

## News Release

For release: 26 July 2016

### **ANZ commits \$250,000 to regional and rural education and employment opportunities –Social and economic impacts are the core of ANZ’s Seeds of Renewal program–**

Applications for the Seeds of Renewal program officially open today, with ANZ committing \$250,000 in grant funding for education and employment projects in rural, regional and remote Australian communities. The grants aim to build local capacity, increase access to employment and develop greater community participation.

The program, launched by ANZ and the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) focuses on community groups and small grass-root initiatives that are foundations for building vibrant, sustainable rural communities

ANZ General Manager Regional Business Banking, Christine Linden said the Seeds of Renewal investment has had a substantial impact on rural communities for more than a decade, with ANZ investing almost \$4 million across 750 community projects since 2002 to deliver social and economic benefits in regional communities.

“ANZ is committed to helping regional and rural communities grow and develop. The Seeds of Renewal investment provides much needed capital to help get essential educational and employment programs off the ground and set up a for a successful future,” Ms Linden said.

Last year, the Seeds of Renewal program funded 35 rural projects ranging from training and work placements for disadvantaged youth in Atherton, Queensland to business-based workshops for micro-businesses in Port Hedland, Western Australia.

FRRR Chief Executive Officer, Natalie Egleton said that education and employment were critical factors for maintaining a sustainable and economically prosperous community.

“The programs encourage locals to develop relevant skills and pursue career pathways that benefit the region. By empowering passionate local leaders to make a change, we see positive outcomes for the whole community,” Ms Egleton said.

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#### **Notes for the editor:**

##### **About Seeds of Renewal:**

The Seeds of Renewal program started in 2002, since then ANZ has donated \$4 million to 750 local projects.

Administered independently by the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR), the ANZ Seeds of Renewal program offers grants of up to \$15,000 to community groups for projects which help advance education and employment opportunities in regional communities of fewer than 15,000 people.

Technology company Lenovo also donates IT equipment, giving applicants the chance to apply for laptops or tablets instead of a cash grant.

Applications close at 5:00pm on 26 August 2016, with successful applicants notified in November 2016.

For more information or to apply please visit [www.frrr.org.au/grants/ANZ-seeds-of-renewal](http://www.frrr.org.au/grants/ANZ-seeds-of-renewal).

#### **ANZ Seeds of Renewal case study:**

- In 2013, the program funded a community marketplace in Maldon, VIC.
- They used their \$5,000 Seeds of Renewal grant to promote the market and raise awareness across the region.
- Only an hour and a half from Melbourne, Maldon is Australia's only National Trust classified town. Jenny Merkus, President of the Maldon Neighbourhood Centre, saw a great opportunity to strengthen the economic base for the township through an increase in visitor numbers and so the Maldon Market was established. The Maldon Market provides local growers, bakers and artists with the opportunity to run their own stall and sell their goods. The initial aim of the market was to attract 500 people each month, now an average of 1,200 people turn up each month.

#### **About FRRR:**

The Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) was established in 2000 to support the renewal of rural, regional and remote communities in Australia through partnerships with the private sector, philanthropy and governments. Since inception, FRRR managed the distribution of more than \$60 million in grants and provided substantial capacity building support to community organisations across the nation. To find out more about FRRR, visit [www.frrr.org.au](http://www.frrr.org.au).