



MEDIA RELEASE

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GRANT FUNDING TO BOOST REGIONAL TOURISM

Campsites, cultural venues, cellar doors, heritages sites and other tourism attractions and destinations will be given a boost with the Australian Government announcing \$8.5 million today in TQUAL tourism grants to 117 projects across Australia.

Announcing the *TQUAL Grants: Tourism Quality Projects* at Majura Winery in Canberra today, Minister for Tourism, Martin Ferguson AM MP said the grants will help to lift the quality and variety of Australia's tourism experiences.

"Most of the grants are in regional Australia where tourism is an important economic driver – in fact 46 cents of every tourism dollar is spent in regional Australia," Minister Ferguson said.

"The challenge for regional tourism destinations is in attracting increasingly time poor visitors out of the gateway cities. These grants will help better position those businesses and organisations who are looking to expand, modify or diversify their product or service to be even more appealing for city dwellers and international visitors.

"As a part of the National Long Term Tourism Strategy, the *TQUAL Grants* help address the lack of investment in tourism which is more pronounced in regional Australia.

"By providing matching funding to investors, the Australian Government is not only seeking to address the market failure but support the almost one million Australians directly and indirectly employed in the \$34 billion tourism industry."

The Minister Assisting on Tourism, Senator Nick Sherry, said *TQUAL Grants: Tourism Quality Projects* gave travellers more reasons to see even more of Australia.

"People will keep coming back if they know they're getting better and fresher attractions, products and services," Senator Sherry said.

"*TQUAL Grants* create greater incentive for tourism operators to invest and that's especially important in regional economies.

"New investment in just one tourism project can generate flow-on benefits to thousands of small businesses, whether they're directly involved in the industry or part of the wider business community.

"This latest \$8.5 million Government funding boost is in effect at least \$17 million when the required dollar-for-dollar matching investment from tourism operators is taken into account," Minister Sherry said.

Details of grant recipients and the competitive selection process is at www.ret.gov.au/tqual

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