

RDA and the Regional Employment Trials Program

2 October, 2018



Regional Development Australia Townsville and North West Queensland Inc (RDA) collaborates with all three levels of government, the not-for-profit and for-profit sectors to facilitate and advocate for economic development outcomes that will support the long term sustainability of our region.

The Townsville and North West Queensland region:

- comprises of 15 local governments;
- covers 25.9% of Queensland's area;
- has a population of 266,600 which is 5.5% of the state;
- generates Gross Regional Product of \$21 billion (2015/16); and
- has a diverse economy, with its greatest strengths and competitive advantages in agriculture, livestock and aquaculture, mining and minerals processing, defence, tourism, education and research, construction, metal fabrication, government and private sector services including health and increasingly renewable energy generation.

RDA operates as an incorporated not-for-profit association and is funded by the Australian Government to deliver activities and outcomes in accordance with a Funding Agreement and the requirements of the Australian Government.

RDA is delighted to one of 10 RDA Committees partnering with the Australian Government's Department of Jobs and Small Business to deliver the [Regional Employment Trials Program](#) (RETP) in the Townsville Employment region which covers Burdekin, Charters Towers, Hinchinbrook, Mount Isa and Townsville. (Other parts of our region are covered by the [Community Development Program](#) and hence projects that are based in these areas will not be eligible for the RETP as well.)

RDA promotes the RETP and provides referrals to the North Queensland and Far North Queensland Facilitators who will provide advice and guidance. RDA will also meet with the Facilitators to give feedback on the development of project proposals ahead of their formal submission for scoring.

RDA Committee members will score and make comments on project proposals which will be provided to the proponents and the Australian Government.

Applications open on 2 October, 2018 and can be accepted now as there are no official rounds. The goal is to fund \$500,000 of projects by 30 June, 2019 and a further \$500,000 of projects in the following six months as all projects must be completed by 30 June, 2020.

RDA will be looking for innovative and targeted project proposals that meet the RETP guidelines, address local challenges and support the sustainability of the region.

Some of these challenges include, but are not limited to:

- high unemployment (Burdekin 7.4%, Charters Towers 11.2%, Hinchinbrook 8.5%, Mount Isa 9%, Townsville 8.2%) compared to the state average of 6%;
- high youth unemployment; and
- gaps in engagement between potential employers and potential employees due to a range of local issues.

To support a sustainable economy and the future of our local communities, RDA is keen to receive project proposals that deliver employment outcomes through:

- existing industries, businesses and not-for-profits that have a competitive advantage with good growth potential;
- new industries, businesses and not-for profits that can leverage regional strengths to compete nationally and potentially globally;
- the roll-out of regional initiatives in infrastructure (e.g. construction of roads and other transport, water, communications and energy infrastructure);
- community infrastructure and services including health and the NDIS roll-out;
- linking skilling levels and industry needs including in STEAM—science, technology, engineering, arts and math; and
- the break down of barriers to effectively link prospective employees with employers across all industry and community sectors.

RDA is particularly keen to support projects that can clearly identify targeted outcomes and the ways in which these will be measured so the learnings can be applied to other settings to create employment more broadly.

For more information:

<https://www.jobs.gov.au/regional-employment-trials-program>

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