



Robyn Preston MP

Member for Hawkesbury

MEDIA RELEASE

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\$3.5 MILLION BOOST FOR THE REGIONAL NSW VISITOR ECONOMY

The NSW Government is giving the State's regional visitor economy a \$3.5 million boost through funding programs to support the development of new attractions and visitor infrastructure, to refresh existing tourism products, and to secure or create new business event opportunities.

The programs, offered by Destination NSW, will help businesses and regional communities recover from the impact of drought, floods, bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic by creating jobs, enhancing the appeal of regional NSW, and improving the quality of the visitor experience.

Member for Hawkesbury, Robyn Preston MP, said this was a significant opportunity for new and established business owners in Hawkesbury to be visitor-ready and create new business event programs.

"These funding programs are just what our local businesses need to get back on their feet, embrace new opportunities and create experiences, attractions and tourism products that visitors will come to Hawkesbury for," Ms Preston said.

"More visitors mean greater benefits for our local visitor economy and local community, so I encourage all business owners to consider how these Destination NSW programs could enhance their offering."

Stuart Ayres, Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney, said the *Tourism Funding Program* – with two separate funding streams, and the *NSW Regional Business Event Development Fund* would help position the NSW visitor economy for long-term growth.

"Tourism is the lifeblood of many regional communities and we understand the devastating effect the past 12-18 months have had on tourism-related businesses. That's why the NSW Government is offering financial support to help business owners turn things around," Mr Ayres said.

“We may be operating in a new, COVID-safe environment but the desire to travel, have new experiences, connect with colleagues, learn and build new networks is stronger than ever.”
The three funding streams that are now open are:

- ***Tourism Product Development Fund***
 - ***Stream 1 - Refresh and Renew Fund:*** offering \$10,000 grants to regional tourism operators to update their product or experience
 - ***Stream 2 - Experience Enhancement Fund:*** provides between \$50,000 and \$150,000 in matched funding to assist operators upgrade existing accommodation to improve their star rating, upgrade business and leisure event venues and facilities, repurpose existing infrastructure to provide new facilities or experiences not currently available within the destination, or to create new tourism attractions or experiences
- ***Regional Business Event Development Fund:*** grants of up to \$30,000 to create, attract and support business events for regional NSW and to motivate business event owners to incorporate regional NSW in their plans.

Applications for the \$3 million *Tourism Funding Program* open today and will close on 31 March 2021.

Applications for the \$500,000 *NSW Regional Business Event Development Fund* open today and will close on 30 April 2021.

For information and to apply, visit www.destinationnsw.com.au.

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