

Hon Geoff Brock

Minister for Local Government

Tuesday, 13 February 2018

South Australian regional leadership ground-breaking study

A ground-breaking study into regional community leadership and economic development is being backed by \$60,000 in State Government funding.

The University of South Australia's research project, titled 'Mobilising Community Leadership' is being supported by the Regional Development Fund.

The study will measure the strength of leadership in Australian communities to identify those places in greatest need.

It will have a practical focus, with a goal of providing important resources for governments to help prioritise resources, design and delivery, along with empowering community organisations and local governments to provide community leadership.

The research aims to provide the first systemic study to deliver results that can be applied Australia-wide.

The three-year research project will be undertaken by Professor Andrew Beer from the University of South Australia's Business School, in partnership with his colleague and global leader in the field, Professor Markku Sotarauta of the University of Tampere in Finland.

Background

This project will require funding from the Australian Research Council to proceed.

Professor Andrew Beer is the Dean of Research and Innovation at the University of South Australia's Business School. He is currently the Chair of the South Australian Government's Homelessness Strategic Group, a Fellow of the Regional Australia Institute and the UK's Academy of Social Sciences, and the Chair of the Regional Studies Association, a scholarly association based in England.

Professor Markku Sotarauta is the Professor of Policy Making Theories and Practices (Local and Regional Development) at the School of Management at the University of Tampere, Finland. He specialises in leadership, innovation systems, and institutional entrepreneurship in city and regional development.

Quotes attributable to Regional Development Minister Geoff Brock

South Australia's regions have many talented and passionate community leaders – they are the backbones of sports clubs, firefighting services, local businesses, networking groups and programs for young people.

This program will help to developing our leaders of the future and equip regional communities with the tools to bolster regional development in their own unique local economies.

Their work is tireless but it can also be exhausting – the results of this world-first research will also help government to better support our regional community leaders.

This is a significant study, the importance of which would be felt not just in South Australia, but nationally and globally.

Quotes attributable to University of South Australia Business School Dean Professor Andrew Beer

Globally, many economies are experiencing unprecedented levels of structural change.

Australia's regions and communities are experiencing and responding to these structural changes unevenly and many are at risk of not transitioning to a more sustainable economic base.

There is widespread acceptance that an important contributor to successful transition, growth and sustainability of cities, communities and regions is effective community and place-based leadership.

However, there is a lack of knowledge that can be widely applied to guide how governments, associations and community organisations can mobilise local leadership capability – this research aims to address that and deliver practical guidance tools.

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