

Department of Regional NSW

Regional NSW Investment Attraction Strategy 2022-2027



Image: Dee Kramer Photography

Regional NSW is already home to big brands from around the world





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Vineyard at Orange in the NSW Central West region

Regional NSW Investment Attraction Strategy at a glance

Our vision is clear - regional NSW is the first choice for investors.

The Regional NSW Investment Attraction Strategy 2022-2027 (the Strategy) establishes the key vision, objectives and priorities to bring \$1 billion in private sector investment and 15,000 high-value jobs into regional NSW over the next five years.

Implementation of the Strategy will play an important role in realising the NSW Government's *20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW*, encompassing the 2021 Vision Refresh (the Vision)². The Vision drives economic recovery by focusing on the key enablers of economic success in regional NSW. The NSW Government is investing in priority initiatives to deliver on the Vision through the \$4.2 billion Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund and \$3.3 billion Regional Growth Fund.

The Strategy will deliver the economic objectives of the Vision by attracting private sector investment that builds on the traditional strength of regional NSW's engine industries, activates emerging industries, supports talent, and fosters an environment for future industries to establish and grow.

The Strategy identifies the megatrends influencing global business investment and articulates how regional NSW can leverage them to secure investment opportunities in a post pandemic environment. By recognising such trends, the Strategy aligns each region's strengths and competitive advantages with the greatest opportunities for investment, delivering sustainable job creation and economic development for regional NSW communities.

The Strategy will also capitalise on the NSW Government's globally competitive policy frameworks, in particular net zero, green hydrogen and Special Activation Precincts to attract world-leading companies and technologies to ensure regional NSW becomes a global destination for future industries.

To deliver the Strategy, the Office of Regional Economic Development will collaborate with Investment NSW and other partners across government and industry to attract and facilitate investment into regional NSW. This will ensure existing, new and emerging businesses deliver jobs and future economic prosperity for the regions. Success will be measured by targeting growth in investment and employment, both in the short-term (two years) and medium-term (five years).

These targets will be delivered through a series of actions that focus on a range of areas including:

- Positioning regional NSW as the location of choice for Australian and international businesses
- Enhancing personalised and tailored service offerings to meet the specific needs of investors
- Accelerating growth in engine industries
- Creating an environment conducive to attracting and growing emerging and future industries
- Turbocharging priority precincts
- Continuing to develop a skilled workforce for current and future needs
- Connecting and promoting NSW's world-class industry-focused research, development and innovation
- Supporting regional communities to secure and retain investment.

The Strategy positions regional NSW as the location of choice for businesses looking to establish and grow in Australia. It enables regional NSW to be the home to emerging and future industries and supports existing businesses to thrive in the global economy.

The Strategy showcases to the world why there has never been a better time to invest in regional NSW.

CASE STUDY: Leading international defence prime BAE Systems Australia chose regional NSW to deliver a critical component of Australia's future air force maintenance capability

Located in Williamstown, BAE Systems Australia is a top-5 international defence company. It has chosen regional NSW to base its operational maintenance and air combat sustainment operations for the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) F-35 and Hawk Mk127 fleets.

With the region selected for its location and proximity to a skilled workforce and defence operations, the Hawk and F-35 programs are of national and regional significance. Australia's air combat sustainment activities see more than 400 employees supporting aircraft sustainment and operational maintenance for the Royal Australian Air Force's (RAAF) F-35 and Hawk Mk127 aircraft.

Maintaining and sustaining the F-35 will create around 360 new direct jobs for BAE Systems Australia over the next 10 years. It will develop a specialist supply chain of around 76 SMEs and contribute some \$70 million to GDP by 2025. The programs also indirectly support more than 1,600 businesses in Australia, including about 180 in the Hunter region.

BAE Systems Australia will continue to partner with local and state industry groups to support growth in the Hunter region, underpinned by the NSW Government's Williamstown Special Activation Precinct.

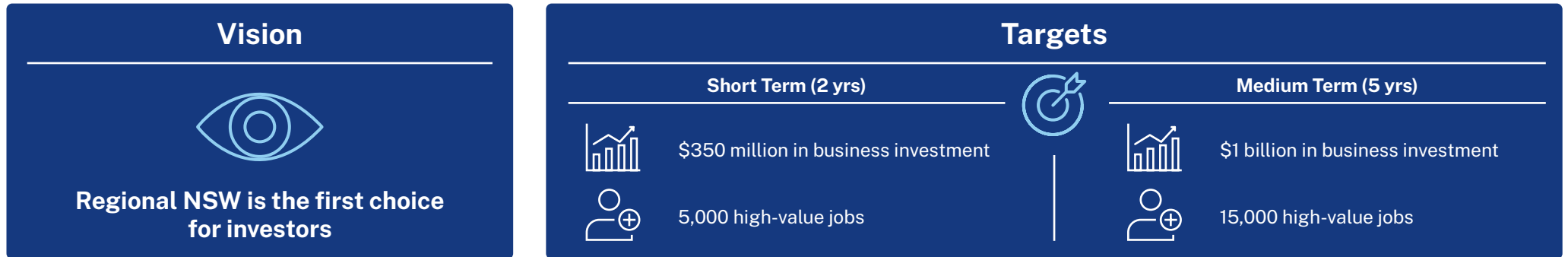


BAE Systems Australia has a strong team in the Hunter region who are committed to growing a thriving local economy and investing back into the region. Williamstown has proved a great location for our aircraft sustainment operations. The region offers a large skilled workforce to support vital defence projects and receives strong support from the NSW Government, which is committed to effective regional economic development.

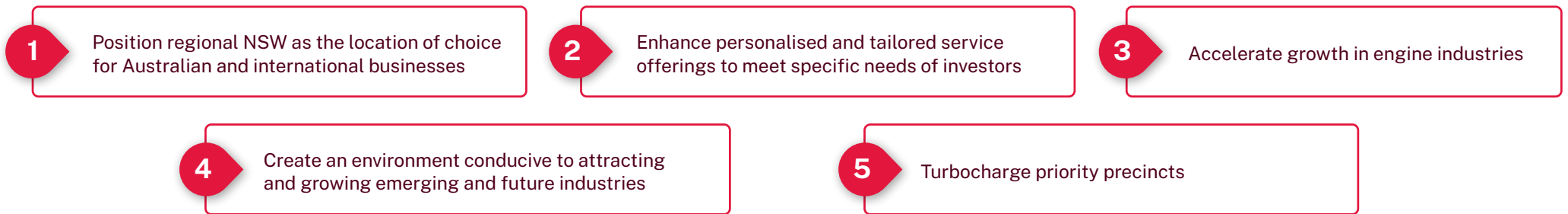


Andrew Chapman, Director, Aircraft Sustainment and Training Australia

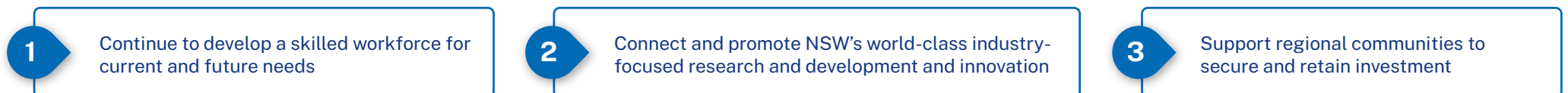
Strategy to deliver the vision for regional NSW



Objectives



Enablers



Investment will continue to drive regional NSW's economic success

Attracting private sector investment and supporting existing regional NSW businesses to expand and grow will deliver substantial benefits to regional communities and the state more broadly. It will also ensure the NSW Government's regional population growth projections of an additional 180,000 residents and 64,000 jobs by 2038 are met.

The *20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW* is the NSW Government's plan to drive sustainable, long-term economic growth in regional NSW.

It seeks to build on unprecedented NSW Government investment in commercial, economic, environmental and social infrastructure by committing to further develop regional NSW's key enablers of economic growth².

A coordinated, agile and active approach to facilitating private sector investment is critical to leverage these investments and build thriving and resilient regional businesses, economies and communities.

Domestic and international private sector investment creates jobs and prosperity. It drives innovation and technology development. It finances new industries, services and

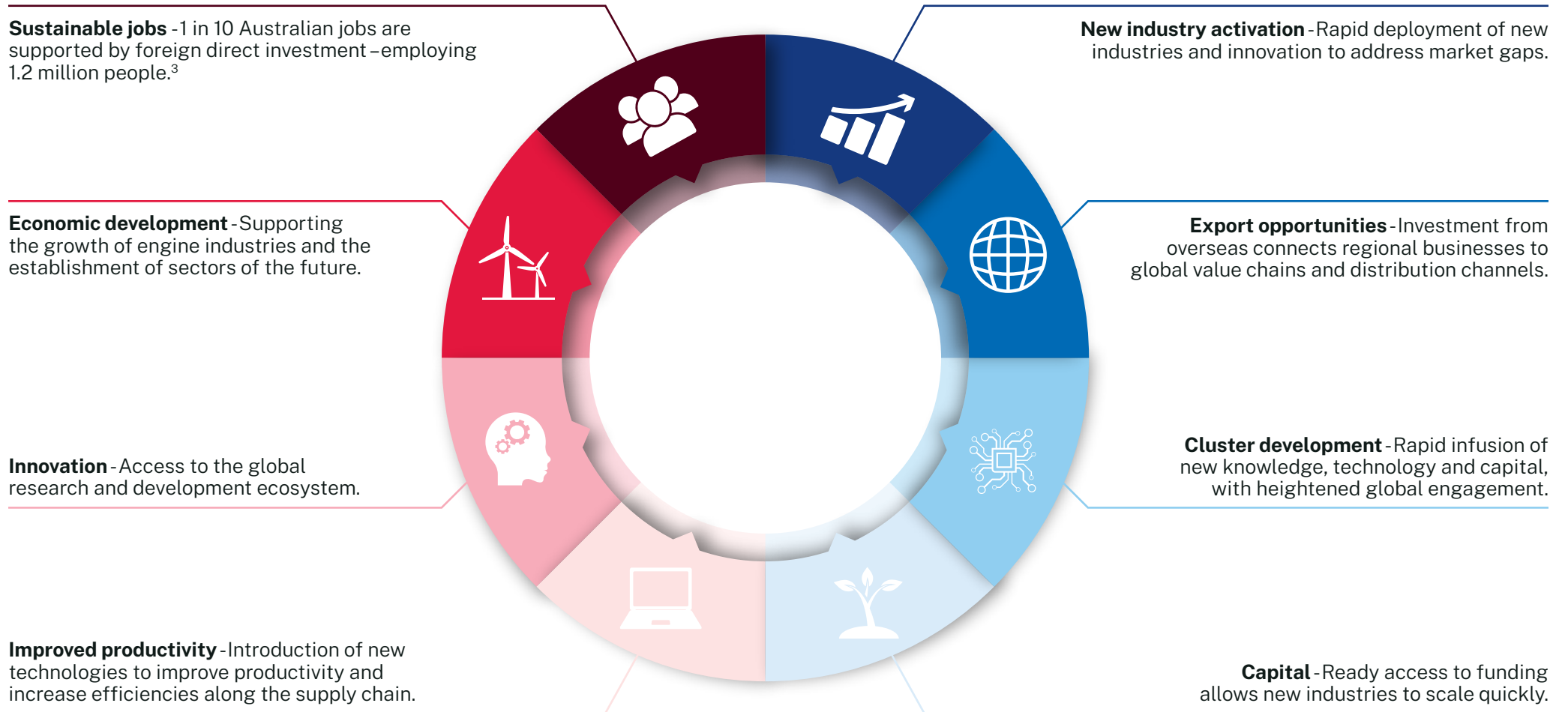
infrastructure, creating new skills and boosting productivity. Continued private sector investment is vital for regional NSW to sustain and grow its competitiveness and create future-focused jobs in key engine and emerging industries across agribusiness and food production, critical minerals, renewable energy and clean technology, advanced manufacturing, recycling and waste management, technology, tourism and defence.



Image: Destination NSW

Benefits of attracting business investment

The Regional NSW Investment Attraction Strategy is a crucial element in ensuring the long-term success of regional NSW.



Regional NSW is the engine room of our economic strength

Regional NSW is rich in resources, has a skilled workforce and boasts many of Australia's and the world's most successful businesses. It's also home to 34 per cent of the NSW population and generates over eight per cent of Australia's Gross Domestic Product².

Competitive strengths of regional NSW as a destination for investment:

NSW

NSW economy is larger than Singapore, South Africa, New Zealand or any Scandinavian country

Largest manufacturing sector in Australia
30% output and over 25,000 businesses

Attracts more **foreign direct investment** than any other state

NSW has a AAA credit rating, the highest possible ranking

AAA

Largest financial services sector in Australia
45% of output
60% of startups

Largest health system in Australia with more than 220 hospitals

Sydney is the financial capital of Australia and ranks 10th on Global Financial Centres index

Largest defence sector in Australia
expenditure exceeds \$9 billion per annum

Home to the most STEM graduates in Australia over 100,000

If it were a country, **NSW would rank 4th in the world** for workers with tertiary qualifications

Regional NSW

Over \$12.4 billion of investment in economically productive and community infrastructure

Unprecedented \$3 billion commitment to **world-leading** green hydrogen strategy

Australia's first Renewable Energy Zone located in Central West NSW to be operational in 2025

Largest regional workforce in Australia

Energy prices forecast to be in the **lowest 10%** of OECD by **2030**

Over 100 Technical and Further Education (TAFE) facilities

Critical minerals powerhouse. Forecast to be the **largest ethical cobalt producer in the world**

Over 150 higher education, science and research facilities

University of Newcastle and University of Wollongong in **top 200 global universities**
source: 2022 QS World University Rankings

Globally significant agricultural sector
Over \$13 billion output

Our Strategy for regional NSW is future-focused to harness global megatrends

Global forces are ever changing and we need to be agile in response. The Strategy is shaped to take advantage of global megatrends for the benefit of regional NSW businesses and communities.

The following megatrends represent major influences on regional investment and trade patterns, and identify major shifts in markets, society and technology. These trends create new opportunities to attract private investment and generate employment in regional NSW.



Megatrend 1: Digital disruption

The evolution of digital technology and its use will continue to radically alter how we live, work and play⁴. By 2023 it is estimated there will be:

- 5.3 billion internet users globally (66 per cent of the population)
- 29.3 billion networked devices
- 3.6 networked devices per person
- 10 devices per household⁵

For regional NSW, uptake of disruptive technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, 3D printing and virtual reality, has been accelerated by COVID-19 restrictions and enabled by improved digital connectivity. This is transforming a range of industries including manufacturing, healthcare, education, defence, construction and mining. It has also had a big impact on agriculture technology, such as farming automation and horticulture robotics⁶. Regional NSW boasts globally competitive locations to host these industries of the future.



Megatrend 2: Rising consumer expectations

Rapid growth in emerging economies, particularly in Asia, will continue to provide significant opportunity for NSW food producers and manufacturers. Emerging Asia accounts

for the majority of the projected global increase in economic activity and purchasing power, with average incomes across this group increasing by around 150% (to 2.5 times 2015 levels) by 2050, while population increases by a third⁷. These consumers will have higher expectations in relation to quality but also health, provenance, sustainability, and ethics.

Health, nutrition and food safety will become increasingly important drivers of buying decisions and the experience of COVID-19 is likely to reinforce these trends.

Biosecurity risks are also increasing across the world in volume, complexity and severity, placing significant pressure on agricultural supply chains and supply patterns. NSW has strong biosecurity and food safety credentials and is well placed to capitalise on growing global demand by leveraging our reputation in key markets.

Increased connectivity and shifting expectations also mean there are more educational opportunities available to people living in regional areas than ever before. This accessibility enables the current workforce in regional NSW to upskill, and for new and specialist workforces to gain new qualifications and keep their accreditations up to date.



Megatrend 3: Changing migration patterns

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the population dynamics of NSW. Domestic migration to regional areas has increased significantly as more Australians are able to work remotely, enjoy a great regional lifestyle and remain highly productive.

Working from home has opened the possibility of regional living for many people and businesses, who previously would only consider hiring employees in metropolitan areas. For regional NSW, the choice of residential location is expanded if people are able to work, study or shop online. Changing attitudes, particularly in relation to working from home, will shape future job opportunities and have the potential to increase population and employment in regions.

Without the geographic constraints of cities, urban fringe and regional areas have the potential to capitalise on the usability and liveability of their location to encourage investment from business. Regional NSW offers a diversity of choice in terms of lifestyle, affordability, family and careers.

The provenance of NSW agricultural products provides a competitive advantage in international markets where we are recognised as a producer of high quality, clean, safe food and fibre.

Capital-city residents are increasingly choosing regional NSW for their regional move. In 2021, regional NSW attracted 50 per cent of the net inflows from capital cities into Australia's regions. This compares with a 36 per cent share in 2020.⁸

With increasing internal migration, regional NSW can expect its population to continue to grow steadily. City dwellers and regional "returners" are gravitating toward regional hubs, seeking a better quality of life and bringing with them a diverse knowledge of place and appreciation for culture and urban amenity. Regional NSW can capitalise on this increased flow of skilled workers for a variety of industries.



Megatrend 4: Structural shifts in the international system

The rise of key developing economies, increased demand from Asian markets and supply chain disruptions are dramatically altering global markets. Regional NSW is uniquely positioned

to meet the needs of Asian markets, while providing stability and security to meet Australia's growing need for sovereign capability across key industries of health, defence, manufacturing and primary industries.

By 2030, four of the five largest economies will be in Asia: China, India, Japan and Indonesia. Economic power is shifting towards Asia, with China and India's share of world GDP expected to increase to 20 per cent and 15 per cent by 2050, respectively. Analysis by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade suggests that by 2030, Asia could be home to a middle class of almost 3.5 billion people⁹, with significant ramifications for Australia's economic composition and growth trajectory.

As incomes in Asia rise the spending power of younger generations is rapidly increasing, creating a growing market for premium products and quality goods and services. While NSW cannot feed all of Asia, we believe it is well-positioned to be its delicatessen, producing and marketing high quality, value-added food products.

Global demand for metals is also growing rapidly. Advanced technology and manufacturing require a range of high-tech minerals for solar panels, batteries, electric cars and more. Regional NSW has a thriving mineral industry, including deposits of rare earth and critical minerals that are in high demand. Investment in this industry could unlock the state's mineral potential.

Access to resilient and reliable supply chains have become a priority for multinationals as volatility increases. Supply chains were severely disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, causing shortages of key raw materials as factories closed and planes were grounded. This is forcing a major rethink about supply chain resilience and investment locations. Regional NSW is well placed to attract businesses who are focused on resilient supply chains.



Megatrend 5: Decarbonisation

Changing investment patterns, government policy and consumer preferences will continue to impact industry.

The decarbonisation of energy supply and industry presents opportunities in renewable energy, transmission and storage, and critical minerals industries that will be central to driving sustainable, resilient economic growth and the development of circular economies in regional NSW.

Regional NSW has the key endowments to be a global leader in circular economies and net zero industries, with the state set to attract more than \$37 billion in renewable energy investment while slashing emissions by 50 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. Regional NSW can expect strong economic development, technological innovation and employment growth in renewable energy industries.

NSW's targets and strategies around decarbonising, net zero and transitioning to a circular economy are supported by NSW Government policy including:

- Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap and Net Zero Plan
- Circular Economy Policy Statement
- NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041.

These policies provide a roadmap for investment opportunities in transmission, generation, storage and firming infrastructure; resource use and management; diverting waste from landfill; and the development of hydrogen, critical minerals and battery industry ecosystems.

Regional NSW is globally competitive

Regional NSW has a strong and resilient economy, world-leading policy settings, well developed transport and logistics networks, a thriving multinational business community and a globally competitive innovation ecosystem.



Economic strength

Regional NSW has the largest and most diverse economy, population, workforce and supply chains in regional Australia. With an economic base in agribusiness, mining, defence, manufacturing and services, the regional NSW economy will continue to evolve as businesses seek new opportunities in areas such as clean technology, critical minerals, green hydrogen and circular economy.



Most globally-connected place in Australia

With well established air, rail, road and sea connections, regional NSW is strategically positioned to service some of the largest consumer markets in the world. In particular, regional NSW is a key source of high-quality food products for growing Asian markets.



Thriving multinational business environment

Regional NSW is already home to many global brands, which leverage the natural and built endowments of the regions plus our highly skilled workforce and innovation ecosystem. Investing in regional NSW is a well-worn path for good reason.



Emerging global leader in net zero and renewable energy

Regional NSW will become a renewable energy superpower with a commitment of Net Zero Emissions by 2050, a target of 50 per cent emission reductions below 2005 levels by 2030, \$3 billion to activate the green hydrogen industry and Australia's first Renewable Energy Zones. The Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap is also expected to see NSW heavy industry electricity prices among the lowest 10 per cent in the OECD.



Innovative R&D ecosystem

With over 150 higher education, science and research facilities, regional NSW offers businesses the innovation ecosystem to turbocharge growth. The University of Newcastle and University of Wollongong both rank in the top 200 universities globally¹⁰. Our tertiary institutions provide significant opportunities for research and development partnerships and combined with leading technical education facilities, ensure that regional NSW has workers that are highly skilled, innovative and ready to meet industry needs.



World-class industrial precincts

The NSW Government is committed to reducing red tape and planning timeframes for businesses investing in regional NSW. At the forefront is our \$1 billion commitment to Special Activation Precincts. These world-class business hubs offer streamlined planning approvals, enabling infrastructure and provide an ideal location for businesses looking to grow.



Skilled and specialised workforce

Regional NSW is home to a ready supply of skilled labour, with 58 per cent of the workforce holding tertiary qualifications. Of these, 22 per cent have science, technology, engineering or mathematics qualifications. The pool of skilled labour is expanding as the rate of labour force growth in regional NSW is higher than projected national growth. The NSW Government also offers a range of programs to upskill and reskill workers.



Enviably biosecurity status

NSW has an enviable biosecurity, animal and plant health status, underpinned by world-class supply chain and food safety monitoring and management systems. Cutting edge technologies enable traceability from “farm to fork” and provenance marketing.

CASE STUDY: Mars Petcare, one of the world's leading pet food businesses, expanded its operation in Bathurst thanks to the Regional Job Creation Fund.

Mars Petcare has been operating successfully in Bathurst since 1978.

In May 2015, Mars opened its new \$100 million state-of-the-art dry pet food factory reinforcing its commitment to Australian manufacturing and continuing its proud track record of regional investment.

The facility is one of the most advanced and versatile dry pet food factories in the Mars Global network and employs 180 local workers to primarily service the domestic market. Mars has publicly stated that the business is a believer in sourcing, manufacturing and selling locally wherever possible.

The factory is equipped with the latest in modern and efficient equipment, energy efficient building design, lean workflow principles and the highest quality and food safety standards which has direct implications for competitive, low carbon Australian manufacturing.

Mars Petcare has a number of leading cat and dog food brands including PEDIGREE®, WHISKAS®, MYDOG®, DINE®, ADVANCE™, OPTIMUM™, and SCHMACKOS™.



Manufacturing in Bathurst means we've got close proximity to high quality ingredients from across the Central Tablelands. We can offer our Associates a great lifestyle living and working in regional NSW, whilst staying connected to the best expertise from around the world. ”

Dan Pope, Plant Manager, Mars Petcare



MARS Petcare

Globally competitive support programs

The NSW Government offers a range of globally competitive incentives to potential investors looking to establish or expand in regional NSW including:

The highly successful **\$140 million Regional Job Creation Fund** supported investment and job creation by offering up to **\$10 million** in co-funding to activate regional projects in engine, enabling or emerging industries. The fund is on track to create close to **7,000 jobs**.

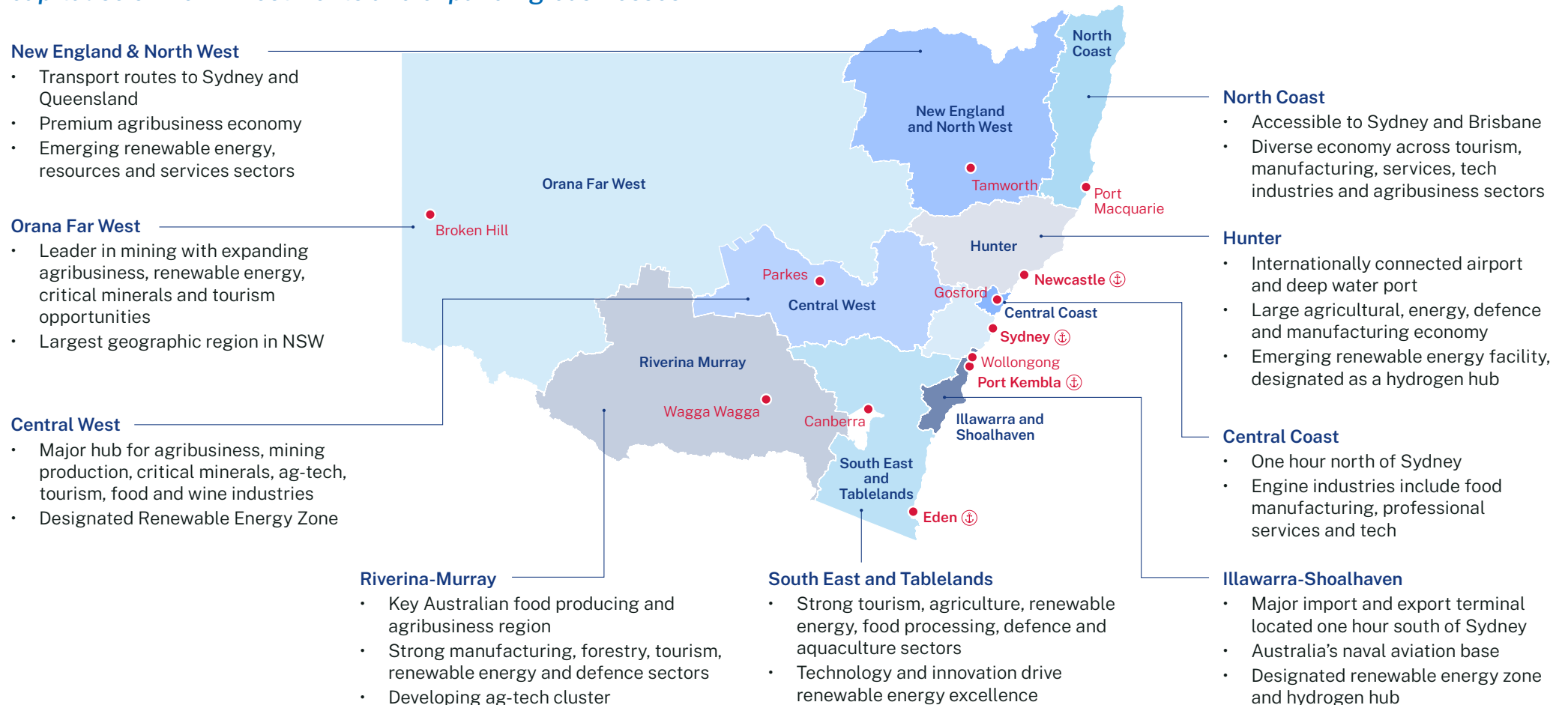
\$145 million Regional Investment Activation Program

to facilitate new private sector investment to activate the potential of priority precincts and industries.

The Regional Skills Relocation Grant offers **\$12,500 per worker** to help attract skilled employees to regional NSW businesses.

Rich and diverse regional identities present opportunities across a range of industries

Each region of NSW presents a distinct range of opportunities for engine, emerging and future industries. With natural endowments that fuel industries and strategic investment from the NSW Government, the regions are primed and ready to capitalise on new investments and expanding businesses.



NSW is the most connected state in Australia

NSW's location provides efficient access to both domestic and international markets. Businesses have access to sophisticated logistics, distribution and transport industries.

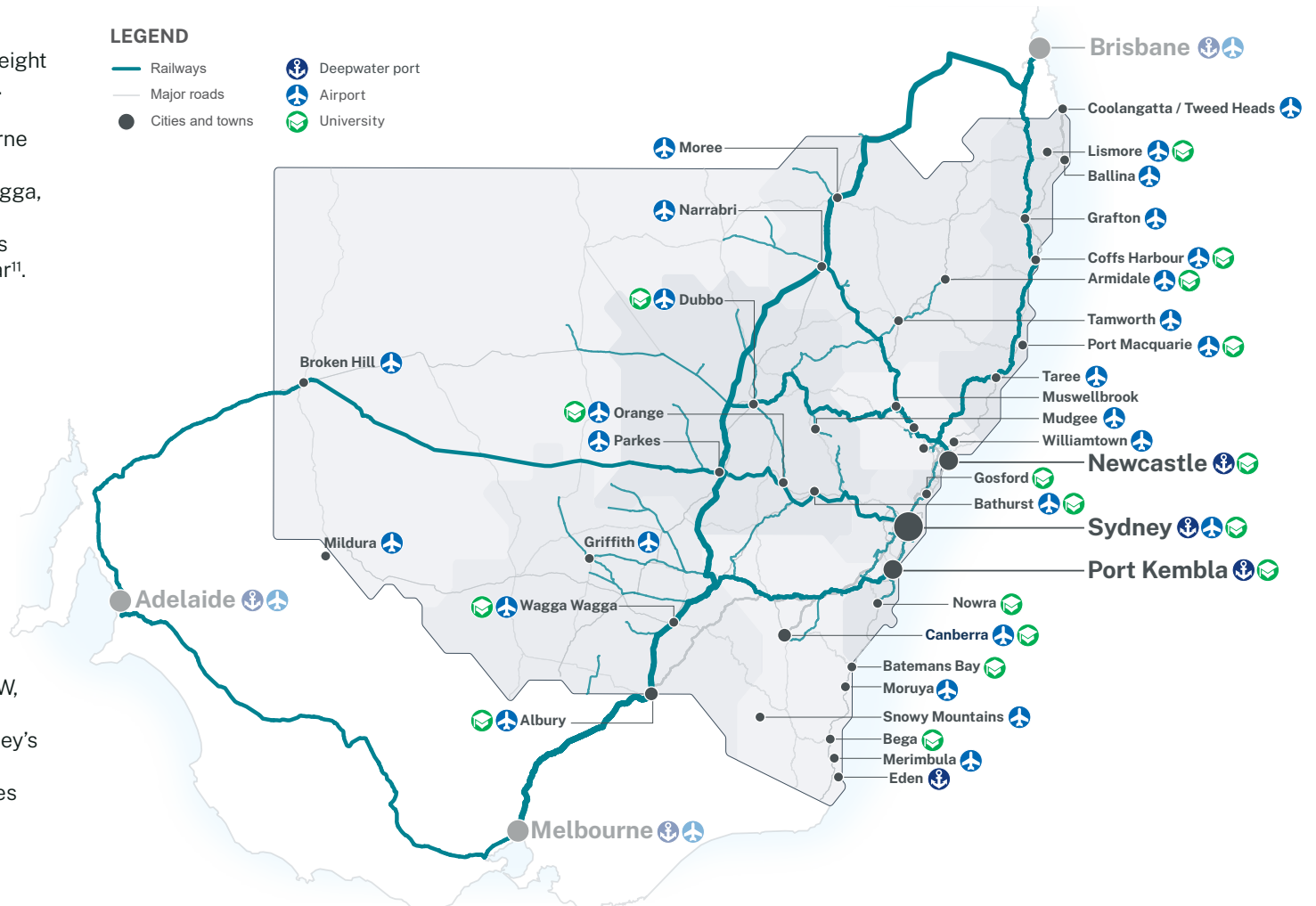
Regional NSW is building on its connectivity with unprecedented investment in transport, logistics and freight infrastructure and the \$14.5 billion Inland Rail network.

The Inland Rail will run between Brisbane and Melbourne with over 1,000 kilometres of track located in regional NSW, with major hubs to operate in Parkes, Wagga Wagga, Albury and Narrabri. It is expected the Inland Rail will save Australian producers, manufacturers and growers approximately \$170 million in transport costs each year¹¹.

Regional NSW has access to the most internationally connected ports and airports in Australia. Key ports include:

- **Port Botany** - Australia's second largest container port (located in Sydney).
- **Port of Newcastle** - world's largest coal export port.
- **Port Kembla** - largest motor vehicle import and largest grain export terminal in NSW.
- **Port of Eden** - southernmost deep-water port, servicing the Royal Australian Navy, cruise ships, woodchip and log ships.

There are more than 70 public airports in regional NSW, many with daily passenger services to capital cities including Australia's largest and busiest airport, Sydney's Kingsford Smith Airport. The new Western Sydney Aerotropolis, operational in 2026, will increase services and airfreight capacity.



Regional NSW is home to world-class research institutions to support business

Research and development is translated into innovative goods and services, which directly contributes to the productivity, sustainability and competitiveness of regional businesses. A vibrant research and development sector helps businesses to adapt to megatrends and respond to volatility in changing markets.

NSW has world-class research strengths in many key science and technology areas, including advanced manufacturing and instrumentation, digital and communications technologies, quantum computing and photonics, robotics and autonomous systems, aerospace and defence, decarbonisation and energy transition, ag-tech and medical technologies. NSW universities are ranked highly on a global scale and make substantial contributions to research, while providing the training ground for technology-skilled graduates.

Regional NSW hosts a range of global leading research centres across 11 NSW-based universities, including the CSIRO Energy Centre, NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI), Cooperative Research Centres, Research Development Corporations, Hunter Medical Research Institute (with over 1,500 researchers) and Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources (NIER). DPI is globally recognised as a top 1% plant, animal and environmental sciences research organisation and maintains a \$100 million per annum portfolio of research projects, over 600 scientific staff and 13,000 hectares of trial sites.

The Office of the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer (OCSE) fosters science and technology innovation and translation, particularly promoting collaboration between research, industry and government, and attracts and supports high-quality, high-impact R&D activities and skills development in a range of science and technology fields across NSW.

OCSE is leading the implementation of the *Turning ideas into jobs* action plan for accelerating research and development in NSW. Released in early 2021, the five recommended Priority Actions are:

- 1 Launch a Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program** – provides competitive grants for SMEs to find and commercialise innovative solutions to NSW Government agencies' specific, well-defined problems.
- 2 Boost open data** – target the strategic release of new NSW Government datasets so businesses can improve decision-making, entrepreneurs can build new businesses and the government can solve complex challenges.
- 3 Turbocharge precincts** – systematically develop precincts to attract national and global technology industries and investment, and drive collaboration with universities, research organisations, start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs to commercialise R&D.
- 4 Target strategic support for NSW universities** – collaborate on research to drive the state's future strategic growth industries and research-led attraction of industry, and form partnerships to better leverage Federal Government research funding.
- 5 Establish an R&D matchmaking platform** – better connect research 'sellers' and 'buyers' and link researchers to infrastructure and expertise.

CASE STUDY: Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources is a focal point for collaboration across NSW and Australia.



Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources (NIER) is a highly successful precinct at the University of Newcastle for industry, academia and government collaboration.

The multidisciplinary research institute celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2021 and has a focus on energy, resources, food and water. It boasts testbed and pilot plant facilities, which have hosted industry collaborations across areas of national significance, including critical resource sustainability and the transformation of the energy system.

The Institute's large base of national and international partners is set to grow with current research priorities focused on:

- industrial innovation to unlock sector potential with a new generation of materials, processes, technologies, and services
- productivity and efficiency to optimise the use of critical resources and enhance processes to reduce waste
- technologies and utilisation to transfer the latest technologies into sectors of significance for sustainability and competitive advantage
- sustainability and security to meet the environmental, social and economic priorities for stronger, more resilient regions.



Our regions drive the state's economic productivity, and supporting the regions to diversify and adapt to new opportunities is a major focus at NIER. Through research and industry partnerships, we can support regional NSW to tap into its potential as a leader in processing critical minerals needed for renewable and low-carbon technologies - creating productive, competitive, and sustainable industries and jobs for future generations. ”

Professor Alan Broadfoot, Executive Director, NIER

Regional NSW's workforce is highly educated and skilled

Regional NSW boasts a ready supply of skilled labour with 69 per cent of the workforce holding tertiary qualifications.¹²

24 per cent have science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) qualifications¹²



10 per cent have a health qualification

4 per cent have an agricultural qualification



Further, the population is growing, with more talent entering the labour market every day.

Regional NSW's labour force increased by 1.6 per cent over the year to May 2022, compared to 0.7 per cent increase in Sydney's labour force.¹³

With over 4.1 million workers, NSW hosts Australia's largest workforce. The NSW university, vocational education and school system is world-class, producing a modern and mobile workforce for the future.

NSW has a large public and private school system. In 2021, the NSW Government invested \$17.4 billion in capital and recurrent expenditure on schools. There are more than 800,000 students attending 2,200 public schools, where students participate in Kindergarten to Year 12.

After school, students can choose to study for a trade or technical qualification through NSW's 333 Registered Training Colleges and 31 Community Colleges, or at one of 130 campuses operated by Technical and Further Education (TAFE).

NSW is ranked first in Australia for the number of people who are STEM qualified¹⁴. The Hunter region's STEM workforce continues to grow due to proactive support for applied STEM knowledge to meet industry needs now and for the future.

NSW is Australia's top ranked state for the total number of students currently studying a bachelor degree at university.

NSW hosts 11 universities that offer bachelor and post-graduate degrees both on-campus and through online learning, with specialisations in areas such as STEM, Agriculture, Mining, Renewables, Health, MedTech, FinTech, Ag-Tech, Biotech, Commerce and Law. There are 12 Country University Centres operating in 15 communities in regional NSW, delivering quality higher education and dedicated learning and study spaces for regional and rural communities.



NSW has the largest number of students in Australia studying Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas and Certificate I-IV qualifications.

A strong regional network of education and technical training institutions backed by a national accreditation scheme ensures a ready supply of innovative and skilled apprentices and graduates. Courses and qualifications are designed in close consultation with industry partners to ensure skills are relevant to evolving industry needs.

In 2021, there were over 238,000 new enrolments in NSW under the Smart and Skilled program. A program that provides eligible students with government-subsidised training up to and including Certificate III and government funding for higher-level courses (Certificate IV and above) in targeted priority areas.

The NSW Government has announced new initiatives such as:

- Creating Institute of Applied Technology Centres.
- Implementing the five recommendations of the STEM national strategy to increase STEM participation and quality of teaching in secondary schools.
- Funding for an additional 70,000 fee-free training courses to accelerate the state's skills-led recovery.
- Funding for regional school upgrades and the creation of modern learning spaces.
- Increasing access to skills brokers across NSW to help any NSW business identify and upskill displaced workers to address demonstrated skills gaps.

How can skills brokers help?



Retrain into a new skillset, or upskill existing staff to maintain employment



Develop sector initiatives to support developing industries attract and train staff



New career pathways, such as apprenticeships or traineeships



Information on how to access training for both employers and employees



CASE STUDY: Regional Rail Project creating opportunities for Aboriginal people

The NSW Government's \$2.8 billion Regional Rail Project involves replacing the ageing NSW regional rail fleet and building a new purpose-built maintenance centre, named Mindyarra, in Dubbo. The contract was awarded in 2018 to Momentum Trains, an international consortium comprising CAF, UGL, Pacific Partnerships, CPB Contractors, CAF Investment Projects and DIF Infrastructure V Coöperatief.

Aboriginal participation and providing opportunities for Aboriginal people is a key project objective. An Aboriginal Working Group (AWG) was established to support Transport for NSW and its delivery partners to achieve Aboriginal participation outcomes.

Eighteen Aboriginal businesses have been engaged on the project. This includes a \$20 million contract for the Mindyarra Maintenance Centre awarded to ARA Indigenous Services, an Aboriginal business recruiting electrician and trade assistant roles locally.



The engagement is a wonderful opportunity for us to make a meaningful contribution towards Aboriginal recruitment in the Dubbo region. ”

*Rohan Tobler-Williams, Strategy and Growth Manager,
ARA Indigenous Services*





The NSW Government has an ambitious vision for regional NSW

The 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW sets out the NSW Government's plans to achieve positive long-term social and economic outcomes for regional communities.

The Vision provides a roadmap to unlock the significant economic potential in regional NSW. It guides transformative, once-in-a-generation investment in our regions through the \$4.2 billion Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund, to create jobs now and into the future.

Since the launch of the original Vision in 2018, the NSW Government has delivered unprecedented investment across regional NSW, growing the economy and presenting major opportunities for new and existing businesses. The Vision was updated in early 2021 and now provides a new, ambitious plan for regional NSW to 2038, identifying new opportunities to refresh, restart and grow regional economies.

The Vision sets out a clear pathway to ensure regional NSW continues to be a vibrant and growing part of our state's economy, and people continue to thrive in our regions.

The Vision affirms the importance of investing in key enablers to foster economic growth. Regional economies need good transport and freight infrastructure, digital connectivity, and secure and sustainable access to water and energy. A new enabler identified in the Vision Refresh is economic strength and diversity, which reflects the need to support communities to prepare for and withstand external shocks.

The Vision identifies ten industries expected to drive regional NSW economies, including seven established engine sectors and three emerging sectors that are gaining ground. In the future, new and innovative industries will be needed to support future markets and communities.

Enablers of economic growth in regional NSW



Infrastructure



Skills



Advocacy and promotion



Economic strength and diversity



Providing a growth conducive business environment

Engine industries will continue to drive growth in regional NSW

1 Agribusiness and forestry



The agribusiness, food, and forestry sectors in regional NSW contribute almost \$23.2 billion to the state's economy. NSW is the base for a range of agribusiness and food companies, with capability in cereals, pulses, oilseeds, food processing, and fruit and vegetables. The state is at the forefront of research and application in functional foods, nanotechnology, new processing technologies, 'smart' logistics control and e-commerce.

2 Resources and mining



Mining, resources and energy are an essential part of the NSW economy, driven by world class and diverse mineral, gas and construction material resources and exploration opportunities. In 2020-21, the mining and resources sector in regional NSW contributed \$12.7 billion to the state's economy. 25,300 of the 36,400 people in NSW employed in mining and resources worked in regional NSW in 2020-21.

3 Tourism and hospitality



In 2022, NSW welcomed 2.7 million international visitors. Tourism and hospitality within regional NSW contributed \$15.6 billion to the state's economy by promoting the most diverse and scenic tourism options in Australia, including outback, country, alpine, coastal, island and sub-tropical regions. The Snowy Mountains Special Activation Precinct will support year-round tourism in Australia's premier alpine destination.

4 Tertiary education and skills



In 2021-22, the education sector in regional NSW generated \$9 billion for the NSW economy. There were 169,976 people employed in education in regional NSW in 2019. International education was Australia's third-largest export pre-COVID. The vocational education infrastructure and approach in regional NSW is well-connected to industry to ensure the workforce has the right skills.

5 Health and residential care



In 2019, the health and aged care sectors in regional NSW employed 282,323 people and in 2018 contributed \$13.6 billion to the state's economy. With a growing and ageing population, the demand for health and care services has increased and presents an opportunity for even greater investment in regional NSW.

6 Freight and logistics



In 2018, the freight, logistics and distribution sector in regional NSW contributed \$6.4 billion to the NSW economy. In 2019, it employed 63,296 people, more than 25% of the state's workforce. A thriving population and growing industry presence is creating significant demand for investment in the sector. High volumes of commodities, manufactured goods, agriculture and wholesale items are moved around NSW.

7 Defence



In 2018, the defence sector in regional NSW contributed \$2.3 billion to the economy. NSW has the largest number of defence bases and facilities of any state in Australia and the largest number of defence personnel, at close to 25,000 people, representing one quarter of the total. NSW is home to operational level headquarters for Navy, Army, Air Force & Joint Operations Command. Defence expenditure is also the highest of anywhere in Australia at \$8.6 billion in 2018. The positive impact of this can also be seen in the largest number of defence industry employees, at 36,000 people, also the highest of any state in Australia.

CASE STUDY: NESTLÉ has a long history driving innovation in regional NSW

Nestlé, the world's largest food and beverage company, has proudly operated in regional NSW for over 100 years. Today, Nestlé has manufacturing sites at Smithtown in the north coast region, and Blayney in the central west.

The Smithtown factory was originally a milk separation plant taken over by Nestlé in 1921. In 1934 it became the birthplace of Milo and has been home to Aussies' favourite choc-malt drink ever since. Today, about 200 people work at the factory, proudly producing Milo, Nesquik and Nestlé Malted Milk, and an extensive range of Nescafé coffee mixes, for sale here and overseas.

More than \$50 million has been invested in the Smithtown factory in the past 10 years, with an additional \$19 million investment underway to support future Milo production.

The Nestlé Purina Blayney factory opened in 1989 and produces a number of leading wet and dry pet foods, such as Proplan, Supercoat, Felix, Fancy Feast and Purina One.

The factory employs more than 280 people and supports more than 60 local businesses and contractors in western NSW, with a focus on sourcing ingredients locally.

More than \$200 million has been invested in the site in the past 10 years. Most recently, a \$90 million upgrade to allow for increased production capacity and export growth was completed in early 2022.



Nestlé has a history of more than 100 years of doing business in regional NSW. Regional NSW offers us reach into key eastern state markets, access to the agricultural ingredients we need and a stable workforce. Regional NSW also offers our employees access to a great lifestyle, where they can be part of strong local communities and have an impact in the communities in which they work and live. ”

Alain Riesterer, Director, Operations, Nestlé Oceania

Emerging industries are thriving in regional NSW with a diversified industrial base and skilled workforce

8 Advanced manufacturing



NSW manufacturers produce almost one third of Australia's total manufacturing output, generating around \$33 billion in industry value. They also directly employ around 253,000 people – almost one third of all jobs in the sector nationwide. Industry sectors with advanced manufacturing capabilities include food and beverage manufacturing, construction technologies, defence industries, aerospace, medical technologies and energy technology.

9 Renewable energy



NSW is fast transitioning towards a modern energy future which is sustainable, diverse and affordable for everyone. Under the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, NSW will build at least 12GW of renewable energy generation and at least 2GW of long duration storage by 2030. Multi-sourced power resources will ensure reliability, drawing on wind, solar, hydrogen and bioenergy, and fortified by storage such as batteries and pumped hydro. Commitments to develop Green Hydrogen Hubs will make regional NSW a world leader in hydrogen technology.

10 Technology



The Vision Refresh identified technology-enabled primary industries as an emerging industry, but investment opportunities exist across the technology industry. NSW boasts a large pool of skilled labour and has more people working in ICT-related fields than anywhere else in Australia, with 107,600 people working as ICT managers or ICT professionals. The impact of COVID-19 on workplaces has created further opportunity for locating ICT business in regional NSW, tapping into this established industry and skilled workforce.



Natural and built assets give regional NSW a competitive advantage in activating industries of the future

11 Critical minerals



Regional NSW is rich in critical mineral deposits to support the increased global demand for technologies such as batteries, smartphones, solar panels and wind turbines. Combining these critical mineral resources with a highly skilled workforce, advanced manufacturing capabilities and established supply chains, regional NSW is well-positioned to be a major exporter of technology materials and components.

12 Ecotourism



To March 2022, the NSW tourism sector attracted more than \$23 billion in spending and employed 175,739 people or 26.3% of Australia's entire tourism workforce. The NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030 sets a target to triple 2009 overnight visitor expenditure in NSW by 2030, surpassing previous targets despite challenges due to COVID-19 related border closures. Regional NSW is home to pristine wilderness and diverse regions including alpine, outback, rural, coastal, island and subtropical locations. The regional NSW ecotourism industry is offering unique experiences for both domestic and international tourists.

13 Recycling and waste management



Responding to global changes in waste management and moves towards implementing a circular economy are driving new opportunities in this sector. Regional NSW has the potential to develop waste and recycling hubs, providing jobs and new material outputs to downstream industries. The NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 outlines government initiatives, supports the transition to a circular economy and provides related infrastructure. The strategy is backed by \$356 million in funding to deliver priority programs and policy reforms.

14 High-quality food products



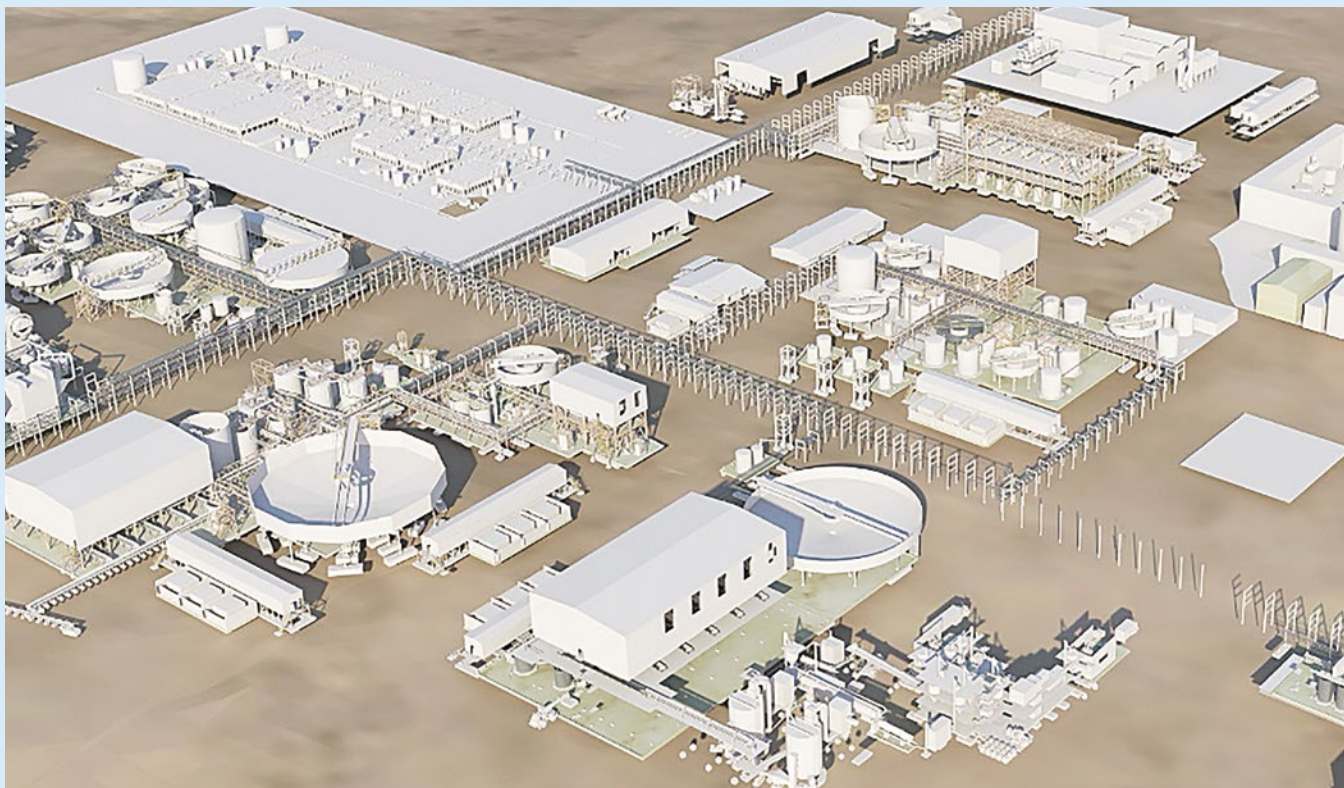
NSW is home to an established, innovative and high-quality food and beverage manufacturing industry. It consists of around 3,600 businesses producing almost one fifth of the Australian sector's exports. It also employs nearly 70,000 people. Increased demand for food and beverage products is being driven by the fast-growing middle class in emerging countries, particularly in Asia. These increasingly sophisticated consumers are interested in safe, high value-added goods and the provenance of their food. Regional NSW is well placed to meet this consumer demand. NSW has an enviable biosecurity, animal and plant health status, underpinned by world-class supply chain and food safety monitoring and management systems.

CASE STUDY: Australian Strategic Materials is producing value-added critical metals for global markets

Australian Strategic Materials Ltd (ASM) is a vertically integrated “mine to metals” producer of critical metals for advanced and clean technologies.

ASM is developing the Dubbo Project, which is based on a long-term polymetallic resource in central western NSW. This advanced engineering project will produce oxides of rare earths, zirconium, niobium and hafnium, to be refined into high-purity critical metals at ASM’s metals plants, the first of which is in South Korea.

ASM developed the Dubbo Project over two decades as a subsidiary of Alkane Resources, achieving government approval in 2015. The company demerged from Alkane in July 2020. Since then, the Optimisation Study for the Dubbo Project has been completed and progress is being made toward a final investment decision. ASM is securing financing and strategic partner agreements for the project, along with construction of its first metals plant in South Korea.



“

We’ve long seen the availability of excellent utilities and transport infrastructure, along with a skilled workforce, as key advantages to developing the Dubbo Project as a mining and processing facility in central western NSW.”

David Woodall, Managing Director, Australian Strategic Materials

Transformative, once-in-a-generation investment is being made to realise the 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW

The NSW Government is investing in priority initiatives to deliver on the 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW through the \$4.2 billion Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund and \$3.3 billion Regional Growth Fund.

The Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund is delivering the critical infrastructure and initiatives identified in the Vision and the NSW State Infrastructure Strategy 2018-2038. Focus areas of the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund include Special Activation Precincts, Regional Job Precincts and the Regional Digital Connectivity program.

Future spending initiatives to support regional economies

The NSW Government's visionary approach underpins record investment in regional NSW, boosting economic growth and creating unprecedented opportunities.



Transformative infrastructure

\$112.7 billion
infrastructure program

\$1.2 billion
for renewable energy infrastructure

\$1 billion
for Special Activation Precincts

\$400 million+
for digital connectivity



Grow economic potential and sustainable jobs

\$703.4 million
to drive growth in emerging high-value industries

\$130 million
to grow investment in mining and exploration

\$145 million
to facilitate new private investment

\$1.6 billion
for regional community investments



Build regional amenity

\$369.6 million
Safe and Secure Water Program

\$835.6 million
for delivery of the new Regional Rail Fleet

\$2.4 billion
to boost regional health workforce

\$193 million
to upgrade regional roads

World-class industrial precincts are driving unprecedented investor interest

Special Activation Precincts will be established in line with the UNIDO¹⁵ guidelines to establish Australia's first eco-industrial parks. They will capitalise on the endowments of each specific region to grow our engine industries, develop emerging industries and create jobs of the future.

The NSW Government has committed \$1 billion to deliver precincts to boost long-term growth in the regions, with streamlined approvals and enabling infrastructure so businesses can set up and grow quickly. The precincts are being planned, delivered and coordinated by the Department of Regional NSW, the Department of Planning and Environment and the Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation. There are five key elements:

- **Streamlined planning:** Streamlined planning and approval processes to provide certainty and confidence to businesses and investors.
- **Infrastructure investment:** Tailored investment in enabling infrastructure to support local and business needs, which may include roads, utilities, waste management and digital connectivity.
- **Government-led studies:** To ensure strategic land use and infrastructure planning for the precinct.
- **Government-led development:** To coordinate each precinct's development in line with social, economic and environmental requirements for each region.
- **Business concierge:** Targeted business and concierge services to attract investment and support businesses to establish and grow in each precinct.




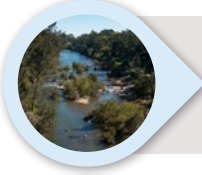


Special Activation Precincts open a world of opportunity

UNIQUE FEATURES	TARGET INDUSTRIES
 <p>Parkes Special Activation Precinct The epicentre of Australia's freight network at the only junction of Australia's two rail spines, the Inland Rail and the Trans-Australian Railway.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freight and logistics • Resource recovery and recycling • Value-added agriculture • Renewable energy • Critical minerals • Hydrogen
 <p>Moree Special Activation Precinct The most productive grain region in Australia with high water security.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fertiliser manufacturing • Plant based protein • Nut processing • Intensive horticulture • Bioenergy
 <p>Snowy Mountains Special Activation Precinct The gateway to Australia's highest mountains and largest alpine playground.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alpine tourism • Extreme and high-performance sport • Health and wellbeing
 <p>Wagga Wagga Special Activation Precinct An industrial rail precinct within the food bowl of Australia, directly connected to established international businesses, research institutions and the amenities of NSW's largest inland city.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bioplastics • Textile recycling • Nut-based milk derivatives • Medicinal cannabis
 <p>Williamstown Special Activation Precinct Home to the largest fast jet fighter base in the country with access to the Hunter's existing skilled workforce in defence, aerospace and advanced manufacturing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defence • Aerospace • Advanced manufacturing

Regional Job Precincts offer support and fast-tracked approvals

Regional Job Precincts, an extension of the Special Activation Precinct program, offer planning support to help fast-track approvals to drive growth, investment and development opportunities in regional NSW.

Regional Job Precincts will deliver faster planning approvals to provide local councils, regional communities, industry and businesses with greater confidence around future investment and development. They will drive local planning reform, investment and new jobs in regional NSW. The NSW Government will work closely with local councils to make it easier for businesses to establish or expand.

	UNIQUE FEATURES	TARGET INDUSTRIES
	<p>Albury Regional Job Precinct An agribusiness and manufacturing hub connecting Australia's two most populated states.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food processing • Recycling • Advanced manufacturing • Intensive horticulture
	<p>Richmond Valley Regional Job Precinct The region has the highest concentration of diverse and high-value food products in NSW.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food processing • Renewables • Biodegradable packaging • Recycling
	<p>South Jerrabomberra Regional Job Precinct Industrial precinct 20 minutes drive from Canberra and Federal Government departments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defence • Space • Cyber-security • Artificial intelligence
	<p>Namoi Regional Job Precinct One of Australia's oldest and most productive agricultural regions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive agriculture • Food packaging • Food processing • Pet food processing

World-leading policy levers to support business growth and drive innovation

With a world-leading and coordinated policy environment that is ambitious and innovative, regional NSW is competitive on a global scale.



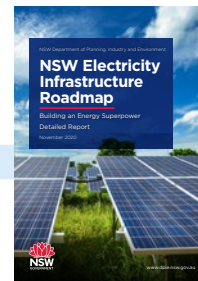
Global NSW is the NSW Government approach to competitively position Sydney and regional NSW in the global economy.



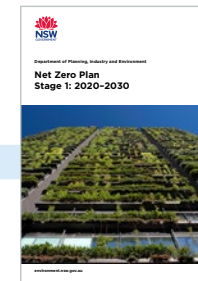
Turning ideas into jobs is an action plan for research and development to accelerate ideas into industry jobs, products and services.



The NSW 2040 Economic Blueprint: Investing in the State's Future sets the direction for the state in a changing world and expanding global economy.

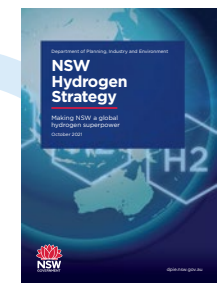


The NSW Government roadmap to secure large scale investment in new electricity infrastructure



Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020-2030 outlines plan to grow economy, create jobs and reduce emissions, including hydrogen as an energy source and feedstock.

The NSW Hydrogen Strategy sets a vision and path for developing a thriving hydrogen industry in NSW



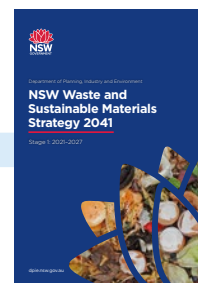
The NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030 is a roadmap to make NSW the premier visitor economy of the Asia Pacific.



NSW Trade Statement is a bold plan to transform the state's exports and trading performance on the world stage.



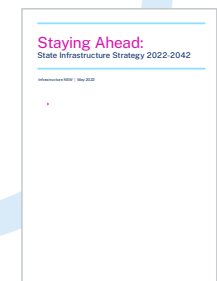
Future Transport 2056 is a suite of strategies and plans that set the 40-year vision, directions and principles for customer mobility in NSW.



The NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy outlines the NSW Government's commitment to transitioning to a circular economy over the next 20 years.



The NSW Critical Minerals and High-Tech Metals Strategy focuses on growing downstream processing capacity particularly in the technology intensive processing stage.



The State Infrastructure Strategy 2018 sets out Infrastructure NSW's independent advice on infrastructure needs and priorities.

Policy snapshot - a global leader in net zero and renewables

As an emerging global leader in the push for net zero, the NSW Government has made specific commitments towards new technologies and renewable energy. Regional NSW is critical to the delivery of these commitments.

NSW NET ZERO PLAN

Regional NSW is key to delivering the Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020-2030 and will be home to the next generation of energy infrastructure in NSW.

The Plan underpins confidence that the challenges posed by climate change can be solved by improving – not eroding – prosperity. There are four priority areas for action:

- Drive uptake of proven emission reduction technologies to grow the economy, create new jobs and reduce the cost of living.
- Empower communities and businesses to make sustainable choices.
- Invest in the next wave of emissions-reduction innovation to ensure economic prosperity from decarbonisation beyond 2030.
- Ensure the NSW Government leads by example.

As part of the Plan, the NSW Government is supporting the development of clean manufacturing precincts (CMPs) to fast-track the decarbonising of high emitting industries and set the foundation to attract and create new, low carbon industries. These clean manufacturing precincts will play a vital role in meeting the state's target of net zero emissions by 2050. They bring multiple industries together, helping them collaborate to access clean infrastructure and technology and develop a path to decarbonisation. They will reduce costs and risks associated with new technology (like hydrogen), while supporting economic growth in a low carbon economy.

RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONES

Regional NSW will host Australia's first Renewable Energy Zones that will unlock up to \$32 billion of private sector investment in large-scale renewable energy and storage projects, creating 2,800 ongoing jobs and delivering affordable and reliable energy

Renewable Energy Zones will involve a significant pipeline of large-scale renewable energy and storage projects supporting up to 6,300 construction jobs at their peak. Looking forward, investments that put downward pressure on energy prices, such as increased supply and access to renewable energy and gas, will encourage energy-intensive industries to set up new facilities in regional NSW.

The landmark Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap will give NSW some of the cheapest, cleanest and most reliable energy in the world. The Renewable Energy Zones will play a vital role in delivering affordable and reliable energy to help replace the state's existing coal-fired power stations as they come to their scheduled end-of-operational life.

NSW HYDROGEN STRATEGY

A \$3 billion package to support the development of a hydrogen industry in regional NSW.

Hydrogen hubs will be established to provide groups of hydrogen users with common infrastructure enabling the local production, use and distribution of hydrogen. The funding for the hydrogen hub initiative has been allocated under the New Low Carbon Industry Foundations focus area of the Net Zero Industry and Innovation Program to develop hydrogen hubs in the Hunter and Illawarra regions. While the initiative is focused on these two regions, it also aims to support hydrogen industries in other strategic locations across NSW. This includes areas such as the NSW Government's Special Activation Precincts and Renewable Energy Zones. The Strategy also includes:

- Exemptions from government charges for green energy producers.
- A 90 per cent exemption from electricity network charges for green hydrogen producers who connect to parts of the network with spare capacity.
- An incentive scheme to support green hydrogen production.
- A hydrogen refuelling station network to be rolled out across the state.

CASE STUDY: Fortescue Future Industries and AGL Energy aim to generate green hydrogen in the Hunter

AGL Energy and Fortescue Future Industries (FFI) have agreed to undertake a feasibility study to repurpose infrastructure at the Hunter Valley's Liddell and Bayswater coal-fired power stations. They aim to generate green hydrogen from water using renewable energy, which will also support the large and skilled local workforce to transition into the next phase of energy supply in Australia.

AGL operates Australia's largest private electricity generation portfolio within the National Electricity Market, comprising coal and gas-fired generation, renewable energy and firming technology, and gas assets. Proudly Australian for more than 180 years, AGL supplies around 4.5 million energy and telecommunications customer services.

As part of Fortescue Metals Group Ltd, one of Australia's largest iron ore mining businesses, FFI is a global green energy and product company committed to producing zero-emission green hydrogen from 100 per cent renewable sources. FFI is a developer, financier and operator investing in zero-emission resources to produce renewable energy at scale.

**FORTESCUE
FUTURE
INDUSTRIES**



AGL and FFI look forward to working with the NSW Government to develop this opportunity in the Hunter Valley, where the sites and workers have been the backbone of the electricity grid for many decades. The project demonstrates Australia's potential to become a global green hydrogen superpower, in the process creating thousands of local direct and indirect jobs and strengthening economies in regional Australia. ”

Mark Hutchinson, Chief Executive Officer, Fortescue Future Industries



Regional NSW Investment Attraction Strategy Objectives

		PRIORITIES
OBJECTIVES	<p>1 Position regional NSW as the location of choice for Australian and international businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematically identify and target global and Australian-based businesses in key industries of opportunity where regional NSW has a global competitive advantage. • Raise awareness of the regional NSW global competitive advantage and high potential investment projects in key international markets and across Australia. • Position NSW’s dedicated network of offshore investment attraction specialists to generate and service an increased number of high impact qualified investment leads.
	<p>2 Enhance personalised and tailored service offerings to meet the specific needs of investors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customise end-to-end services for investors and businesses to support their decision to invest in regional NSW. • Embed a coordinated approach to investment attraction and facilitation with key stakeholders including local, state and federal governments.
	<p>3 Accelerate growth in engine industries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support businesses to collaborate and engage through regional industry networks. • Support greater in-country value-adding, technology transfer and process automation. • Increase the number and size of Aboriginal-owned and operated businesses.
	<p>4 Create an environment conducive to attracting and growing emerging and future industries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and activate strategic commercial opportunities where regional NSW has a competitive advantage. • Provide R&D and commercialisation support for emerging and future industries to drive innovation and economic outcomes. • Pursue an evidence-based approach to identify market gaps and investment opportunities.
	<p>5 Turbocharge priority precincts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise domestic and international networks to develop investor engagement plans to target precinct-specific industries and investors matched to competitive advantages. • Raise awareness of priority precincts with global businesses in key international markets. • Facilitate investment into other NSW Government supported precincts.

Regional NSW Investment Attraction Strategy Enablers

		PRIORITIES
ENABLERS	<p>1 Continue to develop a skilled workforce for current and future needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect businesses to skilled worker support programs and assist in targeting key talent acquisition. • Introduce policy measures to increase the number of skilled workers in regional locations. • Work with industry to enhance alignment between regional skills demand and supply. • Increase Aboriginal participation in major investment projects.
	<p>2 Connect and promote NSW's world-class, industry focused research and development and innovation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish regional NSW as a world leader in research and development. • Turn ideas into jobs by translation of research into commercial opportunities. • Enhance research capacity in regional NSW by fostering strong connections to industry.
	<p>3 Support regional communities to secure and retain investment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver improved mobile coverage and internet connectivity to support people and local business. • Enhance transport, logistics and freight networks to increase the competitiveness of key regional industries. • Introduce policy measures to provide affordable regional housing. • Seek to secure reliable and accessible energy and water. • Improve the customer experience of planning processes for business investment, set-up and expansion.



Objective 1: Position regional NSW as the location of choice for Australian and international businesses

Regional NSW has many competitive advantages making it the best location for business and industry growth. Raising awareness of the opportunities available in the regions in domestic and international markets is critical to increased investment and employment outcomes.

OUR PRIORITIES

1. Systematically identify and target international and Australian-based businesses in key industries of opportunity where regional NSW has a global competitive advantage.
2. Raise awareness of regional NSW's global competitive advantage and high potential investment projects in key international markets and across Australia.
3. Position NSW's dedicated network of offshore investment attraction specialists to generate and service an increased number of high impact, qualified investment leads.

OUR CURRENT INITIATIVES

1. The Invest Regional NSW website and social media platforms virtually connect investors to investment opportunities.
2. Since September 2018, the NSW Government has delivered five successful trade missions for Ambassadors and Consuls General showcasing trade and investment opportunities in regional NSW.

NEW ACTIONS

1. Deliver multi-channel marketing campaigns in Australia and priority international markets to promote regional NSW as a world-leading destination for private sector investment.
 2. Deliver two trade missions and three opportunity forums per year targeted at high potential investors.
 3. Work with the NSW Government's international network of trade and investment specialists across key international markets to undertake proactive investment attraction and targeting.
 4. Enhance data gathering and technical analysis capabilities.
-

CASE STUDY: European Ambassadors energised by investment opportunities in regional NSW

A NSW Government led trade mission to the Hunter region in April 2021 showcased investment opportunities in defence, aerospace, energy and manufacturing industries to ambassadors from 14 countries and the European Union.

The trade mission was the fifth in three years. The two-day visit included tours of leading defence, innovation and energy centres, including BAE Systems, Astra Aerolab, Ampcontrol, Bohemia Interactive, Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources (NIER) and the CSIRO Energy Centre.



EUROPEAN UNION
Delegation to Australia

“

The visit was an excellent opportunity for EU Heads of Mission to learn about regional NSW across a number of subjects from mines to wines, to innovation and defence, to education and tourism. The response has been overwhelmingly positive with many participants remarking on the benefits of visiting regional NSW and getting beyond the confines of the major cities. ”

Dr Michael Pulch, Ambassador for European Union

Objective 2: Enhance personalised and tailored service offerings to meet the specific needs of investors

The NSW Government will enhance the end-to-end support provided to businesses looking to set up or expand in regional NSW in collaboration with government and industry partners.

OUR PRIORITIES

1. Customise end-to-end services for investors and businesses to support their decision to invest in regional NSW.
2. Embed a coordinated approach to investment attraction and facilitation with key stakeholders including local, state and federal governments.

OUR CURRENT INITIATIVES

1. Between July 2018 and June 2022, the regional investment attraction team has assisted to secure investment to the value of \$504.46 million and created 5,663 new jobs.
2. The regional investment attraction team has delivered investment attraction training to over 60 per cent of regional local councils to build investment attraction capability.

NEW ACTIONS

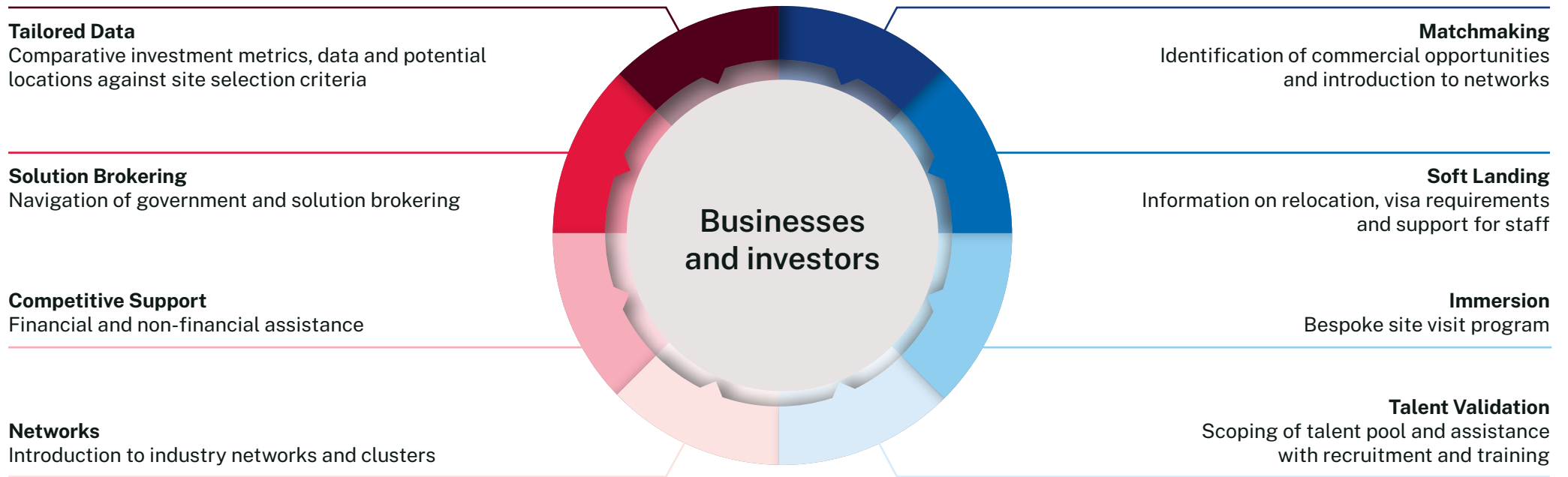
1. Expand our network of investment attraction specialists across regional NSW to provide dedicated resources for proactive investment attraction for priority precincts and industries.
2. Deliver an Investment Attraction Toolkit for use by local governments to support engagement with businesses and investors.
3. Develop world-leading investment attraction tools, including industry specific collateral for place-based opportunities.
4. Develop and deliver the Regional Investment Activation Program.



Image: Destination NSW

End-to-end support for investors

The Department of Regional NSW has established a dedicated regional investment attraction team that works closely with Investment NSW, experts across all levels of government (local, state and federal) and business networks to provide customised information for businesses. The focus of this team is summarised below and will continue to evolve in line with the end-to-end needs of investors and businesses.



Objective 3: Accelerate growth in engine industries

Engine industries will continue to drive economic growth well into the future. The NSW Government will make evidence-based decisions to create an environment supporting industries to establish, innovate, diversify and grow. This enables them to respond to global megatrends, strengthen supply chain capabilities and attract additional private sector investment.

OUR PRIORITIES

1. Support businesses to collaborate and engage through regional industry networks.
2. Support greater in-country, value-adding technology transfer and process automation.
3. Increase the number and size of Aboriginal-owned and operated businesses.

OUR CURRENT INITIATIVES

1. Delivery of Round 1 of the Regional Job Creation Fund (RJCF) under which 112 projects have been approved for funding totalling \$88.36 million, leveraging private sector investment of over \$279.4 million and creating over 4,734 jobs in regional NSW.
2. Planning reforms to improve assessment timeframes, reduce red tape, eliminate double-handling and fast-track projects that deliver greatest public benefits to the people of NSW.
3. The Department of Regional NSW Aboriginal Outcomes Strategy was released in May 2022. It aims to grow our cultural understanding, deliver better outcomes in partnership with Aboriginal people, communities and businesses and guide us towards being an employer of choice for Aboriginal people.

NEW ACTIONS

1. Develop targeted support programs to address priority industry needs and enhance collaboration.
 2. Foster collaboration between industry and the research community to drive innovation and R&D outcomes.
 3. Provide enabling supply chain infrastructure and facilities that improve export efficiency and access to international markets.
 4. Develop targeted support programs to increase Aboriginal enterprise development and employment outcomes.
-

CASE STUDY: Thales Australia is already realising the competitive advantages of operating in regional NSW including access to a highly skilled workforce

Thales Australia is a trusted partner of the Australian Defence Force and a major technology supplier to the defence, transport, aerospace and digital security sectors.

Across Australia, Thales employs 3,800 people at 37 sites, with about 40 per cent employed in regional Australia. Half the Thales workforce (1,900 people) is in NSW and another 1,150 jobs are directly supported in the NSW supply chain.

In regional NSW, Thales have major manufacturing and sustainment facilities producing munitions and small arms as well as providing end-to-end logistics for the provision, distribution and maintenance of ordnance for the Australian Defence Force. They also undertake ship repair and maintenance for the Australian Navy.

Thales is investing \$100 million over the next three years into research and development to help grow Australia's sovereign capabilities. Thales has long term relationships with a number of regional NSW based universities and research institutions to continue this important work.



“

We are proud to be a major employer in regional NSW. Creating high-skilled and well-paid jobs for Australians outside the major cities is key to the success and sustainment of our business. We are a long-term investor in NSW's industrial and advanced technology capabilities, and the regions are an essential part of that. ”

Chris Jenkins, CEO, Thales Australia

THALES
Building a future we can all trust

Objective 4: Create an environment conducive to attracting and growing emerging and future industries

Future and emerging industries will be a source of high-value jobs growth and economic sustainability in regional NSW. It is critical to create the right environment to attract businesses that are global leaders in their field.

OUR PRIORITIES

1. Identify and activate strategic commercial opportunities where regional NSW has a competitive advantage.
2. Provide R&D and commercialisation support for emerging and future industries to drive innovation and economic outcomes.
3. Pursue an evidence-based approach to identify market gaps and investment opportunities.

OUR CURRENT INITIATIVES

1. The Net Zero Plan and NSW Electricity Strategy will result in more than \$7 billion of investment and 1,700 new jobs in regional NSW.
2. \$3 billion in incentives to support green hydrogen production throughout regional NSW.
3. The Geological Survey of NSW is supporting critical minerals exploration efforts by providing cutting-edge, high-quality pre-competitive data in regions of NSW that are prospective for critical minerals.
4. The Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 is backed by \$356 million in funding to help deliver priority programs and policy reforms.

NEW ACTIONS

1. Identify and address barriers to investment and innovation in new industries including hydrogen, plant-based protein, bioenergy and critical minerals.
 2. Complete value chain mapping for key emerging and future industries to establish regional NSW's competitive advantage, capability gaps and target investors.
 3. Publish investment opportunity statements for key emerging and future industries to proactively promote opportunities to potential investors.
-

CASE STUDY: The Broken Hill Cobalt Project will be one of the largest and lowest cost producers of cobalt

Cobalt Blue Holdings Limited (COB) was founded in 2016. COB is a cobalt development and technology company focused on advancing cobalt mining, refining and recycling operations in Australia. COB is developing the Broken Hill Cobalt Project (BHCP) as an integrated open-cut mining and refinery operation to produce cobalt sulphate (suitable as a battery cathode precursor) and elemental sulphur. The operations will have a life of over 20 years and will employ 400 people.

The BHCP is located 23 kilometres west of Broken Hill, an established mining community with well-developed social and utilities infrastructure.



“

The Broken Hill Cobalt Project will be one of the largest and lowest cost producers of cobalt for use in new age batteries anywhere in the world. The Project enjoys substantial advantages due to its proximity to a skilled workforce, infrastructure, and a supportive community. We enjoy a strong relationship with the NSW and Federal Governments who are keen to promote the development of the critical minerals and high-tech manufacturing industries. ”

Joe Kaderavek, Chief Executive Officer, Cobalt Blue

Objective 5: Turbocharge priority precincts

The NSW Government will fast-track and de-risk investment opportunities in priority precincts and proactively target investment attraction

OUR PRIORITIES

1. Utilise domestic and international networks to develop investor engagement plans to target precinct-specific industries and investors matched to competitive advantages.
2. Raise awareness of priority precincts with global businesses in key international markets.
3. Facilitate investment into other NSW Government supported precincts.

OUR CURRENT INITIATIVES

1. Delivery of \$500 million Growing Local Economies Fund to enable crucial projects that support job creation and economic growth in regional NSW.
2. Planning and delivery of five Special Activation Precincts with \$1 billion committed to deliver these world-class economic growth hubs with streamlined planning and enabling infrastructure.
3. Creation of Regional Job Precincts to help drive growth, investment and development opportunities.

NEW ACTIONS

1. Deliver targeted support programs and customised facilitation services for businesses establishing or expanding in a priority precinct.
2. Develop and deliver Investment Attraction Strategies for each of the Special Activation Precincts and Regional Job Precincts, including identification of target industries and target investors.
3. Develop in-depth feasibility studies and business cases for target industries and investment opportunities across all priority precincts.
4. Conduct targeted outreach to high potential international investors in collaboration with Investment NSW and Austrade.

CASE STUDY: Australia's largest PET recycling facility established at the Albury Regional Job Precinct

Circular Plastics Australia is an exciting joint venture between Cleanaway, Pact Group, Asahi Beverages and Coca-Cola Europacific Partners that has built Australia's largest PET plastic recycling facility in Albury.

The new facility commenced operations in December 2021 and will process the equivalent of around 1 billion bottles each year to produce over 20,000 tonnes of new recycled PET bottles and food packaging.



“

This project has been made a reality as a direct result of the support provided by the NSW Government. Regional NSW offers endless opportunities to generate and drive economic activity. All the right settings are there for large investment in regional NSW, it just made sense. ”

David Clancy, Cleanaway's General-Manager for NSW

Enabler 1: Continue to develop a skilled workforce for current and future needs

The NSW Government aims to offer a turnkey workforce solution providing excellence in education, customised training and talent identification for new and expanding companies in regional NSW.

OUR PRIORITIES

1. Connect businesses to skilled worker support programs and assist in targeting key talent acquisition.
2. Introduce policy measures to increase the number of skilled workers in regional locations.
3. Work with industry to enhance alignment between regional skills demand and supply.
4. Increase Aboriginal participation in major investment projects.

OUR CURRENT INITIATIVES

1. The Regional Skills Relocation Grant offers a reimbursement of relocation costs to businesses of up to \$10,000 for skilled workers moving to regional NSW from metropolitan areas.
2. The \$320 million Skilling for Recovery Program offers 100,000 fee-free training places. The NSW Government has committed to 103,000 additional free training places as part of a \$100 million economic recovery package to turbocharge skills and future-proof the workforce.
3. A \$16 million investment in Country Universities Centres to support rural and regional students to study in local communities.

NEW ACTIONS

1. Connect businesses to skilled worker support and programs, as part of proactive investment attraction activities.
2. Support new initiatives in emerging skill areas, such as STEM and new forms of skills delivery.
3. Review skilled migration programs to ensure they meet the needs of new and existing investors.
4. Introduce on-the-job training models for greater integration of students' learning and work experience, with a dedicated focus on Aboriginal people.



CASE STUDY: Talent identification and training vital to Sikorsky Australia's success at Nowra

Headquartered in Nowra NSW is Sikorsky Australia, a Lockheed Martin company. It has a rich legacy in Australian aviation, spanning over 60 years of supporting rotary wing commercial and military operators in Australia and across the region.

Sikorsky Australia's 250-strong workforce, with 195 employees based in Nowra, proudly sustains the Royal Australian Navy's fleet of MH-60R Seahawk helicopters - the world's most advanced maritime helicopter, the Australian Army's S-70A-9 Black Hawk fleet, and regional Sikorsky helicopter operators.

Sikorsky Australia's training programs nurture local talent in the Shoalhaven region, currently employing 12 local apprentices and trainees to grow future sovereign aviation capability. The Regional Skills Relocation Grant assisted Sikorsky to relocate 8 skilled and experienced workers currently living in metropolitan areas to the Shoalhaven region.



SIKORSKY AUSTRALIA
— A LOCKHEED MARTIN COMPANY —

“

Shoalhaven offers a wonderful relaxed coastal lifestyle, which is home to beautiful beaches, nature parks, quality schools and affordable living. It's a terrific place to live and work. ”

Malcolm Wright, General Manager Sikorsky Australia

Enabler 2: Connect and promote NSW’s world-class, industry-focused research and development and innovation

Regional NSW has world-class research and development to support engine, emerging and future industries.

OUR PRIORITIES

1. Establish regional NSW as a world leader in research and development.
2. Turn ideas into jobs by translation of research into commercial opportunities.
3. Enhance research capacity in regional NSW by fostering strong connections to industry.

OUR CURRENT INITIATIVES

1. Since establishment in 2018, the Global Ag-Tech Ecosystem (GATE) has assisted 70 entrepreneurs to bring cutting edge ag-tech ideas to market and raise over \$100 million in follow-on funding.
2. The \$18 million Boosting Business Innovation Program accelerates opportunities and helps universities collaborate with businesses and industries.
3. The NSW Small Business Innovation & Research program is a \$24 million initiative of the NSW Government that provides competitive grants to small and medium-sized enterprises to find and commercialise innovative solutions to well-defined problems for NSW Government agencies.

NEW ACTIONS

1. Link investors to the world-class research and development ecosystem in regional NSW.
2. Support entrepreneurs to innovate, commercialise and scale their products in regional NSW.
3. Continue implementation of actions identified in the Turning Ideas into Jobs Plan, benefitting regional NSW.
4. Provide support for ARCs, CRCs and research networks, with regional partners.

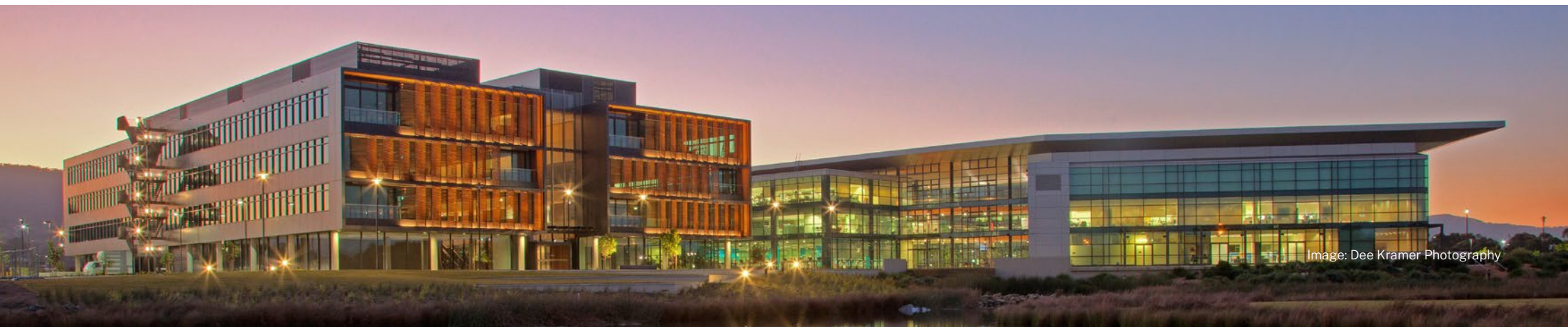


Image: Dee Kramer Photography

CASE STUDY: The GATE precinct is revolutionising Ag-Tech innovation and commercialisation

The GATE (Global Ag-Tech Ecosystem) is an emerging precinct to develop ag-tech ideas and fast-track adoption of agricultural research and development. It leverages the expertise of the Department of Primary Industries' (DPI) 600 scientific and technical staff to support innovation. The GATE's alliance partners include Hort Innovation Australia, Cotton Research & Development Corporation, and Fisheries Research & Development Corporation.

Since its establishment in 2018, the GATE has supported over 70 entrepreneurs and research teams to bring ideas to market and impact industry. With corporate partners Sparklabs Cultiv8, over \$200 million of follow-on funding has been raised and more than 150 jobs created, mostly in regional NSW.

In 2021, the GATE was awarded a Good Design Australia Gold Award for design strategy for its program. In 2022 DPI GATE will expand its offerings to agribusinesses by facilitating on-farm validation of new technologies, product trials and mission based industry collaborations across DPI's 22 research stations and 13,000 hectares of trial farms.



“

SparkLabs Cultiv8 worked hand in glove with the NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) over the past 4 years in establishing the Global Ag-Tech Ecosystem at the Orange Agricultural Institute. Four cohorts totalling 38 companies have participated in our program. Agrifood technology is developing and growing quickly and we are excited to be at the heart of this frontier. Whether it's building a brand to help support the human microbiome or leveraging a unique seaweed to reduce methane output in the livestock sector, we continue to get excited about how we can help support agriculture into the future. ”

Jonathon Quigley - Partner SparkLabs Cultiv8



Enabler 3: Support regional communities to secure and retain investment

The NSW Government is committed to elevate, innovate and invigorate our economy, supporting regional NSW as a more liveable and internationally competitive location of choice for investors.

OUR PRIORITIES

1. Deliver a faster and more reliable and affordable mobile phone and internet service to support people and business.
2. Enhance transport, logistics and freight networks to increase the competitiveness of key regional industries.
3. Introduce policy measures to provide for affordable regional housing.
4. Seek to secure reliable and accessible energy and water.
5. Improve the customer experience of planning processes for business investment, set-up and expansion.

OUR CURRENT INITIATIVES

1. The NSW Government is investing record funding to grow regional jobs, build vibrant liveable towns, support regional communities and drive economic recovery.
2. The \$4.2 billion Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund dedicated to the delivery of transformational infrastructure investment in regional NSW including Special Activation Precincts and Regional Digital Connectivity program.
3. Implementing the Planning Reform Action Plan and utilising the Planning Delivery Unit (see following page) to progress priority planning projects, with a total of 241 regional projects supported so far.
4. Establishment of the Regional Housing Taskforce to address housing supply.

NEW ACTIONS

1. Optimise rail, road and air links to make regional products more competitive in overseas markets.
2. Explore the potential of hydrogen as a versatile energy carrier that can provide a decarbonisation pathway for energy-intensive industries in regional NSW.
3. Increase the availability of affordable and diverse housing across regional NSW.
4. Government investment in water infrastructure to help secure the future of regional industries.



CASE STUDY: Planning Delivery Unit working to resolve issues with major development applications

The Planning Delivery Unit (PDU) was formed in July 2020 to resolve issues with major development applications (DAs), planning proposals and precincts, so decisions can be made faster.

The PDU operates in three main ways:

1. Case management –to resolve significant stalled projects by coordination and mediation.
2. Concierge service –to proactively assist new major investors navigate the NSW planning system.
3. Planning reform –improving systems and gathering ideas on how to improve the planning system.

The PDU is not responsible for the determination or approval of projects. The group proactively works with developers, councils and agencies to resolve issues that are delaying decision-making, to ensure timely determinations. Projects can be referred to the Planning Delivery Unit by developers, councils or government agencies.

PDU Case Management Criteria



Significant projects

Regional significant development
 Crown development
 CIV > \$5m with integrated development
 Strategic merit



Unreasonable delays

Outstanding concurrence or referral requests
 Assessment times > 120 days



Delivers a public benefit

Social or affordable housing
 State/regional infrastructure
 Community facilities/public space




Complex projects

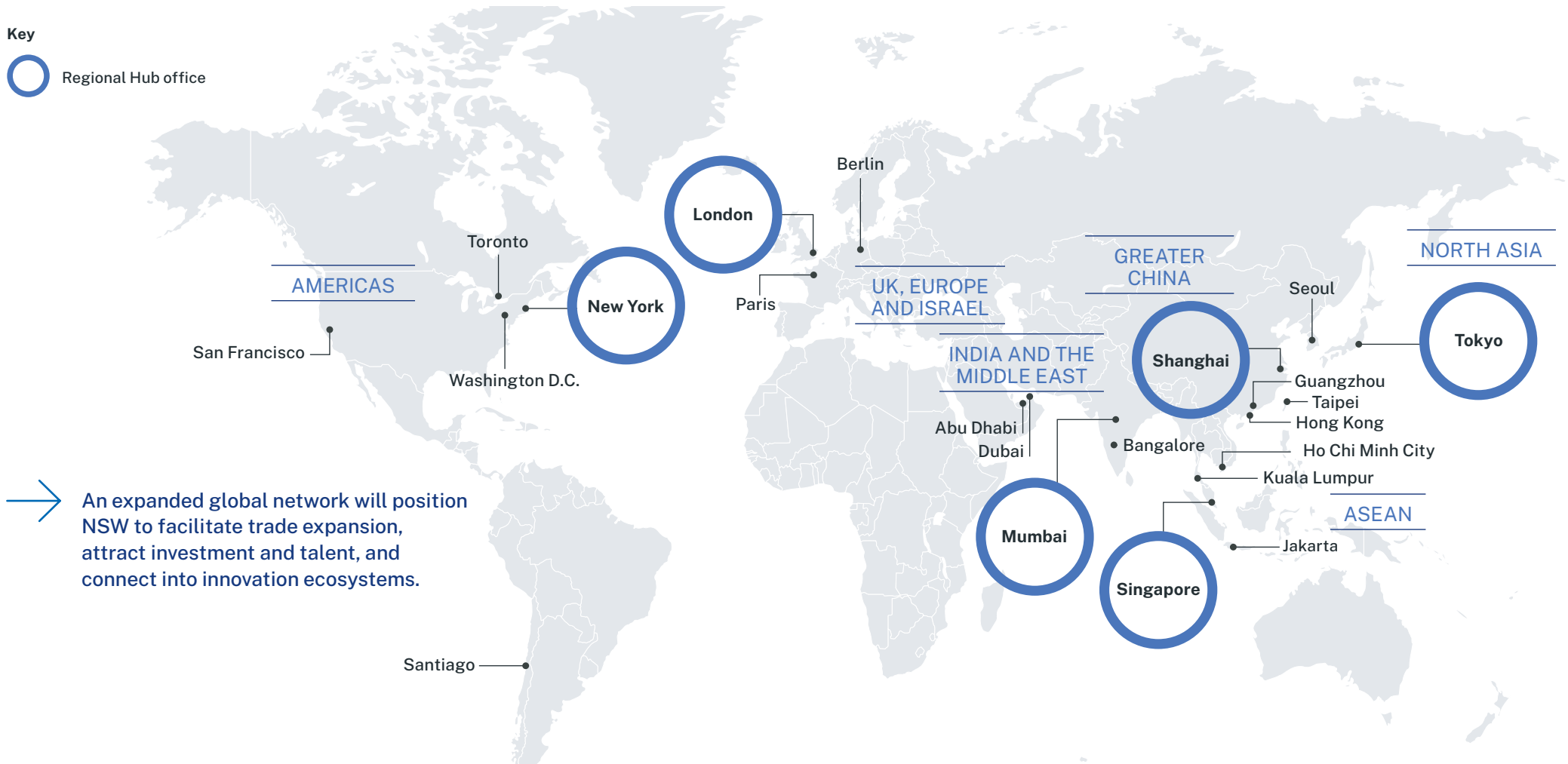
Referred by applicants, councils or agencies

Doubling NSW's network of international specialists

The NSW Government is building our international representation in key markets to turbocharge trade and investment attraction efforts. By the end of 2022 we will have representation in 22 locations, with 55 staff across these six regions:

Key

 Regional Hub office



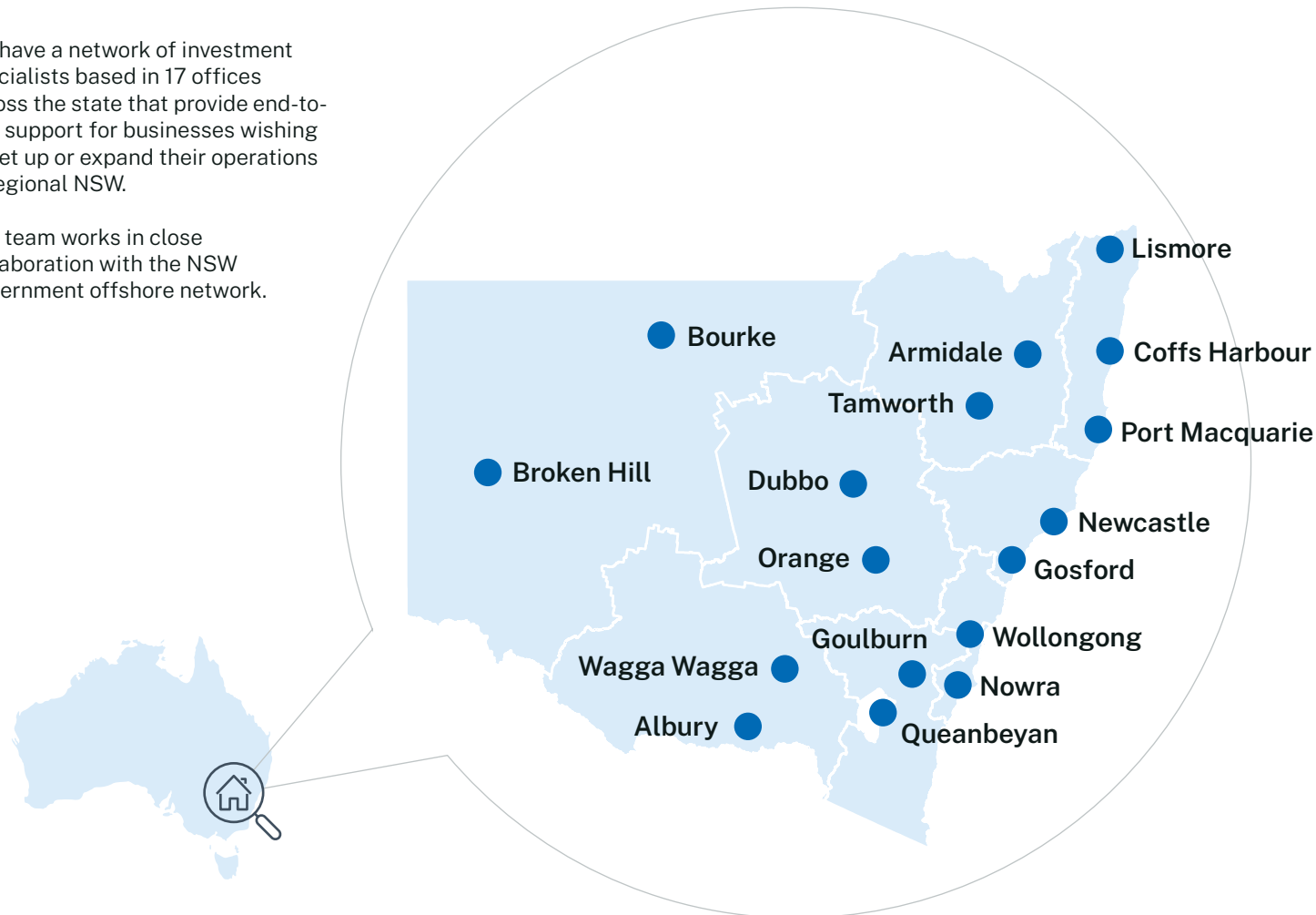
➔ An expanded global network will position NSW to facilitate trade expansion, attract investment and talent, and connect into innovation ecosystems.

Extensive regional network of investment attraction specialists

A dedicated regional investment attraction team provides tailor-made investment facilitation and information services for domestic and international investors.

We have a network of investment specialists based in 17 offices across the state that provide end-to-end support for businesses wishing to set up or expand their operations in regional NSW.

The team works in close collaboration with the NSW Government offshore network.



For more information on investing in regional NSW

1300 679 673
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www.investregional.nsw.gov.au

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Regional NSW acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First Peoples and Traditional Custodians of Australia. We thank them for their custodianship of Country – land, seas and skies. We acknowledge the diversity of First Nations cultures, histories and peoples, recognise their enduring connection to this state, and we pay our deepest respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



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The Regional NSW Investment Attraction Strategy 2022-2027 was developed by the Department of Regional NSW (Office of Regional Economic Development).

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