



Media Release

11 May 2016

G21 welcomes Labor's \$2m GROW commitment

G21 has welcomed a \$2 million funding commitment from Federal Labor to the GROW (G21 Region Opportunities for Work) initiative addressing disadvantage in the region.

The election commitment was made today (11 May) by Deputy Federal Opposition Leader Tanya Plibersek during a visit to Geelong.

"This is a landmark announcement. The \$2m would enable the innovative GROW project to move ahead confidently with implementing its long-term strategic plan," G21 – Geelong Region Alliance CEO Elaine Carbines said.

"GROW is about tackling joblessness in disadvantaged areas in the G21 region, through a united approach by government, business and community organisations.

"Addressing disadvantage is among the most important objectives any community can have as it works to evolve and grow economically. We can't afford to leave sections of our community behind.

"Today federal Labor has recognised the significant role GROW is playing to address disadvantage across the G21 region.

"We are encouraging the federal Coalition government to also financially back this important project. We're hopeful of positive news from Corangamite MP Sarah Henderson and the Liberal candidate for Corio, Richard Lange.

"G21 acknowledges the behind-the-scenes efforts of Corio MP Richard Marles and the Labor candidate for Corangamite, Libby Coker, which have resulted in today's announcement.

"This is one of G21's Priority Projects. Today's funding commitment is crucially important as it means a Labor government would provide the tangible support that GROW needs to succeed.

“We now have funding commitments from Give Where You Live Foundation, the Alcoa Foundation, G21, the state government and the federal opposition,” Ms Carbines said.

GROW is an initiative of the Give Where You Live Foundation and G21 - Geelong Region Alliance.

GROW is supporting organisations in the G21 region to understand the value of choosing local suppliers, products and services to create new jobs which can potentially employ people from target areas.

GROW will also link jobs and jobseekers through ‘demand-led employment brokerage’ providing incentives for the employment of suitably trained people from target areas.

GROW signed a compact with the first group of 20 participating regional companies last November. Other steps to implement the GROW project across the G21 region can be found on the GROW website: **www.grow.g21.com.au**

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