



Central Highlands Digital Enterprise

Regional Forum Attracts Canberra Interest

A Ballarat academic and Australian government nominated National Broadband Champion is urging community, business and local government in Western region to get behind the roll-out of the National Broadband Network. Director of Centre for eCommerce and Communications at University of Ballarat, Dr Helen Thompson, is working hard to ensure the groundwork is laid for optimising increased broadband capacity across our region.

Thompson has been instrumental in arranging a visit to the region by Mr Peter Harris, Secretary of the Department of Broadband Communications and Digital Economy.

“This visit, hosted by University of Ballarat, provides opportunity for all levels of government, and key stakeholders including NBN Co., to meet and discuss strategies to leverage off the early roll-out of broadband across our region,” advised Thompson.

It seems that local government agrees with Thompson. Mayors and CEO’s from across the region will meet for a Regional Roundtable with Peter Harris at Greenhill Enterprise Centre on Thursday September 27th. They will be joined by key economic development stakeholders including Federal Member for Ballarat The Hon Catherine King, Ms. Jo Bourke of Wimmera Development Association, representatives of Committee for Ballarat, Regional Development Australia and State Government. Following the Roundtable a forum open to the public will be held from 1:00pm. The forum’s panel discussion format

will include government and regional representatives, NBN Co and the Departmental Secretary.

Thompson believes responses to opportunities for Central Highlands and the region will be strengthened by collaboration and local leadership.

“Our business community needs to better understand and be in a position to take practical steps to grow market reach, profitability and efficiencies. On line capability will hold the key to this as we are increasingly pushed to adapt to a global economy” she said.

“Local leaders in government, business and community can assist through ensuring enterprise and community development programs, land-based and strategic planning, and regional connectivity supports the uptake of digital enterprise and new technologies. Working together we can achieve greater outcomes. Projects like our new two year initiative Central Highlands Digital Enterprise Program have been funded by the Australian government because we have shown how we can work co-operatively in Golden Plains, Hepburn, Pyrenees shires, and City of Ballarat. Local businesses and community groups can access free skills development workshops and mentoring through this program.”

“A positive economic and social future for our region will be accelerated if we capture opportunity today. The early roll-out of broadband across Central Highlands and Wimmera provides competitive advantage. Collaboration by stakeholders and utilisation of on-line technology is key





Australian Government



Central Highlands Digital Enterprise

to realising the benefits. More partnership initiatives like our Digital Enterprise skills development initiative will assist us get ahead of the pack,” she said.

Information on the Regional Forum, and local National Broadband Network initiatives can be found at www.digibiz.net.au

Photo Opportunity: YES

Interview Opportunity: YES

Contact: Gerrie Carr-MacFie

E: g.carr-macfie@ballarat.edu.au

PH: 0408 153 94

University of Ballarat
Learn to succeed



digitalbusiness.gov.au
nbn.gov.au

