



Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Advance Queensland

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (10.10 am): The appetite for the Palaszczuk government's Advance Queensland initiative across the state is enormous. Since launching the initiative just over 15 months ago, we have approved more than \$59 million worth of funding that has delivered 748 direct jobs for Queenslanders. Put simply, this government is getting on with the job of supporting innovative Queenslanders to turn their ideas into action, grow their businesses and create jobs.

Over that time, we have consistently seen massive oversubscription of applications for a large majority of the 20 programs that have been opened—with more than 1,800 applications being considered for funding. The latest example of this interest is the second round of our Advance Queensland Ignite Ideas funding program. The first round of the program attracted more than 340 applications, and I can inform the House that the second round has surpassed that number, with more than 450 applications from Queensland innovators.

Over the next few weeks, eligible applications will be examined by a panel of independent, external assessors. These assessors have deep experience in developing and investing in innovative companies and their products. To qualify for Ignite Ideas, a business must have fewer than 200 staff and a working prototype boasting enough features to support testing and further development.

Our first funding round identified a range of very innovative products emerging from Queensland start-ups and small and medium sized enterprises. Brisbane based SurgicalPerformance, for example, received \$100,000 of Ignite Ideas funding to further develop its innovative surgical audit software. The company supports more than 600 surgeons, mostly from Australia, to collect clinically meaningful data to directly improve patient outcomes. The company's software takes hospital data from the clipboard to a detailed, accurate and confidential database, which is accessible online and in real time. The software has strong global market potential, and this funding will help deliver more jobs for Queenslanders.

Another example is Toowoomba company Bayro No. 1, which secured \$250,000 to develop a world-first feeding device, RoseCup, for people who have difficulty swallowing—a condition called dysphagia that is associated with a wide range of medical conditions. Not only does RoseCup have enormous potential on global markets, leading to more jobs in the Toowoomba region, but it also has the potential to improve the quality of life of millions of people worldwide. Both SurgicalPerformance and Bayro No. 1 are great examples of how Advance Queensland funding supports businesses at a crucial point in the product development cycle.

Ignite Ideas support also ensures that founders can accelerate the growth of their companies without giving up too much equity in their early stages. The program delivers a vital boost to efforts to grow and diversify our economy. We know ambitious small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy

and we are backing them. I am confident that, just as with round 1, round 2 recipients will also have the potential to deliver significant new exports and jobs for our state. The Advance Queensland Ignite Ideas program provides a clear demonstration of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to ensuring that Queensland really is the start-up state of Australia.