



# **Regional Development Australia Far West**

Quarterly Report to the Region

July 2018



# INTRODUCTION

Regional Development Australia is a national network of local leaders working with all levels of government, the private sector, businesses and community groups to support economic development within their regions.

From 1 January 2018, RDA Far West is funded by the Australian Government for a further three years to facilitate a new charter for a Strong, Confident and Vibrant Region. A copy of the new RDA Charter can be accessed here, [RDA Charter](#)

Under the Funding Agreement all RDA's are required to produce a quarterly report to their regions to provide an update of activities and projects.

RDA Far West's Quarterly Report to the region highlights recent work we have undertaken.

# THE COMMITTEE

Led by the Chair, Mr. Dave Gallagher, the RDA Far West Committee comprises:

Byron Hooker, Deputy Chair

Wayne Murray, Treasurer

Brian Dodson, Member

Naomi Schmidt, Member

RDA Far West will soon be seeking Expressions of Interest for Committee positions and the role of Deputy Chair.

RDA members will typically be very well connected and networked individuals who have knowledge of the region's strengths and challenges. Business acumen is highly valued along with an understanding of economic development.

While positions are not yet advertised, any interested parties should contact the office to register their name so that when documentation is prepared they can be contacted directly.

# RENEW THE FAR WEST

Renew the Far West is a social enterprise designed to catalyse community renewal, economic development and small business.



Renew the Far West works with property owners, creative enterprises, individuals and community groups to support the establishment of creative projects and small businesses into some of the growing number of empty shops and offices within the region and develop an environment that inspires creativity and reduces empty spaces.

Renew the Far West will find short and medium term uses for buildings in the Far West that are currently vacant, disused, or awaiting redevelopment.

Renew the Far West has supported the establishment of four businesses within the region with another business planned to open in the near future.

The project has achieved great outcomes to date with the reduction of four empty spaces and the creation of additional jobs within the region.

Congratulations must be extended to not only the entrepreneurial individuals that have taken the opportunity to develop their business but also the property owners who have offered their premises to create opportunities within the region.

A video case study of the third Renew the Far West project, the Little Bloom Studio is available [here](#)



# THE FAR WEST EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS AWARDS

Planning is well underway for the 2018 Far West Excellence in Business Awards.

Nominations for the Awards opened 01 July and will close at midnight 21 September 2018.

The Business Awards are an opportunity to honour the diversity, innovation, excellence and commitment of the Far West region's businesses, culminating with a gala awards night on Saturday 17 November 2018 at The Whitehouse Convention Centre.

The awards were established in 2014 and have grown significantly over the years with the 2017 Awards receiving over 4000 nominations and more than 350 people attending the gala evening.

The awards cover a diverse cross section of categories across three sections, including; Business Awards, including new businesses, small, medium and large businesses, customer service, presentation and marketing

Training Awards, including Apprentice of the Year, Trainee of the Year and School Based Trainee of the Year, and

The ever popular people choice Awards, including the Service with a Smile, the Regions Favourite Business and the Region's Favourite Tradie.

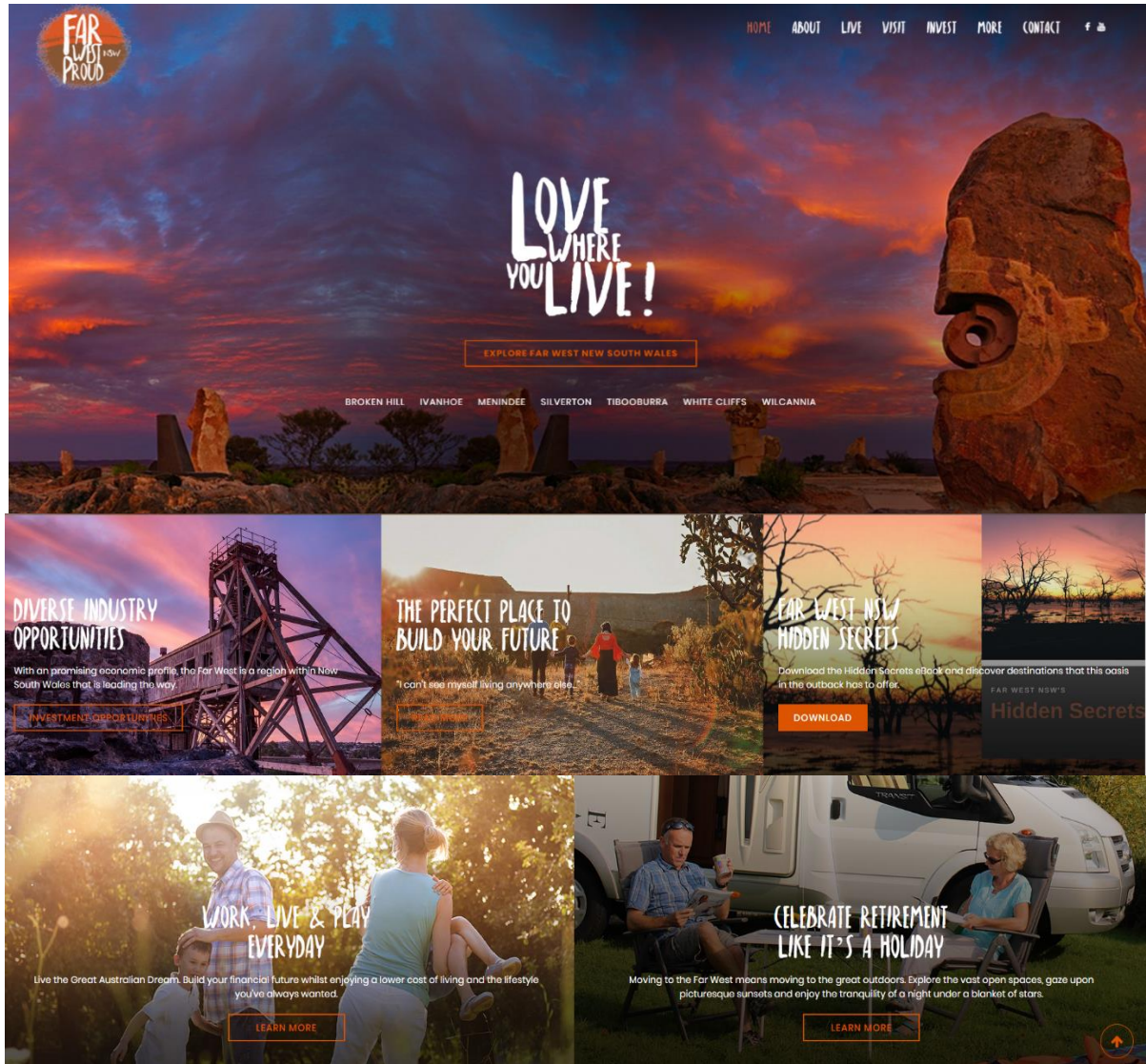
Tickets for this years Gala evening, with guest speaker, former Australian test cricketer and commentator Kerry O'Keefe will be on sale at the RDA Far West Office.





# FAR WEST PROUD

## LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE



The concept of promoting a region to encourage population growth, tourism growth and skills development is not new, many regions across Australia have very successfully promoted their regions over extended periods of time. However, the Far West have not in recent years, if ever, seriously promoted the region as an alternate destination to live, work and play.

Far West Proud is an initiative of Regional Development Australia Far West to promote the Far West of NSW as a desirable region to relocate business and families.

The Far West embodies the dream of the Great Australian Outback with wide open spaces, untouched natural beauty, spectacular National Parks, red desert and rolling sand dunes, the mighty Darling River, rich Indigenous culture and history and an abundance of wildlife. The region offers affordable housing, an enviable lifestyle, strong and relevant education pathways and importantly, jobs.

Located as the most central of Australia's rural communities the Far West provides road access to all of Australia's Southern and Eastern capital cities within a day's drive.

The Far West of NSW, especially Broken Hill makes it onto many bucket lists. The region has developed significant marketing and promotional materials over many years, quite simply, people love visiting the region and are often surprised when they arrive. The Far West is very good at promoting the region and building the visitor economy, tourists arrive in droves and mostly enjoy the experience.

However, as a region, our focus in marketing has always been around tourism. Broken Hill's population peaked at around 34,757 in 1915. Hovering around the high 20,000's to low 30,000's for many years, the population has declined steadily from the 1970's to an estimated 17,500 in 2018.

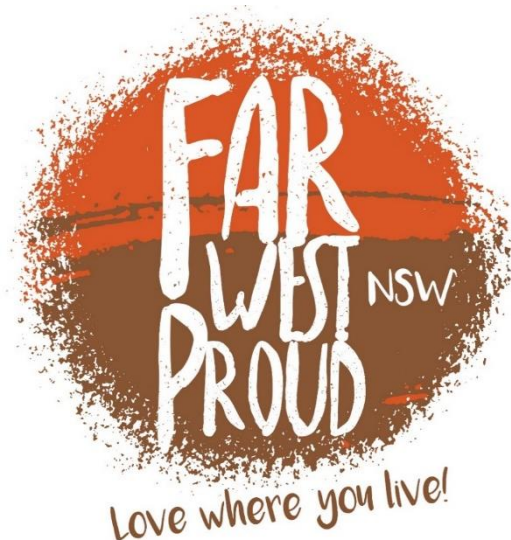
Population decline has impacted the region, our services and our future. Far West Proud has been established to reverse this trend and again grow the region's population.

[Visit Far West proud here](#)

Launched in the first quarter of 2018 the website has exceeded expectations with growing engagement from across the world.

Far West Proud features a number of different aspects, including;

- Far West Welcome Pack, providing valuable information for new members of the community.  
<https://lovethefarwest.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Welcome-Pack.pdf>
- Far West Regional Prospectus, outlining the regions investment opportunities, competitive advantages and promoting the Far West.  
<https://lovethefarwest.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2016-Far-West-Regional-Prospectus.pdf>
- The Far West Accommodation Guide, highlighting the diversity of accommodation available in the region. <https://lovethefarwest.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Accommodation-in-Far-West-NSW.pdf>



- The Far West Food Guide, providing addresses and contact details for the regions restaurants and cafés <https://lovethefarwest.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Far-West-Regional-Food-Guide-2018.pdf>
- The Far West Art Guide, providing details of the many fine art galleries accessible within the Far West <https://lovethefarwest.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Art-in-Broken-Hill-Surrounds.pdf>

## THE FAR WEST GIFT CARDS

Another aspect of the Far West Proud campaign is the Far West Gift Card, unique within the region the cards are the perfect gift, prize or incentive.

Far West Gift Cards support local shopping and encourage locals to spend money in local stores. The cards are EFTPOS based and can be loaded with a value from \$10 - \$1000 and redeemed in over 115 participating regional businesses.



## APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINEESHIP

Critical to the growth of the region is the establishment of career pathways for our young people. In partnership with Training Services NSW, Regional Development Australia Far West have created an Employment and Training Coordinator position to promote and support vocational pathways.

The Far West Workforce Development Study highlighted both opportunity and need. Employers sincerely recognised the potential skill shortages in the region, training providers had clearly lost student numbers and apprenticeship opportunities in the region were dwindling.

RDA Far West recognise the need to establish and support vocational pathways and since October 2017 have supported the establishment of over 100 apprenticeship, traineeship and school based traineeships.



Creation of Vocational pathways and high quality outcomes are important to the local community and integral to the sustainability and growth of the region, however they are also a critical aspect for potential re-locators, parents need to be assured there are strong, relevant pathways and employment options for their children if they choose to move to the Far West.

# FAR WEST CAREERS EXPO

Through a partnership with NSW Department of Education Public Schools, and local Secondary and Central Schools, RDA Far West have facilitated and coordinated the past 5 Career Expos.

The annual Careers Expo provides an opportunity for students to speak with employers and industry experts and seek real advice about pathways, requirements and expectations etc. It also provides an opportunity for employers to meet the next generation of employees and discuss requirements, pathways and options.

The Far West Careers Expo caters for approx. 500 students annually from Broken Hill High School, Willyama High School, Menindee Central School, Wilcannia Central School and Ivanhoe Central School.

Over 70 exhibitors annually provide a dynamic and interactive environment for students to explore careers they may not have previously considered.

Planning is well underway for the 2018 Careers Expo to be held 25 July 2018 and the Whitehouse Convention Centre, Broken Hill





# COUNTRY UNIVERSITIES CENTRE FAR WEST



The Country Universities Centre Far West (CUC FW) is a not-for-profit, community governed, incorporated body providing high-tech facilities and university level educational opportunities to students in the Far West region of New South Wales.

The Centre has been established through strong partnerships with the NSW State Government, Regional Development Australia Far West and the Broken Hill Community Credit Union.

Recently opened by the Hon. John Barilaro the CUC FW Centre delivers on the need to provide local higher education opportunities for a regional and rural community with a higher than average proportion of low socio-economic students.

In doing so:

- Students can remain living in the local area while undertaking further education, so as to reduce the migration of intellectual and economic capital from the Far West to urban areas;
- Obtaining a university education is potentially cheaper for students who can be academically and administratively supported by the CUC FW and no longer have to relocate and find expensive accommodation in distant urban or large regional centres ;
- Local businesses and government facilities can access people with university qualifications locally, without having to design incentive packages to attract those people to the Far West from outside the area;
- The CUC FW is an additional participant in the educational community of local schools, TAFE and RTO's, and an interface between students (current and past) and local employers of graduates;
- Students can design university research tasks around local challenges and opportunities, to the benefit of the whole community; and
- The Far West region will be a more attractive place to live and work for families, as higher education opportunities can be sought locally.

# THE FAR WEST SPORTING HALL OF FAME



The Far West Sporting Hall of Fame will recognise those individuals that have achieved success at an elite level.

The Far West Sporting Hall of Fame is being established to honour the region's sporting champions; individuals who have made a positive impact on the local community, achieved success at the highest level of their sport, and to provide role models for today's athletes and generations to come.

Sport and perhaps more specifically, the 'spirit of sport' has been a fundamental building block for our nation. The values of trust, respect, sportsmanship and the sense of a fair go, are all part of the value system of sport in Australia. The 'spirit of sport' instils these values, particularly in our young, as they benchmark, develop and shape their own lives.

Far West NSW has nurtured the rise of numerous individuals to an elite level in their chosen sport.



Adelaide Crows Captain, Broken Hill's Taylor Walker

The Far West Sporting Hall of Fame recognises and promotes the outstanding sporting achievements of our sportsmen and women from the Far West to preserve the region and Australia's rich sporting heritage. It is an illustrious group of the region's most respected and celebrated champions that span time. They are the best of the best, who through their achievements have made a significant contribution to our nation's sporting history and have inspired young Australians to achieve their potential in both sport and life.

# FAR WEST RAMPS PROJECT

The Far West Ramps Project will improve access to commercial buildings for people with disabilities to ensure the greatest possible participation in the social, economic, cultural and political life of the community. The project aims to create a truly accessible region, leading the country in creating accessible shopping and dining districts for the disabled, elderly and pram users

Being involved in the community is important to all of us and this involvement can take many forms. It can include visiting friends, doing the shopping, going to the movies, playing sport and working.

Most people take for granted the ability to go about daily lives in the community without experiencing any barriers.

To get about in the community people with disabilities require public and private transport that is suited to their needs and buildings, streets, open spaces and services that are accessible and welcoming.

For people with disabilities to have the same opportunities as other people to participate in community life, it is important that the services and facilities provided to the community address the access requirements of people with disabilities. Improving access and inclusion is also of great benefit to everyone in the community including families with prams, seniors and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The Far West RAMPS project is being delivered through a partnership with Central Darling Shire Council, Broken Hill City Council, LiveBetter Community Services, Ability Links, Disability Advocacy and the Broken Hill Aboriginal Land Council.

Expressions of Interest for Ramps are currently being accepted. Tenders are currently open for the installation of the ramps by suitably qualified and experienced people. To discuss the project more contact RDA Far West.

