



## COMMUNIQUE

TCI-Network Oceania's Innovation & Competitiveness Summit, Adelaide, 1-3 June, 2016

### **Seeds Sown for Development of Innovation Clusters for Competitiveness**

The seeds were sown to support innovation clusters to contribute to future growth and national competitiveness at TCI-Network Oceania's "Innovation & Competitiveness Summit" in Adelaide 1-3 June.

Key note speaker and international cluster expert Dr Christian Ketels, TCI-Network President and associate of Michael Porter's Institute for Strategy & Competitiveness, Harvard Business School, outlined Australia's current competitive position in the world economy, moving from a position of comparative economic strength to projections of more negative growth forecasts with significant disadvantage in a number of key competitiveness areas signalling problems ahead. Christian urged Australian industry and economic policy makers to support a cluster based approach to facilitate stronger integration with global supply and value chains through the collaboration platforms embraced by many of the world's more competitive economies. Clusters have been used as important tools of policy by governments around the world as they have proved to effectively facilitate regional economic development. ***"As globalisation accelerates, clusters strengthen the collaboration required for increased innovation and connectivity, crucial for upgrading the competitiveness of companies, regions and nations"***

Chris Burns, CEO of South Australia's Defence Teaming Centre (DTC), one of Australia's long term cluster initiatives, outlined the vital role played by the DTC in securing defence industry contracts for the state and the strong international linkages nurtured over many years through collaboration and cluster strategy.

International cluster guru, Ifor Ffowcs Williams, provided grist to the mill with international examples of national policies and programs linking national competitiveness agendas through strong connections to regional clusters. ***"Regional and metropolitan clusters provide hubs of innovation, connecting talent with science, technology, manufacturing and service resources, and fostering the creativity, ideas generation and innovation that will drive competitiveness and create the jobs of the future"***

Dr Allan O'Connor, Academic Director, Post Graduate Innovation & Entrepreneurship, University of Adelaide, encouraged regional, industry and economic policy makers and practitioners to get on

board with the ***Australian Cluster Observatory***, which provides a platform for collaboration and cluster benchmarking with European and North American clusters.

Bjarne Jensen, Director, REG LAB and Co-Director, Cluster Excellence Denmark provided an excellent overview of the Danish Cluster Policy and Programs that have boosted the Internationalisation and Competitiveness of Danish Regions and see Denmark now rating No 5 in world competitiveness rankings.

Mirjana Prica, Managing Director of FIAL (Food Innovation Australia Ltd) outlined FIAL's plan to build a national platform for collaboration for Food Clusters in Australia.

The Summit closed with Dr Jen Cleary, Chair, RDA (Regional Development Australia) Far North South Australia and Chair of RDA's Chair's Reference Group (CRG) outlining the economic opportunities and challenges for Australian regions and how a cluster based approach for increased collaboration and innovation would be beneficial to many regional communities.

The summit was preceded by a full day tour of some of South Australia's high performing clusters and concluded with a full day of workshops on clusters for collaboration, innovation and competitiveness.

For further information contact:

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