



Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Regional Queensland, Innovation

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (10.04 am): Innovation and entrepreneurship are not unique to big cities. We are seeing incredibly innovative new products and services being developed right across Queensland. Since the launch of Advance Queensland, I have visited 13 regions across the state and met with many hundreds of locals to talk about investing in our future by harnessing innovation to strengthen and diversify the economy and create jobs.

From sensor technology in sugar mills, to sunscreen that mimics the UV protection of the Great Barrier Reef, from apps that reduce waiting times to see the doctor, to research to reduce costs in abattoirs, regional innovators are making their mark both at home and in global markets. People should not feel that they need to move to Brisbane to get the support they need to turn good ideas into commercial success.

To foster innovation right across our state, the Palaszczuk government is providing \$6 million to support the development of regional innovation hubs throughout Queensland and a further \$1.5 million to ensure that they are all networked with each other. These hubs will support regional innovation by connecting local efforts, leveraging key regional strengths and lifting the capability of innovative local firms to create jobs.

To make sure that we get the best out of these hubs, we are asking for the help of regional Queenslanders to design this program. Last week, along with the member for Ipswich, I visited the impressive Fire Station 101 co-working space in the City of Ipswich to launch the regional innovation hubs discussion paper. I would like to congratulate the Ipswich City Council and Mayor Paul Pisasale for having the vision to establish the start-up hub. If Queensland is to be ready for the knowledge economy of the future, it will take all levels of government, regardless of political persuasion, to work together for the common good of future generations.

Each region in our state has its own unique challenges and opportunities and each will require different backing to support the turning of great ideas into commercial outcomes. We will conduct a series of workshops across the state to build a sense of shared purpose around innovation and listen to stakeholders about local needs and how to encourage collaboration to deliver results. For those who cannot attend the workshops, I encourage them to share their views online via the Advance Queensland website.

We want to maximise engagement and participation to ensure the success of the regional innovation hubs that will shape the growth of innovation and entrepreneurship throughout Queensland. Queensland is made for innovation, particularly in our regions. I want to encourage locals to help make the most of this funding and join the innovation movement that is working to build a better future for Queensland.