

August 9 2018

Final Media Statement

Future Students & Stakeholders Celebrate The Uni Hub Spencer Gulf

On the evening of Tuesday 14 August in Port Pirie, a major milestone in the life of the Community Owned Tertiary Education Centre (COTEC) Project will be celebrated when its brand is formally unveiled.

The three Upper Spencer Gulf Councils – Port Pirie, Whyalla and Port Augusta, are proud to have brokered and brought to life the vision of a COTEC for this region.

Chair of Spencer Gulf Cities, Port Augusta Mayor Sam Johnson, said he is thrilled that the project has reached this important stage. “We have been working with a range of local industry, education and government partners for several years now to develop a new model to deliver higher education in our region and to meet the needs of our region and the collaboration thus far has certainly returned dividends.”

Project Manager, Moira Coffey acknowledge that “This project would not have been possible without the shared vision of the Upper Spencer Gulf Common Purpose Group and project partners which include: Port Pirie Regional Council, Port Augusta City Council, Whyalla City Council, Flinders University, TAFE SA, Central Queensland University, Curio Academy and the University of Adelaide.”

Fundamental to the success of this initiative is the Australian Government’s commitment to stimulate economic growth in the Regions. The \$222.3 million Regional Jobs and Investment Packages (RJIP) supports this commitment. The program’s intended outcomes are to drive economic growth and create jobs in ten pilot regions by investing in projects that will diversify regional economies, stimulate long term growth, deliver sustainable employment and enable applicants to enter new markets and sectors. The Upper Spencer Gulf is one of those 10 pilot regions.

Federal Member for Grey Rowan Ramsey commended the Upper Spencer Gulf Common Purpose Group on being one of the nine successful grant recipients in the Upper Spencer Gulf region.

“This is a great example of how government can partner with business and community groups to drive growth, create jobs and stimulate economic activity,” Mr Ramsey said.

“The COTEC project will deliver a huge boost for tertiary studies in the Upper Spencer Gulf, injecting over \$1 million into the region’s human capital.

“Creating new job opportunities is crucial to ensuring a strong and vibrant future for local communities in the Upper Spencer Gulf and this important government initiative will have significant long-term benefits for our region and our state.”

Funding of \$1,110,000 was announced in April this year, unlocking a further \$1,153,750 million in regional and partner cash contributions towards the initiative.

Project Coordinator, Reg Dennis noted "our region has a disproportionate percentage of people that hold tertiary level qualifications (11.3%) compared to all of South Australia (23.3%). As a consequence, our industries have difficulties in recruiting for many skilled positions. The Uni Hub Spencer Gulf promotes a 'grow your own' approach to developing regional skills."



Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



The Project Team have been working with project partners to secure courses and prepare the site selected, the former Port Pirie Regional Council Library, for the Uni Hub to open its doors to students in 2019. Recent work undertaken with community stakeholders and the student voice to develop a striking brand and identity for the Uni Hub promises to shine a light on this important Upper Spencer Gulf project.

The establishment of Uni Hub Spencer Gulf is evidence of the renewed optimism across many sectors, particularly education, skills and industry more broadly. “The opportunity for regional students and families to have access to locally supported university study through the Uni Hub, with the advantage of not having to leave home to study is a gap which needed filling” Port Pirie Mayor John Rohde.

Media Contact: Moira Coffey 0421 034 740

ENDS: