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## **RUN AND RCA SIGN MOU TO BOOST EDUCATION AND CAREER PATHWAYS**

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) and Regional Capitals Australia (RCA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) aiming to highlight the need for improved academic and career pathways for young people and residents living in regional Australia.

The Chair of RUN, Professor Jan Thomas, says, "Regional universities play a key role in developing regional cities and economies, and that the agreement would facilitate closer collaboration between the two groups on skills and education policy.

RCA Chair, Mayor Shane Van Styn added, "The jobs and industries of the future will need highly skilled university graduates who can further connect regional cities with the global, innovative economy."

As employment centres for wider regional areas, regional cities play a role in the productivity and prosperity of Australia.

"Regional Australia is characterised by lower rates of higher education participation than in our capital cities. Increasingly, there will be the need for more highly skilled graduates as automation takes over more low skilled jobs. Regional universities provide the only realistic option for many regional students to attend university," Professor Thomas said.

With one-third of Australians living in and depending on a regional capital city for its everyday needs, both RUN and RCA are committed to ensuring regional cities are places to access higher education and attract new businesses.

"Our regions must be able to provide incentives to attract and retain young people and residents transitioning to new service industries. We need to reduce the perceived and actual skills-gaps of our workers as a way to remain competitive and entice businesses to come to the regions," Mayor Van Styn said.

Under the MOU, RCA and RUN will develop an action plan for coordination of activities, including communicating messages and policy.

### **About Regional Capitals Australia**

RCA is a national alliance of local governments across the nation representing Australia's regional cities. Its mission is to provide a formal platform to champion the continued growth and sustainable development of regional capitals around the nation. To learn more about our work visit <http://www.regionalcapitalsaustralia.org/>.

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

**About the Regional Universities Network**

RUN is a network of six regionally based universities with headquarters in regional Australia with strong links to their communities and a shared commitment to playing a transformative role in their regions. The group recently released a policy statement “Clever Regions, Clever Australia – Policy Advice for an Incoming Government” which includes policy on regional universities being formally considered as players in regional development.

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