissioner

Ms Coralie McCarthy – Acting Director City Futures, updated the Group on the work of the Office of the 24 Hour Economy Commissioner regarding the Uptown Program. The information presented, and additional information regarding the Uptown Program, is attached to these Minutes.

EG24.4 SEGA Terms of Reference Discussion**HPERM Ref:
D24/81062**

Note: This item was not discussed and is deferred to the next meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 5:52pm.

John Lamont
CHAIRPERSON

EG24.11 Advocacy and Growth - Staff Update

HPERM Ref: D24/170587

Department: Tourism & Economic Development

Approver: Coralie McCarthy, Acting Director - City Futures

Reason for Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy (SEGA) group with an update on key projects in the City Futures Directorate.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group receive this report for their information.

Options

1. Receive this report for information.

Implications: The SEGA group will be provided with a high-level overview of key priorities and projects.

2. Request additional information.

Implications: Staff will provide additional information during the meeting if possible, or later after further investigation.

Background

The Tourism and Economic Development team within Shoalhaven City Council provide regular reports to the SEGA group. Below you will find information covering local business support activities, event insights, strategy reviews, open funding opportunities, visitor statistics and various council updates.

Managers Update – Financial Sustainability

Staff are currently undertaking a Service Review for the Visitor Information Services operations in Shoalhaven under direction of the Financial Sustainability Project.

At Council's Ordinary meeting on 6 May 2024, it was resolved that the Draft Delivery Program Operational Plan and Budget 2024-25 would be put on Public Exhibition (CL24.118). Industry is encouraged to make a submission on the Draft Budget, DPOP Actions and/or proposed Fees and Charges. The documents will be on exhibition until 10 June and will be available for viewing on Council's Get Involved website at getinvolved.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au. Submissions made will be considered by Council prior to the final budget being adopted at Council's 24 June Meeting.

Economic Growth Update

Council staff have participated in, or provided feedback towards the following Economic Development matters:

- Attended meetings of the Shoalhaven Motor Sports Working Group

- Stakeholder for the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Economic Development Strategy
- Member of the Nowra Riverfront Action Taskforce
- Organised and attended the April 2024 CEO Business Forum
- Member of the Shoalhaven Careers Advisors Network (SCAN)
- Support of the Shoalhaven Business Chamber – Business After Hours events
- Support and attend the Shoalhaven Professional Business Association meetings and events
- Supported the South Coast Beef Association’s Steer Spectacular event
- Attend/Present at various Business Chamber meetings and hosted Business Chamber round-table discussions with Council staff
- Ongoing collaboration with Telstra and NBN regarding the Shoalhaven Connectivity Action Plan
- Supported and advocated for businesses impacted by recent flood events
- Attended meetings and briefings regarding the 24hr Economy Uptown and Accelerator programs
- Attended and facilitated Illawarra Shoalhaven Defence Network events and showcases
- Attended Tourism Australia’s RTO Forum and Destination Australia Conference
- Attended DSSS and Destination NSW Visitor Economy Strategy Review Workshop

Advocacy Update

- Internal and external consultations are underway to update Council’s [Advocacy Document](#) in time for the upcoming Government Elections. The team is currently reviewing the existing key projects and investigating new initiatives to include that meet community and business needs. Previously provided feedback from SEGA has been considered in the preparation of the draft document and presented to the Executive Management Team, SEGA will receive ongoing updates on this project.

Strategy Reviews

- Currently reviewing Councils Shoalhaven Economic Development Strategy and the Tourism Destination Management Plan to map out alignment, goals and actions ready to collaborate with stakeholders before renewal.
- Council is part of a working group to develop a broader Illawarra Shoalhaven Economic Development Strategy, which is being led by the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation. This Strategy will be launched in near future.
- Reviewing and providing a submission to the draft Community Improvement Districts Bill 2023, being led by Transport for NSW. Submissions were due 29 March 2024. Further information can be found [here](#).
- Reviewing and providing comment to the draft discussion paper on Short Term rental Accommodation (STRA) alongside Council’s Strategic Planning team to provide feedback to Planning NSW. Further information can be found [here](#).
- Reviewed and provided a submission to the draft Shellharbour Airport Master Plan regarding benefits to tourism and the economy. The draft plan can be found [here](#).

Defence and Manufacturing Sector Development

- Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Defence Network - member of the Steering Committee and ongoing involvement in arranging events and programs:
 - Arrange regular Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Defence Network lunch events
 - Defence Career Videos and Case Studies are being created
 - Capability mapping project has recently requested quotations for the project
 - Stallholder at Illawarra Career Expo in May 2024
 - Upgrade of information and material on the Network's website
 - Ongoing social media content being developed and promoted.
 - Support of relevant programs and events such as the Defence Industry Conference and Defence Industry breakfast
 - Creation of the Aircraft Maintenance Engineer attraction program to address skills shortages.

Industrial Land Updates

The sale process of Council Employment/Industrial Land has recently changed due to the Councillor's resolution of 25 March 2024 (MIN24.171C) excerpt below:

4. That any future employment land is sold without any restriction as to use or compulsion to complete building works within a specified timeframe., and future employment land is sold for not less than an independent market valuation.

5. That Council's Employment Land (Industrial Land) policy be developed to reflect the abovementioned resolutions.

- Flinders Stage 11 - Ongoing development to create 4 lots available for sale.
- AATP Stage 5 – Approaching completion and will progress to a sale process of 15 available lots.
- Woollamia Stage 5a - Ongoing development to create 6 available lots for sale.
- Remaining lots in Woollamia Stage 5 and Flinders Stage 10 - The 5 remaining lots across these 2 industrial areas were recently sold.

Local Business Support

- Attendance at Destination NSW inbound tourism workshops in region, and attendance at DSSS Centre of Excellence familiarisations
- Discussion with CommBank regarding Local Business Insights, Council strategies and their IQ data service
- Discussion with Economy id to discuss the new modules on offer
- Discussions with relocation businesses and career opportunities for Shoalhaven residents
- Discussions with Illawarra & South Coast Jobs Network re: Introduction to the 'Get a Job South Coast'
- The Economic Development team hosted AusIndustry in April to discuss closer working relationships and additional opportunities to support local businesses via funding programs, business services and information sharing

- Attendance at Shoalhaven Business Awards Launch, which was held at Harry Sawkins Park with the Nowra Farmers Market
- Attended the launch of the Shoalhaven Food Network Autumn Food Event
- Meeting with Regional Development Australia's new CEO Selena Stevens to gain a better understanding of the new RDA Illawarra Shoalhaven and its boundaries
- Visited the SCC Flood Recovery Centre at the Nowra Showground

Economy Data (Attachment 1)

The Peak Period Comparison report attached shows Nov 2023 – Jan 2024* Spend transactional data from Localis Data Company that primarily maps transactions from the VISA network for both local and visitor spend. This report is benchmarked against other destinations such as Orange and Noosa, and factors in insights from other Localis data such as accommodation booking and mobility (mobile phone location) data from 2023.

Key insights are as follows:

- Transaction data in Shoalhaven showed a 13% drop in local spend and a 20% drop in visitor spend from November 2023 to Jan 2024 compared to the same period in the previous years
- January 2024 spend in Shoalhaven by visitors dropped 36%
- January 2024 spend in Shoalhaven by locals dropped 18%
- Shoalhaven accommodation bookings averaged 30-40% of capacity during the months of July through to October 2023, as compared to Noosa and Orange in the same period who averaged around 60 – 70% occupancy
- Market segments with the largest downturn of visitor spend (year on year) in Shoalhaven for the period of November to January:
 - - 36% on hotels and lodging
 - - 21% restaurants & dining
 - - 20% on retail
 - - 20% on entertainment
- Tourism Research Australia data year ending December 2023 shows an annual total estimated visitor expenditure of \$1.485 billion. This total was growing steadily but has been volatile since hitting the \$1 billion mark in December 2019.**

*Localis Data Company, VISA, mobility and Accommodation booking insights November 2023 to January 2024

**Tourism Research Australia National and International Visitor Survey 2019 – 2023

Marketing and Promotion:

- Activated Shop Shoalhaven campaigns for Easter and Mother's Day, as well as new features to bundle bespoke hampers. A new call out was made for additional products also.
- Soft launch and business consultation of the new business-to-business website has occurred, with testing underway before promotion.

- Preparation Autumn Wellness post-campaign report is underway, with articles coming through from journalist familiarisations in March, and analysis of leads to website and industry from advertising.
- With reduced budget available at this time, a basic food campaign for winter will be launched in June, consisting mainly of publicity and digital marketing.
- Tourism Marketing Specialist attending the Australian Tourism Exchange with collaborative international marketing brand for the South Coast, The Grand Pacific Drive.

Event Update General

- Zeah McMillan joined the events team in the Event Liaison Officer role on Monday 6 May.
- The Uptown Grant Program Round three from the Office of the 24-Hour Commissioner is currently open, with applications closing 22 May 2024. The have been promoting this program and organised an information session for local businesses took place on Thursday 11 April at Council Chambers which was well attended. From initial discussions it looks as though applications will be made from 4 districts in the Shoalhaven (Berry, Nowra, Sussex Inlet and Huskisson).
- The DNSW Regional Event Fund closed in April. Shoalhaven had 11 event organisers apply for the grant, the events team supported them by provided letters of support, local tourism data from Localis Data Company and event specific REMPLAN reports.
- The events team continue a review of policies and procedures, working to streamline the event application process. The first stage of this review is now completed, with the Pop-Up Stall permit application and Film permit application has now been moved online via the council website.
- General update on events processed on Council owned or managed land in:
 - Following the same trend from the previous quarter, there were another 63* events processed and approved on Council land in January to March, bringing the total number of events processed by the Events Team this financial year to 158*. These events included monthly markets, triathlons, sporting competitions, music festivals and the local agriculture shows.
 - There has been an increase in monthly markets as well as more larger scale events (more than 1000 attendees) across the region.
 - The team supported 11 ANZAC Day marches and services across the region, with the majority of services requiring additional support with traffic guidance schemes and traffic control.

**This count taken from internal events calendar run by events team as at 02.05.2024*

Event Support Program (Grants)

The February 2024 Round of the Event Support Program is on hold due to Councils current Financial Sustainability measures. The round received 33 applications for new events prior to the funding cuts, resulting in no new funding being awarded. 33 applicants represented a 57% increase in applications than in the previous round.

From previous rounds of funding, the below sponsored events have run:

Volleymook Tour – Mollymook

- Brumbies Rugby South Coast 7's – Ulladulla
- Classic Car Show & Shine – Sussex Inlet
- Rhythmic & Aerobic Gymnastics State Championships – Bomaderry

Still to come in the second half of 2024 is:

- Beer & BBQ Festival – Huskisson
- Viking Festival – Sussex Inlet
- Summit Shoalhaven – Kangaroo Valley & Surrounds
- Buangla Music and Arts Festival – Coolendel
- Coast Forage – Vincentia
- Volleyball NSW State Championships – Mollymook
- Huskisson Triathlon Festival – Huskisson

Visitor Information Services

The recent period has seen a robust influx of visitors, predominantly consisting of interstate travellers and caravan enthusiasts, who have opted for prolonged stays. The delightful Easter weather played a significant role in drawing holidaymakers outdoors, engaging them in a variety of adventures and activities. Our dedicated Mobile Tourism Van has been actively distributing essential guides, including the latest edition of Our Favourite Walks booklet.

From 7 March to 2 May 2024, the Ulladulla Visitor Centre and Library proudly presented the 'Bidhiinja: Restoring Our Oyster Reefs' Exhibition. This enlightening exhibition showcases the forgotten history of New South Wales oyster reefs and highlighted the ongoing restoration efforts aimed at revitalising these crucial marine habitats.

In the realm of local commerce, the [Shop Shoalhaven](#) online store has expanded its range by incorporating additional local suppliers, thereby broadening its array of regional products. This expansion comes with the exciting introduction of specially curated Mother's Day hampers.

In alignment with directives from Shoalhaven City Council, the management team has been diligently working towards enhancing operational efficiencies and achieving cost savings. As part of this initiative, the Nowra Visitor Centre is set to undergo a trial period of altered operating hours, ceasing Sunday operations and reducing Saturday hours starting from 27 April 2024. This change is subject to a reassessment in the forthcoming financial year, ensuring that community needs and organisational objectives continue to be met effectively.

Grants Spotlight – Current Business and Community Opportunities

Climate Smart Agriculture Program – Depart of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Small Grants up to \$100,000 to support sustainable agriculture projects Applications Close 4 June 2024

The Climate-Smart Agriculture Program will support Australia's agriculture sector to drive climate -smart, sustainable growth, and protect Australia's natural capital by funding best practice sustainable agriculture and natural resource management activities.

The intended Climate-Smart Agriculture Program outcomes are to drive agricultural productivity and sustainability by supporting farmers and primary producers to:

- Adopt climate-smart practices that reduce emissions and build resilience to climate change

- Understand and benefit from participation in carbon and biodiversity markets
- Apply natural resource management practices that improve soil and protect biodiversity

Individuals and groups that are eligible to apply for Small Grants: (not limited to)

- Farming systems groups
- Local Landcare groups
- Individuals and farming entities including farmers, pastoralists, farm foresters, aquaculture operators and fishers who can demonstrate the public benefits of the project
- Networks operating in the agricultural landscape
- Friends-of organisations and other community-based groups
- Women and youth groups who have been operating in the sustainable agriculture landscape
- Groups whose membership is predominantly made up of Indigenous Australians

Funding is available over a two-year period. All programs must be completed by November 2026. Co-contribution is required but the program allows for in-kind contribution including special services, knowledge and expertise.

For more information and to access the full funding guidelines please click [here](#).

ClubGRANTS Category 1 – Clubs NSW
Small grants between \$1,000 and \$10,000
Applications Close on 31 May 2024, 6.00pm

ClubGRANTS Category 1 is currently accepting applications for initiatives that support welfare and social services, community development, employment assistance activities, health services, and projects aimed at improving the living standards of low income and disadvantaged people.

The Shoalhaven Local Committee has identified the following priority areas for funding support in the Shoalhaven: safe and prepared communities, affordable housing opportunities, vibrant culture and connected communities, sustainable environments, children and families thrive, healthy and active communities, opportunities for lifelong learning and accessible transport. Local community groups that have previously benefited from ClubGRANTS funding include:

- Supported Accommodation & Homelessness Services Shoalhaven Illawarra (SAHSSI)
- Milton Ulladulla Men's Shed
- Culburra Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade
- Nowra Youth Centre
- Shoalhaven Education Fund

For more information on how to apply and eligibility criteria please visit [here](#).

Community Foundation Grants – IMB Bank
Grants up to \$20,000 to support community initiatives
Round 4 Applications Close 14 June 2024

The IMB Bank Community Foundation is committed to building and strengthening our local communities. Applications for funding will be assessed against their ability to help deliver on these key objectives:

- To encourage and assist economic, social and environmental diversification within the communities in which IMB operates

- To advance shared prosperity and sustainability in the region by supporting social, cultural, environmental, heritage, educational, tourism and economic initiatives
- To promote the mutual and self-help philosophies of IMB
- To identify and support activities that encourage self-sufficiency through transfer of skills and knowledge, and that may develop new physical resources
- To encourage and support volunteer inputs throughout the communities
- Ultimately, to build and strengthen "community assets".

The IMB Bank Community Foundation will seek to support projects that can demonstrate collaboration with other groups within the community. In addition, preference will be given to projects that demonstrate a high degree of self-help, either in the form of the applicant's own efforts and work already undertaken, or in the form of actual physical or financial resources already committed to the project. Please note, successful applicants will be required to open an IMB Bank account to receive the funding.

More information and access to funding guidelines can be found [here](#).

**Strengthening Rural Communities – Foundation for Rural Regional Renewal
Small and Vital Program offering grants up to \$10,000
Round 21 is now OPEN - Applications Close 5 June 2024**

The Strengthening Rural Communities Small and Vital program gives small remote, rural and regional communities across Australia the opportunity to access funds for a broad range of initiatives that directly benefit communities.

Grants up to \$10,000 are available for grassroots, community led initiatives that directly benefit local communities through strengthening local people, places and climate solutions with a preference for smaller communities with populations under 15,000.

For more information and access to funding guidelines please visit [here](#).

Staff Updates

Updates for Tourism and Economic Development:

- **Payton Walsh** resigned as Marketing Liaison Officer
- **Anna McDonald** is joining the team as the new Marketing Liaison Officer on 11 June
- **Renee Wenban** resigned as Event Liaison Officer
- **Zeah McMillan** has joined the events team as Event Liaison Officer
- **Emelie Einarsson** remains on maternity leave
- **Lindsay Conway** remains filling in as the Visitors Services Manager full time
- **Kristy Mayhew** remains Acting Tourism and Economic Development Manager