



MEDIA RELEASE

MARTIN FERGUSON

Minister for Resources and Energy
Minister for Tourism

SENATOR NICK SHERRY

Minister for Small Business
Minister Assisting on Deregulation and
Public Sector Superannuation
Minister Assisting on Tourism

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APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR NEW QUALITY TOURISM PROJECTS

Applications are open for a fresh round of Australian Government funding for tourism projects that will nurture quality tourism experiences and support Australia's marketing campaigns.

In 2010, the Australian Government committed \$40 million over four years to the *TQUAL Grants* program. Two types of funding are available under *TQUAL Grants*:

- *Tourism Quality Projects* of up to \$100,000 for smaller-scale projects to stimulate private sector investment in the community
- *Strategic Tourism Investment Grants* of up to \$1 million to fund a small number of larger-scale projects to support Indigenous tourism, economic development and tourism employment

"With matching funding the TQUAL Grants program will inject over \$80 million into the tourism sector over the next four years," Minister Ferguson said.

"Just like hotel rooms, Australia's tourism experiences need constant refreshing to ensure they offer visitors a high quality experience and they feel compelled to return.

"The Grants will help lift Australia's competitiveness as a tourism destination and stimulate investment in innovative products and services."

Tourism is vital to the Australian economy, contributing \$33 billion a year to Gross Domestic Product and employing one-in-12 working Australians. Tourism is the nation's largest services export and contributes eight per cent of Australia's total export earnings.

Minister Assisting on Tourism, Nick Sherry, said many small businesses would benefit from *TQUAL Grants – Tourism Quality Projects*.

"The small business sector is the backbone of the Australian tourism industry. These grants encourage small businesses to innovate and make holidays in Australia an even more attractive prospect for overseas travellers and Australians alike," Minister Sherry said.

Applications for *Tourism Quality Projects* open today and will close on 15 April 2011 with announcements of successful projects by mid 2011.

For further information on *TQUAL Grants* visit www.ret.gov.au/tourism. *Tourism Quality Project* applications and program guides are available at www.ret.gov.au or by calling 13 28 46.

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