

## MEDIA RELEASE

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# Fostering local leadership

LEADERSHIP Wimmera's 2021 flagship programs have officially begun.

More than 30 Wimmera Southern Mallee people will take on formal and experiential learning opportunities across the next 10 months – learning more about themselves, others and the region and unlocking new avenues to provide leadership and contribute effectively and positively in their workplace, community and personal lives.

Eighteen people have accepted an offer to complete Leadership Wimmera's Business Leaders program, designed for people who own or run a business, lead a team and have influence in their workplace. They spent the weekend at Roses Gap on an opening retreat.

A further 13 people will complete the Regional Skills program, designed for people wanting to build skills to enhance participation in workplace, community and personal arenas. Participants apply their learnings through development of a community project as part of their program year. The group's retreat was delayed due to the COVID-19 Circuit-Breaker Lockdown and was scheduled to March.

Leadership Wimmera program manager Jessica Grimble said 20 Wimmera Southern Mallee workplaces, and many more community groups, were represented among this year's cohort.

"Leadership Wimmera offers this region a unique opportunity for personal and professional growth, in a local setting and with like-minded locals who become an important network during and after programs," she said.

"Our flagship community leadership programs have very strong support from many local businesses and organisations, who recognise an opportunity to invest in their people and grow and develop skills locally.

"Including discussion and education about regional challenges and opportunities, along with more program days, are exciting additions to our long-running programs this year.

"Then, through the Leadership Wimmera Graduate Network, people and businesses can seek specific skills and advice that will apply to businesses or community groups – or everyday life. Last year these initiatives ranged from best practice community engagement and change management, to building

resilience in the early weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic, to sought-after governance courses with the Australian Institute of Company Directors.”

Ms Grimble welcomed confirmation that the Victorian government would continue supporting community leadership programs in 2021.

“The state government’s support helps Leadership Wimmera to offer subsidised opportunities for people to participate in a range of opportunities that will boost their knowledge of community leadership – including our year-long program and other initiatives to support local leaders and learning locally,” she said.

Major sponsor ACE Radio will continue its sponsorship of Leadership Wimmera.

Financial and in-kind support from Leading Teams Australia, Agriculture Victoria, the Minerals Council of Australia, The Hugh Williamson Foundation, Robyn and Des Lardner, Wimmera Business Centre, Horsham Rotary Club and Wimmera Development Association enables individuals to participate in the program; and ensure Leadership Wimmera’s offerings are robust, timely and relevant.

Leadership Wimmera began in 2002 and has supported the development of almost 600 emerging leaders in the Wimmera Southern Mallee through its flagship programs alone.

Leading Teams will facilitate the programs and Wimmera Development Association is the auspice organisation.

**ENDS**

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