

# Sunshine Coast

## Regional Economic Development Strategy & Regional Economic Resurgence Plan

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2020-2021**  
October 2021



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sunshine Coast Council would like to thank the signatories and partners of the Regional Economic Development Strategy and acknowledges the valuable contribution they have made to the implementation of the REDS and the continued growth of the Sunshine Coast economy.

 **Sunshine Coast COUNCIL** | Our region. **Healthy. Smart. Creative.**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the traditional Country of the Kabi Kabi Peoples and the Jinibara Peoples of the coastal plains and hinterlands of the Sunshine Coast and recognise that these have always been places of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance. We wish to pay respect to their Elders – past, present and emerging – and acknowledge the important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play within the Sunshine Coast community.

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Since 2013, the Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy has provided a vision and blueprint for the new economy – a prosperous, high value economy of choice for business, investment and employment, while offering an enviable lifestyle and environment.

### The region ended 2020 with the following results:

 <b>\$20.9 billion</b> Gross Regional Product	 <b>169,104</b> Local Jobs	 <b>185,601</b> Employed Residents	 <b>40,580</b> Businesses
 <b>60.6%</b> Employment Participation	 <b>1.27%</b> Employment Growth	 <b>5.9%</b> Unemployment Rate (↓0.1%)	 <b>\$6.38 billion</b> Exports (↑6.0%)

In alignment with the Regional Economic Development Strategy, all figures above are for the wider Sunshine Coast region, which includes Noosa. Despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the overall 2019-2020 economic outcome for the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area has remained strong at \$17.9 billion (NIEIR 2020).

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

### Council demonstrated strong engagement with local industry and clients:

<b>\$297.72 million</b> economic impact <b>Target: \$226 million</b>	<b>1487</b> jobs supported/created <b>Target: 1237</b>	<b>8479</b> clients assisted/served <b>Target: 6,000</b>
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Implementation of the Regional Economic Development Strategy in 2020/21 was notable for the concerted response to the COVID-19 pandemic via adaptation and targeting of economic development actions.

## THE ECONOMIC RESURGENCE PLAN

The Economic Resurgence Plan was a key element of Sunshine Coast Council's economic stimulus package aimed at re-energising the region's economy as it recovers from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The focus of all economic intervention and support outlined in the Economic Resurgence Plan was to stimulate economic activity in the Sunshine Coast over 2020/2021 to return the regional economy to the level of economic growth experienced in 2019/2020 by:

- Providing focus and direction to rebuild business and consumer confidence
- Building capacity, supporting and creating jobs and increasing productivity in the local economy
- Facilitating innovation in the marketplace to support technological advances and contribute to the development of a smart economy, and
- Positioning the Sunshine Coast in domestic and global markets as a Healthy, Smart and Creative destination to live, work and be a partner of choice (supply and demand).

The frameworks set out within the Regional Economic Development Strategy 2013-2033 (REDS) remain relevant to driving visitation and economic benefit in a post COVID-19 pandemic context.

To help the region bounce back, we reviewed our Council strategies and focused on actions that would:

- Win back consumer trust and confidence
- Connect the labour market and opportunities
- Support business assistance and renewal
- Enhance business connectedness
- Support supply chains.

## SUNSHINE COAST ECONOMIC RESURGENCE TASKFORCE

The role of the Sunshine Coast Economic Resurgence Taskforce was to provide advice and guidance to Council on the tactics to employ to deliver the highest value results in the shortest timeframe in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Taskforce provided a collaborative approach to guiding the delivery and implementation of the Economic Resurgence Plan.

In addition to sharing market intelligence and advising Council's Economic Development team on a wide range of programming, the Taskforce championed seven projects aligned to REDS Pathway priorities:

- Next Level: AWS Digital upskilling (digital connectedness and labour market)
- Retail activation (business assistance and renewal)
- Data community (digital connectedness)
- Jobs Now (labour market)
- Local Business Champions (business confidence)
- Smart Manufacturing Food Hub (supporting supply chains)
- Bring back capital (business confidence).

## HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMS/PROJECTS AND PARTNERS

- COVID-19 pandemic economic response
- Smart21 Intelligent Community of 2021
- Sunshine Coast Investment Attraction Program
- Vitamin SC phase 1 marketing campaign

## REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2013-2033

This annual report highlights the program of activities delivered during 2020-2021 against the strategy's five critical pathways and their respective priorities. It also provides a report of Council's economic support in response to the COVID-19 pandemic impacts.

PATHWAYS	2019-2023 PRIORITIES
 <b>Leadership, Collaboration and Identity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Strong economic leadership and collaboration between government at all levels, industry and the community</li> <li>→ A recognised, competitive regional identity</li> </ul>
 <b>Capital Investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Securing investment in the region's infrastructure and other project priorities</li> </ul>
 <b>High Value Industries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Supporting high value industries to expand activities, job opportunities and connectivity to markets and supply chains</li> <li>→ Promoting cross-sector collaboration and engagement on key initiatives and projects</li> <li>→ Promoting entrepreneurship, innovation, research and digital connectivity</li> </ul>
 <b>Local to Global Connections</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Positioning the Sunshine Coast in key national and global markets</li> <li>→ Supporting local businesses to respond and adapt to market change and opportunity</li> </ul>
 <b>Investment in Talent and Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Developing, attracting and retaining a suitably skilled workforce</li> <li>→ A regional education and training offering that aligns to the demands of the changing economy</li> </ul>

# Leadership, Collaboration and Identity



## Objective:

Council's objective is to win back consumer and business trust through a coordinated and collaborative approach by leaders from across business, education and industry. With a united focus, resources can be maximised to promote the region's business credentials to local, domestic and global markets.

## GOALS

- To position the region and its opportunities in front of key decision makers
- To increase employment and economic activity across target industries
- The accelerated uptake of best practice to enhance resilience and national access
- To increase capacity to access opportunities and adapt to new or recurring challenges.

## Chamber and industry group collaboration

→ 99 representatives from the region's Chambers of Commerce and industry groups came together for the Collaboration for the future event at Maroochy RSL. The event was an opportunity for the Economic Development Branch to outline Council's approach to working with business and industry into the future.

Guest speakers included Emma Greenhatch from the Food & Agribusiness Network, Professor Tim Wess from USC and Wallis Westbrook from the Sunshine Coast Chamber Alliance whose insights and approaches to competition and collaboration were extremely valuable.

→ Council brought together 71 business and industry leaders for the Human Capital event which included a workshop to develop to address workforce and skilling shortages.

Guest speakers included Debra Kraft from Youi Insurance, Anthony McLean from Ambrose Building and Hayley Wright from Kilcoy Global Foods.

## LGAQ Investment Attraction

- Presentation to Local Government Association practitioners in July 2020.
- Follow up meeting with Queensland Government's resurgence taskforce representative about building business confidence.

## Build Back Better

- Council partnered with B-Corp Sydney at this event which attracted 30 attendees. Council was further promoted in the B-Local Sydney marketing campaigns.

## Growing the sports economy

- A Project Control Group established between the University of Sunshine Coast, The Sports Hub and Sunshine Coast Council to grow the region's profile as an elite sports training destination.

## Business successes

- Saltwater Eco Tours was promoted to more than three million Australians who watched the Channel 7 broadcast of the AFL Grand Final on 24 October 2020.

Council's Development of Indigenous Tourism Products aims to have Indigenous tourism experiences included in activity promoted by Tourism and Events Queensland and Tourism Australia to national and international visitor markets.

- Brigid Woolnough from Kokopod Chocolate was listed as one of Queensland's Top 20 entrepreneurs aged under 40.

## NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

### Intelligent Community awards:

- The Sunshine Coast was again named by the Intelligent Community Forum as a global Smart21 Intelligent Community of 2021.
- This is the seventh time the Sunshine Coast has been recognised as a Smart21 community and twice as a Top 7 finalist of internationally benchmarked communities.



# Capital Investment



## Objective:

As capital investment is a fundamental driver of economic growth, attracting capital flow back into the Sunshine Coast region as quickly as possible is vital. The primary focus is to encourage more diverse business operators, increase employment and to ensure the region is better prepared to weather future economic impacts.

### GOALS

- Increased investor confidence and demonstrated willingness to invest, or reinvest, in the region
- Increased employment and economic activity across target industries
- Increased capacity to access capital for infrastructure opportunities in both traditional and emerging industries.



## Overview



Council assisted **7** companies in their investment attraction efforts



Resulting in **808** direct and indirect full-time employment positions



**\$236.51 million** economic impact

**\$3.11+ billion** in total regional economic impact to the region since 2014-2015

### Sunshine Coast Investment Attraction Program (SCIAP)

SCIAP is an important part of the Economic Resurgence Plan to fast-track shovel-ready projects. It aims to encourage larger projects with capital expenditure of more than \$5 million and/or more than 50 jobs created during the construction phase.

#### Subject to eligibility, incentives may include:

- 25% development application fee rebate
- Staged payment and deferred infrastructure charges
- Sunshine Coast Investment Incentive Scheme financial incentives
- Sunshine Coast Infill Development Incentive for Caloundra and Nambour CBD developments.

25 applications were lodged with an estimated value and economic impact of:



**\$1.74 billion**  
output construction and ongoing



**5,679 jobs**  
new and ongoing job creation



**8**  
development applications approved

**13 projects**  
lodged a Material Change of Use application

**3 approved**  
projects began construction

**9 projects**  
confirmed for the development application fee rebate incentive

**10 projects**  
confirmed for staged payment of infrastructure charges incentive

# Capital Investment continued



## Business success

→ In August 2020, Council approved an application from Country Chef to establish a new food manufacturing facility at the Sunshine Coast Industrial Park.

The proposed investment of \$20.5 million capital expenditure and 256 new/retained full time equivalent employees (FTEs) will have a total economic impact of \$208.62 million and 627 FTEs. The project will be the largest food manufacturing facility on the Sunshine Coast.

## SUMMARY OF TOP PERFORMANCE METRICS FY21

 <b>627</b> new leads	 <b>109</b> opportunities	 <b>7</b> wins
 <b>23.4 million</b> total ad views	 <b>25,374</b> total emails sent	 <b>491,560</b> 100% video views (Vitamin SC)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were made in relation to business establishment or expansion of major companies.

→ ENTAG	→ Huddle	→ Tropicco
→ Walker Corporation	→ Holiday Inn Express	→ OneQode
→ Vitality Village	→ Vantage Homes	→ Newstead Brewing
→ Sunshine Coast Cold Stores	→ Ambrose Building	→ Kenilworth Dairies
→ SunRamp	→ Habitat Development Group	→ King Truss
→ Legion Telecom	→ AustCyber	→ Trees Adventure Group - Next Level
→ HeliMods	→ Spotlight	

## Targeted approach and outcomes

Several activities were undertaken to deliver a targeted approach to build on the region's competitive advantages, focusing on:

- Business leaders and decision makers
- Focus on Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne
- Businesses with 20+ people and \$2+ million turnover

KEY CAMPAIGNS	These activities resulted in:	Headline results lead generation:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Food and agribusiness</li> <li>→ Health industry</li> <li>→ Vitamins SC (Phase 1)</li> <li>→ Google Ads</li> <li>→ Organic social: 5761 followers and 2979 interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ 109 investment opportunities</li> <li>→ Potential employment capacity of 3910 direct FTEs</li> <li>→ Total estimated direct capital expenditure of \$1.3 billion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ 23.4 million advertisement views</li> <li>→ 25,374 emails sent</li> <li>→ 613 new investment leads achieved</li> </ul>

## Non-financial investment incentives/services

Provided to:

- Sunshine Coast Pharmaceuticals Alliance Pty Ltd
- Stone and Wood Brewery
- QTM Enterprises
- The Grove Retirement
- CKSCH Cranes Hoist and Rigging
- Pace Property Partners and Crushing Dynamics
- AfterDark Technology

# REGION SHAPING PROJECTS

## Digital connectivity

The region's enabling digital connectivity is now live and leveraging of assets progressing:

- Council has been appointed a Cyber Security Innovation Node, one of only two regional nodes in Australia.
- Telecommunications company OneQode hosted the first office e-sports games via the Sunshine Coast International Broadband Network. By routing the connection for Melbourne competitors using the Sunshine Coast cable instead of the standard Sydney path, competitors experienced an additional five milliseconds off the latency, ensuring they were competitive despite their greater distance from Guam.
- Digital First project launched, providing a multi-platform approach for Council's Investment Prospectus to be efficiently published across a wide variety of mediums and formats.

## Transportation connectivity

Physical transport assets similarly continue to be leveraged and new projects progressed:

- Council continued to liaise with Sunshine Coast Airport about COVID-19 pandemic affected operations.
- Council hosted more than 50 community engagement activities between April - June 2021 about the Sunshine Coast Mass Transit Project. Progression of the project is on track.

## Health and knowledge hubs

- 18 new Griffith University students to enter the Doctor of Medicine program as graduates of the University of the Sunshine Coast's (USC) Bachelor of Medical Science.

## Event, convention and hotel facilities

- Construction began on the 4.5 star Holiday Inn Express Hotel and Suites at the new Maroochydore City Centre, the first outcome of Council's hotel attraction work.
- This \$40m investment will have a total economic impact of \$69.61 million and 238 jobs.

## Smart connected centres

The activity centre network is evolving with notable investments and commitments occurring:

- Walker Corporation will invest \$2.5 billion into the Maroochydore City Centre following an agreement with Council and SunCentral Maroochydore.
- Australia's first underground automated waste collection system for a CBD is live in the new Maroochydore City Centre.
- Evans Long sold 1 Foundation place for \$31.187 million to Primewest and received development application approval for a second building, A1.

### Maroochydore City Centre investment

The direct investment of \$185 million in capital expenditure will add an estimated \$293.53 million and 911 jobs to the Sunshine Coast economy during construction phase.

(Source: economy.id)

Artist impression

# High Value Industries



## Objective:

The key to successfully delivering long-term and enduring career opportunities lies in supporting local businesses to reboot their activities through the increased adoption of technology, stronger access to markets and supply chains, and improved resilience and growth within high value industries.

## GOALS

- To deliver greater access to more technically advanced supply chains and markets
- To increase employment and economic activity across the target industries
- The accelerated uptake of best practice to enhance resilience and innovative business collaborations
- To increase innovation and digital skills adoption by the local workforce.

### Destination Tourism Plan 2020-2025

- Provides an overview of Visit Sunshine Coast's (VSC) direction for the next five years.
- The Sunshine Coast welcomed new direct flight routes with Cairns, Canberra and Newcastle and the return of Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide services before ongoing lockdowns and travel restrictions impacted visitation.
- Despite the unprecedented disruption the Sunshine Coast recorded a 24.5% increase in overnight visitor expenditure (OVE) to \$2.8 billion for the year ending June 2021, with an increase of 17% in domestic visitor numbers.
- Result of VSC's strategy targeting the drive market to reduce the losses from international and interstate markets.

For the year to June 2021, intrastate travel to the Sunshine Coast rose by 35% to a record 3.2 million visitors, and compared to 2019, intrastate visitation increased by 7.8%.

This is a testament to the reputation and appeal of the destination and continued efforts by industry to provide a safe and welcoming visitor experience. A contributor to this was VSC's tactical promotions that leveraged the 'For real' campaign which launched in late 2020.

### Next Level digital skilling program

- Council partnered with AWS Educate to develop a free education learning platform.

### Industry 4.0 and Advanced Manufacturing roundtable

- Key local industry leaders met with the Queensland Chief Entrepreneur to discuss potential collaboration and opportunities in the Sunshine Coast region.

### Advanced manufacturing industry support

- Council supported three advanced manufacturing best practice events.
- Designed and assisted the establishment and

the formation of Manufacturing Excellence Forum - Sunshine Coast, a new non-for-profit industry group supporting business scale up capabilities.

### Clean technologies industry support

- Supported engagement of cleantech industries re-engagement project post COVID-19 pandemic impacts.
- Combined Cleantech and Building Designers Networking event attracted 61 attendees.
- Participated in the Virtual National Clean Technologies Conference and Exhibition in November as an exhibitor and delegate to support this high value industry for the Sunshine Coast.

### Food and Agribusiness Network (FAN) TURBINE Project

- Facilitated and supported FAN in briefings, implementation options and advocacy regarding the concept to develop a SMART Food & Beverage Manufacturing Hub on the Sunshine Coast.

The vision supported is to unlock investment through industry sharing common-use infrastructure and services to drive growth through an industry-led innovation ecosystem.

- Assisted in ongoing efforts to access funding including via the Federal Governments Modern Manufacturing Initiative (MMI) streams.

### Sunshine Coast Health Symposium

- The two-day virtual program attracted 500 registrations.

### ASPIRE - business to business circular economy tool launched

- Negotiated a license for every Sunshine Coast business with an ABN to list their interest in other businesses' waste streams and/or list waste streams they would like to pass on to other businesses.
- The business tool matches supply and demand opportunities within the platform linking business to business.

### Relationship Management Plan

- Provides regular information, industry feedback

and connections to Chambers of Commerce, industry groups and Council to provide support and intelligence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Council strategic projects

- Contributed to a range of key Council-wide projects including Mass Transit, Environment and Liveability Strategy, Caloundra Aerodrome Masterplan, Coastal Health Report and Coastal Hazard Adaptation Plan.

### Business successes

- International company Borderless Healthcare Group (BHG) chose The Conceiving Mind as the Australian representative to provide mental healthcare to women during IVF via the Baby Bubble digital health site.
- Big Heart Bamboo, Fable Food, Glasshouse Brewery, Kokopod, Brouhaha, EPIC Assist and the Food and Agribusiness Network featured in Food Innovation Australia's 2020 guide of Australian innovation champions.

### SunRamp Health Technology Accelerator

- The first cohort of seven health technology businesses have participated in the SunRamp HealthTech Accelerator program. The local program, a subsidiary of the proven US program UpRamp, leverages the Sunshine Coast International Broadband Network to attract, retain and develop scale-up technology businesses and is funded through a partnership with Sunshine Coast Council and the Queensland Government through Advance Queensland.

### Sunshine Coast Regional Innovation Project Team (SCRIPT)

- SCRIPT's Regional Innovation Benchmark Report released in September 2020. Key highlights of the study include:
  - 34.5% of Sunshine Coast innovators collaborate (up from 29.8% in 2019 and higher than the rest of Australia).
  - 52% of Sunshine Coast firms report implementing new-to-the-firm innovations (up from 48% in 2019).

# High Value Industries continued



## Sunshine Coast Innovations Day

- The event was held on 23 March and showcased 19 exhibitors and attracted 135 participants.
- This regional innovation event brought together innovative digital, service and product solution providers who could offer operational improvement to businesses, institutions, and organisations.

## StartupBlink Ecosystem Rankings Report 2021

- The Sunshine Coast moved up from 8th place last year to rank 6th in Australia - overtaking Canberra and Gold Coast to be the highest ranked region outside the capital cities.
- The Sunshine Coast region is placed in the top 25% of 1000 cities in the 2021 Global Ecosystem Index report - up 10 places (from 259 to 249) since its debut in last year's rankings.
- The annual international report measures the quantity and quality of startups and other supporting organisations, infrastructure, business environment, and ability to operate as a startup founder.

## Cyber Security Innovation Node

- Sunshine Coast Work Plan finalised to feed into the national AustCyber Strategy.



# Local to Global Connections



## Objective:

To drive business, positioning the Sunshine Coast in key national and global markets as a competitive source of high-demand goods and services is vital. The COVID-19 pandemic induced global upheaval is predicted to create a rise in on-shoring to Australia (plus the USA and Canada), particularly in the bio-tech and life sciences, logistics, advanced manufacturing, software and IT services and the food and beverage sectors.

## GOALS

- Establish a strong profile in domestic and global markets
- To increase exports to national and international markets
- To develop stronger, more agile supply chains
- To increase collaboration locally, nationally and internationally.

## IP Law and trade mark series for exporters

→ The IP Law and Trade Mark workshop series provided information and advice to local businesses to build further competency in international IP law and trade mark protection considerations prior to export. Facilitated by Special Counsel Mark Metzeling, an intellectual property and trademark specialist from law firm Macpherson Kelley, the workshop series was tailored to target industry specific groups.

### → Series 1 - July/Aug/Sep/Oct 2020 - Virtual/in person delivery

62 businesses participated over four workshops in 2020. 100% surveyed found the content valuable and practical for export/business needs and would recommend the workshops to other businesses.

### → Series 2 - Mar/April 2021 - in person delivery

60 businesses participated in four workshops in 2021.

95% surveyed found the content valuable and practical for export/business needs and would recommend the workshops to other businesses.

## Participant Quote:

*"As a small business startup, attending the workshops with Mark has been absolutely amazing and truly assisted our business with some key decisions as well as legal requirements surrounding business set up."*

Kristine & Andrew – Silver Tongue Foods

## Export Market Pathway Program 2021 (International)

→ The program was designed to support local businesses in the food & agribusiness sector to build the capability, global growth mindset and strategies to become successful exporters in ASEAN markets.

→ Delivered in partnership with Food and Agribusiness Network (FAN), Regional Development Australia and Trade and Investment Queensland, the International export program provided a staged program commencing with a Masterclass and culminating in a Virtual Market Visit.

### → Stage 1: Masterclass

- 29 participants from 23 businesses – 12 being from the Sunshine Coast Council LGA.

### → Stage 2: One-on-one mentoring

- 8 participants: 4 Sunshine Coast Council LGA businesses.

### → Stage 3: Virtual Market Visit in partnership with Trade and Invest Queensland

- 4 participants: from Sunshine Coast Council LGA businesses
- Belladotti – sent samples to European Gourmet Hong Kong
- Fenn Foods – sent samples to Singapore
- Telge Fisheries – sent samples to Singapore
- Yanalla Farms – decided not to pursue export at this time.

→ Qcamel achieved export contracts to Singapore, and Belladotti achieved export contracts to Hong Kong as a result of participation in the program.

## Business successes

→ The Queensland Government secured a deal with Concept Labs to provide hand sanitiser and cleaning product to government departments utilising ethanol donated by Bundaberg Brewing.

→ Council provided assistance to have Concept Labs listed by the Queensland Government as a critical manufacturer of medical supplies for Queensland, due to the issue of restricted supply of ethanol. As a result, the Queensland Government facilitated the supply of 24,000 litres of ethanol (donated by Bundaberg Brewing company) with negotiations ongoing between Concept Labs and Bundaberg Brewing regarding additional ongoing supply of ethanol.

→ Council facilitated identification and introductions to the approved dangerous goods transport logistics companies and storage facility

for this amount of ethanol for Concept Labs and continue to engage with Concept Labs and the state government to identify suitable storage sites in Caloundra.

## Virtual Trade Mission

→ Council's Smart Cities Team participated in the virtual event organised by the UK Trade Development office, Brisbane. The virtual meeting included four United Kingdom smart city technology companies.

### → Virtual Trade discussions

Conducted an online virtual meeting with leaders of Foreign Affairs Office of Xiamen Municipal Government to learn about each other's situation in the COVID-19 epidemic, outcomes, and measure of economic and social recovery. Participants included:

- Director General of the Foreign Affairs Office of Xiamen Municipal People's Government (FAO)
- Level-1 Consultant (Deputy-Director General Level) Xiamen FAO
- Division Director for Industrial Coordination of Xiamen Reform and Development Commission
- Division Director for Primary Health Care of Xiamen Health Commission
- Division Director for Sports, Health and Arts Education
- Level-4 consultant (Deputy-Division Director-Level) for External Economic Cooperation of Xiamen Commerce Bureau.

## Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Local to Global Programs

→ The following programs were postponed or did not proceed:

- 2021 FAN Domestic Export Pathway Program
- 2020 Premier of Queensland Export Awards.

→ Council's International Missions Program has been modified due to the risks associated with international travel, however industry missions and inbound visits are being professionally facilitated and conducted virtually.

# Local to Global Connections continued



## Intelligent Community Forum (ICF)

- The Intelligent Community Forum (ICF) Top7 virtual site visit took place on 31 August and 1 September 2020.
- The ICF New York judging panel and 25 participants from 15 Sunshine Coast government, education and business organisations participated in the virtual event, and 10 panel discussions.
- Sunshine Coast community leaders Mayor Mark Jamieson, Dr Retha Scheepers (USC) and Kris Carver (ENTAG CEO) pre-recorded a conversation with ICF Co-founder Lou Zacharilla for the virtual ICF Global Summit in October in Dublin, USA.

## Visiting delegations

- Hosted the Consul General Queensland and Northern Territory and team from Department of International Trade, British Consulate-General Brisbane. Discussions highlighted trade and investment opportunities between the UK and the Sunshine Coast region, with the CG committing to schedule follow up visits by specialist fintech and trade teams.
- Sunshine Coast Investment Roundtable and site visit from Austrade and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade representatives regarding investment opportunities resulting from the Sunshine Coast International Broadband Network and Cyber Security Innovation Node.
- Hosted Austrade Investment Advisors (tourism and infrastructure) for regional visit, including meetings with Council's Head of Investment, SunCentral, and local tourism operators.
- Consul General, Republic of Indonesia and leaders of ASUMSI (Indonesian community association) visited to discuss development of the relationship between Sunshine Coast and Indonesia, including economic opportunities, COVID-19 pandemic recovery strategies and community engagement.

# Investment in Talent and Skills



## Objective:

Building the capacity of the region to adapt to the new economy post COVID-19 pandemic means supporting the local labour force through skills development and jobs growth - and ultimately enabling them to take advantage of new opportunities. This critical assistance will also support local businesses by bridging capacity, up-skilling the workforce and enhancing business connectedness.

## GOALS

- Provide greater access for the community to jobs and opportunities (with a specific focus on youth)
- To deliver increased opportunities for the community to access skills development & training opportunities
- To increase the capacity and resilience of local businesses to survive, revive and thrive
- To develop and implement place-based activation strategies.

## COVID-19 pandemic economic business support

- Council's Professional Advice Support Program supported 75 critically impacted businesses with up to one hour of free advice in accounting and insolvency, human resources, and legal services.
- The Jobs Now radio and social media campaign promoted the vacancies available within the tourism and hospitality industry and was delivered in partnership with Visit Sunshine Coast. In addition to significant social media and direct mail reach, the dedicated Jobs Now webpage received more than 58,000 page views over the two month period.
- The Join Now Chamber and Industry Group Membership Drive initiative resulted in 182 new members joining local business groups. The campaign was delivered across radio, print and social media with the aim of building capacity and capability in the organisations.

- Next Level is a free, online cyber security and digital training program that will future proof the region's digital capability and support continued economic growth.

Launched in May 2021, the cutting edge training program is available to Sunshine Coast residents interested in pursuing new, job ready skills in the areas of cloud computing, cyber security and application and software development. Next Level is a collaboration between Council, Amazon Web Services and TAFE Queensland and is supported by technology industry group Silicon Coast.

📍 [www.nextlevelsc.com.au](http://www.nextlevelsc.com.au)

## Study Sunshine Coast Student Employability Program

- Study Sunshine Coast developed the Student Employability Online Portal which includes a range of resources and information to assist people into the workforce.

- 35 fully funded scholarships were provided to students to participate in the Project Global Citizen cultural competency program.
- Four industry engagement events and workshops were held and connected more than 100 students to industry stakeholders.

## Study Sunshine Coast Pop-up Student Hub

- Delivered 12 dedicated student support events with over 250 students in attendance as a way to connect students to support measures in response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Delivered four dedicated Student Pop-up Hub events with over 100 students in attendance. The hubs were delivered in partnership with USC and TAFE Queensland.
- More than 300 students attended seven Talent Essentials workshops to increase their experience in resume writing and interview skills.

## Study Sunshine Coast student attraction and brand activation

- Onshore student marketing and engagement campaigns were delivered to attract international students already studying in Australia. This included attendance at the Study Australia Virtual Fair, Trade and Investment Queensland Business Development Manager briefing, International Agent Tour, and Student Ambassador program.
- Four new destination and employability videos and images were developed to promote the region as a high-quality and safe education destination.

## Study Queensland Launch U Trade Accelerator Program

- 94 USC students participated in the program orientation.
- Delivered in partnership with Study Sunshine Coast, the student-led project focuses on international market research and provides recommendations about international business growth opportunities for Queensland-based export or trade businesses.

## Train Sunshine Coast

- Economic Development secured a \$1.3 million

investment to deliver this initiative to enhance the region's sports economy by maximising the use of regional sporting assets and industry capabilities.

- The project will help position the region as a premier destination for high performance sports training and tourism.

## TAFE Build a Better Business Program

- 104 businesses participated in the 12-week online program which aims to support businesses in developing business action plans, which include marketing, finance and implementation plans.

## Next Level

- A series of free specialist digital skills training courses available online and on-demand to help the community build new ICT skills and job-ready capabilities.
- Council is delivering the program in partnership with Amazon Web Services (AWS) and TAFE Queensland.

## Local business support

- Delivered tailored and specialist advice to 678 businesses across the region.
- Supported 103 events attended by 2,024 participants, including the Collaboration for the Future and Human Capital event; a Small Business Month Breakfast; the launch of the 2021 Sunshine Coast Business Awards; and delivery of the TAFE Build A Better Business workshop and mentoring program.

## Supplier briefings

- Two Council supplier briefings, also available online, presented information about the Local Business Support Program.

## Jobs Now campaign

- Council partnered with TAFE Queensland, Visit Sunshine Coast and the local tourism and hospitality industry to run a Jobs Now campaign to promote opportunities for tourism jobs on offer during the expected busy period during December and January.
- TAFE Queensland developed a four-day course

# Investment in Talent and Skills **continued**



to enable the workforce to upskill with relevant qualifications including RSA, safe work, customer service and barista training.

- The Jobs Now webpage received more than 58,000 page views over the two months.
- The campaign was highly visible across Visit Sunshine Coast, Study Sunshine Coast, Council social media, and Chambers of Commerce. It was also distributed to direct mail networks including Sunshine Coast schools, community support and employment organisations, and business networks.
- Significant progress has been made in 2019-2020 to future proof the Sunshine Coast workforce and develop meaningful partnerships and collaborative opportunities. Strong partnerships have continued with TAFE Queensland, USC, Department of Employment, Small Business and Training, Jobs Queensland and local industry.

Although programming has been delayed, the region is well placed to rebound due to these established relationships. Future programs will be developed to respond to the workforce issues created from the COVID-19 pandemic impacts.

## Youth programs

- Supported by Council, RoboCoast delivered training to 724 students and 84 teachers and staff at 80 schools across the region during 2020.
- RoboCoast, USC and Sunshine Coast Regional Innovation Project Team co-hosted the first annual RoboRAVE Australia, a large international robotics tournament (limited to Australian teams in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic). More than 110 teams with over 440 people participated in the event held at USC Stadium.
- Nine young entrepreneurs delivered pitches to a panel of judges in the Generation Innovation GI

Challenge, a program that supports 15-25 year olds to develop a business idea and take it to market.

- 75 Glasshouse Christian College students participated in a Shark Tank style event over three days as part of the DeLorean Project. The program enables students in Year 10 to learn lean startup and entrepreneurial skills and develop the capabilities and skills to effectively navigate their journey through the 21st Century.
- More than 20 finalists in the 2021 Sunshine Coast Telstra Innovation Awards for Year 9-12 students were connected with industry mentors to develop enterprise skills and entrepreneurial thinking.
- 250 local students attended the Big Day In digital careers conference.

## Communications and outreach activities

- A dedicated web page providing information about government support programs, industry resources, mental health support, tips for business, health FAQs and advice.
- [www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/Business/COVID19-Support-for-Business](http://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/Business/COVID19-Support-for-Business)

## Local Business Champions

- Established as part of the Economic Resurgence Plan to build business confidence.
- The series acknowledges local business efforts, including COVID-19 pandemic recovery ideas, changes in business model, and inspiring stories from local businesses.
- Council, in partnership with the Chamber Alliance and Hot 91, ran a four-week media campaign to promote the Local Business Champions initiative.
- [www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/Business/Local-business-champions](http://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/Business/Local-business-champions)

## Buy Local

- An online business platform that aims to support local businesses by raising awareness in our community about the importance of buying locally and encouraging consumers to support local first.
- [www.buylocalsunshinecoast.com.au](http://www.buylocalsunshinecoast.com.au)

## Business Podcast

- Council's Bound for Success podcast features inspiring business leaders who share career tips about the Sunshine Coast business community.
- [www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/Business/Business-Podcasts](http://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au/Business/Business-Podcasts)

## Downtown Caloundra

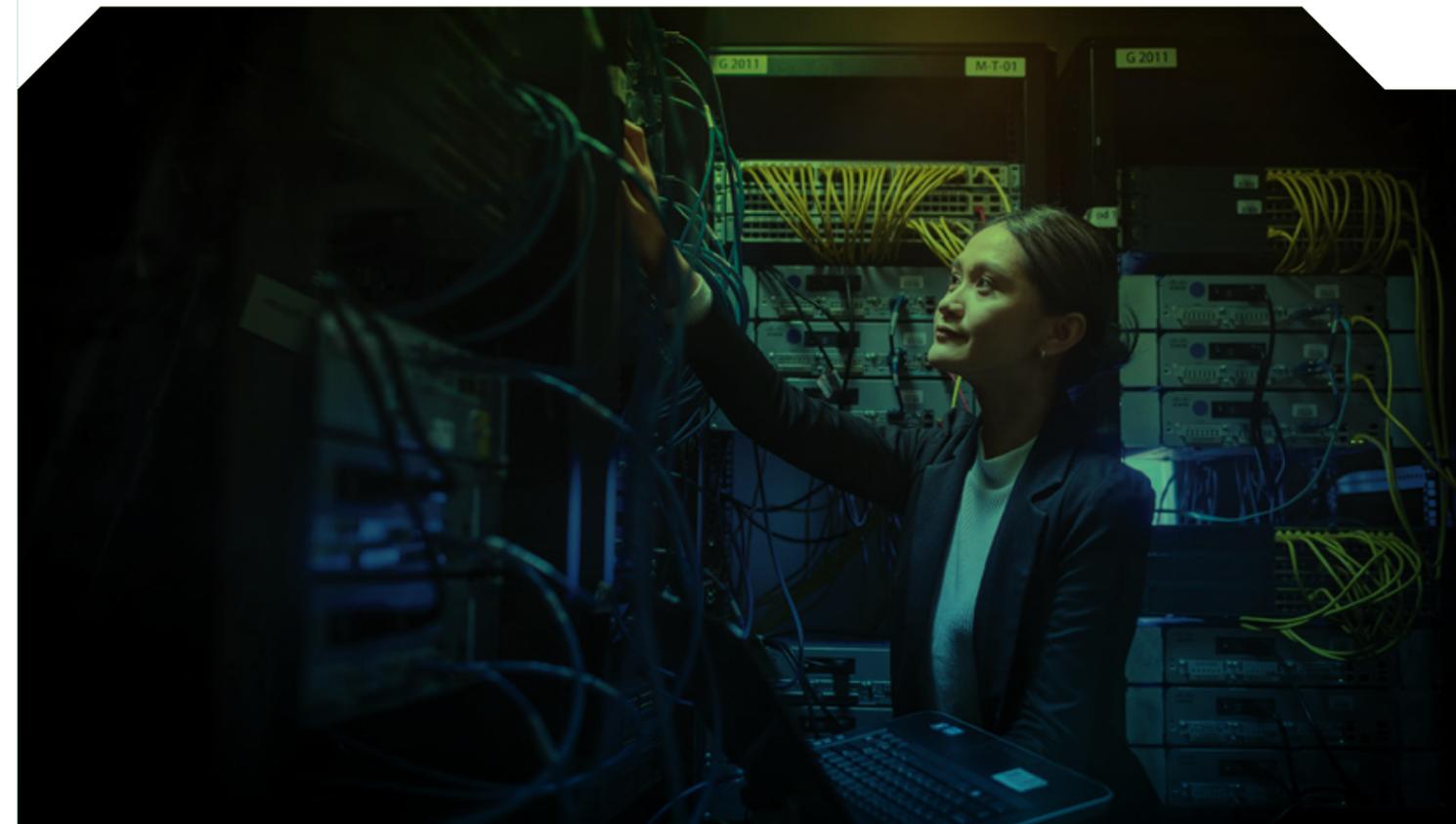
- Hot91 Ferris Wheel attracted 32,164 riders in the first three weeks in July 2020.
- Luminate! was a free, three-night festival featuring the Caloundra streetscapes and boardwalks presented with unique light installations, music and markets. 53,837 devices connected to the free public WiFi during the event. All Caloundra accommodation was sold out and businesses were full of people across the weekend.

## Mooloolaba activation

- Developed a Retail Activation Program to help in the use of vacant retail space and increase the vibrancy of Sunshine Coast communities.
- The TODAY Show weather segment was broadcast from Mooloolaba Beach in August, a collaboration between Visit Sunshine Coast and Mooloolaba Chamber of Commerce to showcase the coastal lifestyle, famous seafood and weddings. The total advertising space rate value was \$477,772.
- Christmas window decorating competition for the business community, supported by My Weekly Preview and Liquid Radio, to build business confidence and add to experience of visiting Mooloolaba.

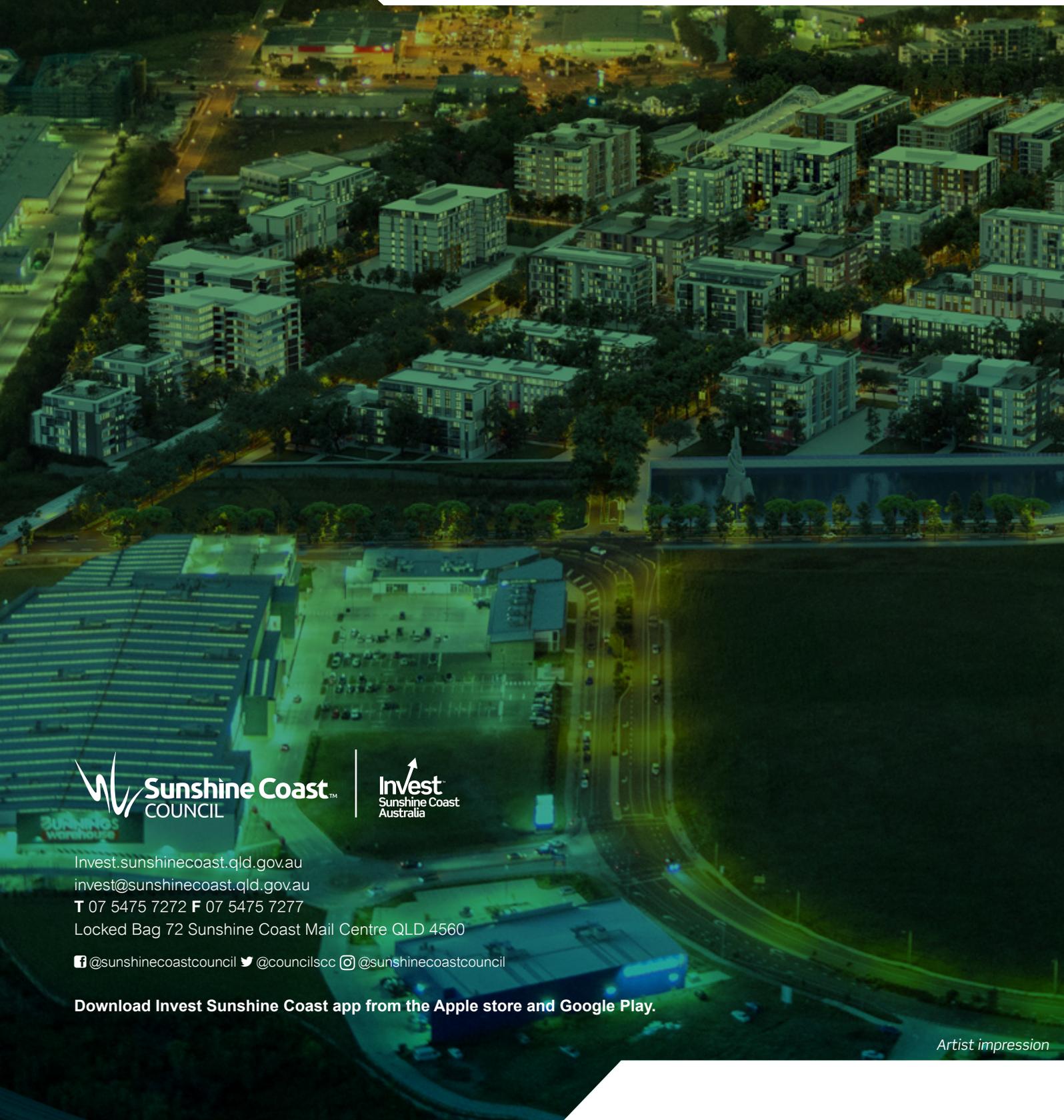
## Place activation

- Visitor Information Centres re-established in Mooloolaba and Caloundra, allowing local businesses to promote their services.
- Mooloolaba hosted the Lunar New Year celebration featuring traditional dragon dancing, singing and cultural performances. The event attracted approximately 500 spectators.





# Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy & Regional Economic Resurgence Plan Annual Report 2020-2021



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*Artist impression*