



Introducing Hunter iF

Hunter iF's mission is to harness our region's immense potential to help create a more innovative future.

Hunter iF has been established as a not-for-profit support organisation to encourage and facilitate investment, jobs and growth as our region undergoes significant change.

It does this by providing a one stop shop for innovation in the Hunter through a comprehensive, connected and cohesive package of services, programs and opportunities. Hunter iF is accelerating innovative ideas to successful outcomes.



www.hunterif.com.au

An Innovation Ecosystem project “Connecting Innovation to Opportunity”

The Hunter Region has a rich history of innovation and ingenuity across a broad range of industry sectors. It has survived economic downturns and natural disasters which have bred a cohesive, supportive community culture. Its people believe in their ‘place’, relating strongly to it and wanting to see it thrive. With major infrastructure developments either recently completed or underway, an accelerating innovation scene built on the back of at least a decade of activity, a re-engaged local university and local councils driving change, now is the Hunter’s time. The pieces of the puzzle are in place to transform the region economically, socially and environmentally.

To accelerate and make the most of this moment, we need to unite the pieces and players, champion the region’s success, and develop innovation activity to take us to the next level of maturity. This is the purpose of the iF Project.

Many committed people and organisations have been working tirelessly to grow programs, capability and funding for innovation and entrepreneurship over the years, and recent collaborative activity by major players is aligning to build on this. It will:

- help to diversify and strengthen industry in the region,
- grow new businesses,
- strengthen current businesses,
- grow new industry providing jobs for our people, and
- attract new business and investment.

The iF project has sought to support this through extensive stakeholder engagement to ensure ownership of the vision and delivery of action. Over 200 stakeholders have been involved in the project to date, across business, education, industry, government and research.

In addition to working collaboratively with the regional innovation community, international best practice was also analysed and considered drawing on the expertise of leaders, participants and acknowledged experts.

Hunter iF has been set up to act as a coordinating organisation to drive the planned program. It will act as a champion for innovation and grow scale of impact by driving strategy for new activity. It will also be responsible for measurement relating to the innovation ecosystem, and promotion of the Hunter region as an innovation powerhouse. The entity has a broad-based leadership from across the sector stakeholders named above.

The project actions include:

- Create an “Open Innovation Lab” or program of activity: connecting large corporates, SMEs, start-ups and the research base through a range of projects designed to increase collaborative innovation activity, and routes to market for these innovations.
- Incubator dedicated to globally scalable start-ups and upscaling high growth potential, successful SMEs.
- Education programs to build capability of mentors and professional service providers.
- Design new models for funding, such as crowd funding platform and/or Sidecar fund, and/or regional Venture Capital (VC).
- Hunter region strategy for access to ‘Makers Spaces’ and prototyping facilities.
- Developing a connected talent pathway for the Hunter.
- Encouraging youth into innovation.
- Promoting Global connections.
- Establishing a systematic approach to fund raising to support the project.
- Starting the process of seeking a world class CEO.
- Training for investors and investees.
- An online ideas platform, “Idea Hunter”.
- Development of funding pathway diagram to place on central connecting website.
- Listing the region’s start-ups on an easily accessible portal.
- Arranging collaborative showcase events in Sydney and Melbourne.

Seed funding has been provided by Jobs for NSW which has allowed the not-for-profit organization to appoint a project officer and plan a year of exciting events to be run by partner organisations.

The organisation will continue to seek investment from government and the private sector and to bring entrepreneurs and investors together to turn ideas into reality.

There are many ways in which people can help us to create jobs and a bright future.

- iF you are an investor or mentor we have workshops running in late 2018 and 2019
- iF you are an inventor contact Hunter iF today to discuss your innovation pathway
- iF you are seeking advice on grants and tax incentives we can put you in contact with free advice
- iF you are running innovation events in the Hunter and would like to spread the word contact our Project Coordinator to add to our regional events database and attend our Hunter Innovation Events workshop early in 2019
- iF you want to receive information and updates from Hunter iF subscribe to our Newsletter on our website www.hunterif.com.au
- iF you are interested in joining Hunter iF contact us today, our member directory is coming soon
- iF you would like to nominate for the Board of Hunter iF contact our Project Coordinator, we will be seeking to elect a diverse group of Directors who possess a broad mix of skills and experience
- iF you would like to support Hunter iF financially contact our Project Coordinator to arrange a confidential discussion today

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