

Question on Notice

No. 1740

Asked on 11 October 2016

MR WHITING ASKED THE MINISTER FOR INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR SMALL BUSINESS (HON L ENOCH) -

Will the Minister provide an update on how the residents and businesses in the electorate of Murrumbidgee will benefit from the latest round of Regional Innovation Hubs Workshops?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Murrumbidgee for his question and acknowledge his tireless advocacy to build an innovation eco-system in his region.

I was pleased to launch the \$6 million Advancing Regional Innovation Program on 29 October 2016.

The program is a cornerstone of realising the potential of our growing innovation communities across the state, by working to better connect local innovation efforts, leverage local expertise, build the capability of local firms and foster increased collaboration between researchers and businesses.

As part of the program guidelines we have designated 12 regions each with funding up to \$500,000 (excluding GST) available over 3 years to support a collaborative action plan designed by each community. One of these regions will be Moreton Bay, which encompasses the Murrumbidgee electorate.

The funding is available to support activities including upgrading or equipping innovation spaces, boosting capability and skills development, increasing access to mentors and investors, tools and platforms to enable greater collaboration, and programs that connect local entrepreneurs with each other and with regional businesses and industries.

Our Advancing Regional Innovation Program will foster a network of hubs of innovation across the state. That is why we also have a separate \$1.5 million Network Fund to support activities that will strengthen the links between innovation hubs.

The Palaszczuk Government recently held a series of regional consultation workshops across the state to make sure we get the design of this program right. These workshops were attended by over 420 Queenslanders from a wide range of backgrounds. We also received over 100 responses to the online survey from Queenslanders having their say in the program design.

During this consultation, the Murrumba electorate and wider region had the opportunity to inform the program design for their community at a workshop on 21 September 2016. The event was attended by 36 individuals interested in engaging in innovation in their community.

The program design has taken into account the feedback from stakeholders across the state. Pre-registration for the Advancing Regional Innovation Program is open to interested parties until Friday 18 November 2016. Each pre-registration must have a lead applicant and identify five or more project partners.

Following the pre-registration period, applications can be submitted from 21 November 2016 until the closing date on 28 April 2017.

The program guidelines and applicant documentation is available on the Advance Queensland website (<http://advance.qld.gov.au/regionalinnovation>).

I believe the Advancing Regional Innovation Program is an exciting program that gives a real boost to innovation in regional Queensland, and encourages our State to thrive.