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## **FUTURE FORUM HIGHLIGHTS PIVOTAL ROLE OF REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES**

The enrichment provided by regional universities to their regions, communities and local industry, and their fundamental role in education, research, and innovation, is the focus of the ABC Future Forum television program *The Clever Country* – can universities meet the challenges facing regional Australia?

The six RUN Vice-Chancellors discussed the contribution and role of regional universities in the program which will be broadcast on ABC News 24 on December 9 at 8.30pm (AEDST). See below for link to preview.

Chair of the Regional Universities Network (RUN), Professor David Battersby, said, “Regional universities play a crucial role in providing opportunities for the growing population in regional Australia to participate in education and to grow national productivity. Our research is embedded in the regions but addresses issues of national and international importance.

“Our universities value add to the regions. They contribute to the diversification of industry, decentralise wealth, and make up a significant proportion of regional economies. The potential for regional universities to be a pivot point to give greater coherence to regional policy and development should be recognised.

“I hope that the Future Forum program will contribute to an enhanced understanding of regional Australia and the role that regional universities play,” Professor Battersby said.

The Regional University Network’s members are CQUniversity, Southern Cross University, University of Ballarat, University of New England, University of Southern Queensland and University of the Sunshine Coast.

The Future Forum program and a separate audience Q&A can be previewed at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-11-12/the-clever-country-can-universities-meet-the-chall/4366368>

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