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## **RUN SHOWS SOME GROWTH IN APPLICATIONS**

The Department of Education and Training's Undergraduate Applications, Offers and Acceptances 2016 data shows that the Regional Universities Network (RUN) had a minor increase in applications from 2015 to 2016 of 0.6 per cent.

The Chair of RUN, Professor Greg Hill, said that, while the increase was welcome, more needs to be done to encourage regional Australians to go to university.

"There are still significant barriers to regional, low SES, and first in family Australians attending university. While the data shows an increase of 1.6 per cent in applicants from low SES and non-metropolitan backgrounds respectively to universities across the board, non-metropolitan applicants were more than twice as likely to defer. The costs associated with re-locating to study are still a barrier to many," Professor Hill said.

"The increase in enrolments from Indigenous Australians to university of 8.6 per cent is heartening. RUN universities teach about 16 per cent of Australia's Indigenous higher education students.

"The total number of applicants in the ATAR band 50.00 or less remains small in absolute terms. There is a growing trend for students to be admitted directly to university on a basis other than ATAR. This is the case for many students at our universities," Professor Hill said.

"It is vital to regional economies that regional Australians are further encouraged and supported to attend university. The employment outlook for graduates is good, including in regional Australia. Students who study at regional universities largely stay in the regions to work."

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