

MEDIA RELEASE

May 3, 2017

New jobs from GROW: Report card

The innovative GROW initiative is reporting growth of 9 per cent, equalling \$23.8 million, in localised procurement among 18 of GROW's participating organisations across the G21 Region.

Importantly, this growth has created specific jobs or placements in disadvantaged communities, a major GROW objective.

Independent economic modelling by ArcBlue shows that growth generated by GROW has led to at least 56 new on-the-ground jobs, and a further 90 indirect jobs in the G21 region more broadly.

The achievement was unveiled today (May 3) at GROW's first-ever 'report card' event. The launch of a regional shared measurement 'dashboard' and local employers providing 'case study' stories of the benefits from their GROW involvement were features of the event.

The principle of GROW (G21 Region Opportunities for Work) is to encourage enterprises to buy and employ locally, keeping the economic benefits of spending within the community.

GROW was established jointly by the *Give Where You Live Foundation* and *G21 – Geelong Region Alliance* to address disadvantage in the region through creating jobs, especially within areas of high unemployment.

Already 58 businesses and other organisations have signed the GROW compact, committing to procure and employ locally wherever practical. Today's announcement is based on expenditure data collected from 18 of the 58 GROW Compact signatories.

Give Where You Live Foundation CEO Bill Mithen said the results demonstrated strongly that, less than two years into an initial 10-year plan, GROW was already having an impact.

"The ArcBlue data confirms the 'local and social procurement' approach behind GROW has commenced and will not only address pockets of disadvantage, it will have flow-on economic benefits across the entire G21 region," Mr Mithen said.

"ArcBlue modelling last year showed that of more than \$17 billion of routine procurement each year in the G21 region, less than half was going to local suppliers.

"Harnessing spending leakage from the region has massive potential to assist vulnerable community members, while also better connecting and growing local business."

G21 CEO Elaine Carbines said GROW was already clearly demonstrating the value of businesses choosing local suppliers, products and services.

“GROW was always a bold, exciting and potentially challenging project. However, now its benefits are being seen as tangible real results, which will be felt over many years across our region,” Ms Carbines said.

“We’ve been able to achieve these outstanding early results with the support of a core group of the region’s enterprises. Imagine what’s possible as we further expand the number of organisations signing on to the GROW compact.”

Partners can now confidently continue towards the GROW objective of gaining the commitment of at least 200 significant businesses and organisations across the G21 region by 2018

A panel discussion at the GROW Report Card event included GROW compact signatories

- Corio Waste Management
- Bapcare’s Norlane Development
- Karingal Kommercial
- Deakin University
- Programmed

Give Where You Live Community Foundation has committed \$2 million as well as ongoing operational support over 10 years to establish GROW, with the expectation that additional government, business and philanthropic funding will be committed as the project develops.

G21 has provided \$30,000, plus an ongoing in-kind contribution. The State Government provided \$100,000 to develop the GROW Strategic Plan document, and further committed to match GWYL funding for the first five years (\$1 million).

The Alcoa Foundation has also provided a legacy grant of \$300,000 towards GROW. Steps to incorporate the GROW project across the G21 region and a copy of the ArcBlue data and ‘economic dashboard’ can be found on the GROW website: www.grow.g21.com.au

Media contacts:

Bill Mithen, Give Where You Live Foundation CEO & G21 Chair, (03) 5229 4364 or 0419 302 650 mobile

Elaine Carbines, G21 CEO, (03) 5227 4000 office or 0437 202 300 mobile.



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

Give Where You Live Foundation acknowledges key GROW funding partners - Victoria State Government and Alcoa Foundation

