

AREA PRIORITIES 2021

REGIONAL EVENT SECTOR RECOVERY & SUSTAINABILITY

COVID-19 has accentuated the need for financial and development opportunities that will position regional events across Australia for a resilient and prosperous future.

In 2021, AREA will focus on priorities and projects aimed at building strong foundations for event sector recovery and industry sustainability. These areas include:

1. Developing Connections & Strengthening Partnerships

Events, and in particular regional events, lack a common advocacy and support group, and therefore a network of mutually beneficial partnerships. AREA will work closely with Australian Regional Tourism (ART), as well as independently, to better connect with all levels of government; state and national tourism organisations; other sectors who are reliant on events such as music, sport, arts and business; as well as the event sector at large.

Regional events want their needs and importance to be heard, and equally want to provide assistance and support to stakeholders, so the sector can continue to drive social and economic outcomes for regional and rural Australia.

2. Grants / Funding

A key priority of AREA will be to develop and advocate for a bespoke regional event sector funding program that focuses on developing and strengthening critical success areas such as strategy, planning, operations, marketing and delivery. The proposed program will help to keep skilled staff and contractors in the industry and would be designed to elevate the event experience.

AREA will advocate for flexibility to current funding programs conditions where reasonable, as well as provide opportunities for government authorities to consult directly with industry experts when developing funding programs so there is a greater awareness of industry needs.

3. Strengthening the narrative around the social and economic impact of events

AREA will work to raise the profile of regional events and their significance, seeking funding and support opportunities to research the broader value of the regional events sector within regions, states and nationally. This value will be demonstrated in areas of social, economic, marketing and community impact and will be cleverly communicated for greater cut through.

4. Building sustainable and resilient events

AREA will work on areas that commonly challenge the industry to help build resilient and sustainable events. These areas include volunteer fatigue, good governance, risk management and financial sustainability.

AREA will also strive to shift the mindset of regional events being seen as 'something nice to do' that is ran by 'hobbyists,' to being recognised as an industry essential to the national economy that is ran by highly skilled and passionate professionals.