

**8 OCTOBER 2013**

## **REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES IMPORTANT FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION**

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) welcomes the report, *Positioning for Prosperity? Catching the Next Wave*, published by Access Economics today (8 October) which identifies International Education as one of five important industries that reflect Asia's changing impact on Australia for the next decade.

RUN Chair Peter Lee said regional universities can play an important role in providing international education – in the safe and rewarding environment provided by regional towns.

“RUN supports greater international enrolment in regional universities,” Professor Lee said. “International students diversify regional communities and facilitate and enrich cultural development. They also provide students in disciplines not necessarily in demand from domestic students who can potentially fill areas of skills shortage in the regions.”

“RUN enthusiastically supports the Government’s new Colombo plan to facilitate two way exchange of students from regional Australia and the Asia Pacific. Regional Australia must be part of this program,” Professor Lee said.

“We also support other measures to encourage international students to attend regional universities including providing additional bonus points to students towards Australian residency for attending regional campuses, particularly for those studying in areas of regional skills need.

“RUN has called for incentives such; as extending the work rights of international students who study in non-metropolitan locations (we support provision of an extra year on completion of undergraduate or post graduate study); providing work rights to students who have completed a bachelors or masters at a regional campus regardless of the duration of study; and facilitation of two way exchanges between the Asia-Pacific and Australia,” Professor Lee said.

Australia’s regional universities play a key role in developing regional economies, and contributing to the social, cultural and environmental development of the regions.

RUN’s six member universities teach more than 100,000 students across 29 campuses or 9 per cent of enrolments in Australian public universities.

### **For media enquiries:**

Dr Caroline Perkins, Executive Director, Regional Universities Network, 0408 482 736

Issued by: Diana Streak, RUN Media Adviser, 04108 482 736

[www.run.edu.au](http://www.run.edu.au)