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## North Coast News & Views No. 150

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### Key Outcomes From Tourism Jobs Summit

Australian Minister for Trade and Tourism Don Farrell this week led a Tourism Jobs Summit in Canberra to discuss ideas for addressing workforce challenges in the visitor economy. Some of the key actions identified were reforming the migration program; encouraging people with a disability and those on an Age Pension into the workforce; incentivising employers to improve on-the-job training; and promoting tourism as a career of choice.

Read [the report](#).

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### \$5 Million To Activate NSW Heritage

Applications are open for innovative ideas that boost public access to the state's most significant heritage places and stimulate local economies across NSW.

Minister for Heritage James Griffin said \$5 million in funding support is available through the 2023-2025 NSW Heritage Grants program.

The 2023-2025 NSW Heritage Grants program has six categories, including:

- The new Activating State Heritage Grant where one successful applicant will be awarded \$1 million in matched funding
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Grants where applicants can apply for up to \$80,000
- Caring for State Heritage Grants where applicants can apply for up to \$150,000
- Community Heritage Grants where applicants can apply for up to \$50,000
- Emergency Works Grants to help address emergency situations at state significant sites
- Local Government Heritage Grants program designed for NSW local councils.

Find [more information](#), including guidelines and applications.

Read [media release](#).

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## Northern Rivers Future Forum

Northern Rivers Future Forum is a one-day event being held in Ballina on Monday 19 September 2022.

The Future Forum is part of the Leading Australian Resilient Communities (LARC) program, led locally by Regional Development Australia (RDA) Northern Rivers. The LARC program and Northern Rivers Future Forum is aimed at strengthening the region's network of local leaders to support and drive a positive future for their communities.

Outcomes of the LARC program include practical real-world ongoing projects championed by program participants and connected to regional and national leaders.

There will be 26 local scholarships available for the LARC workshop program, being held in October 2022 and February 2023 in the Northern Rivers.

You can find more information and register for the [Northern Rivers Future Forum here](#). Information and applications for the LARC scholarships can be [found here](#).



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## Creating Job Opportunities For People Living With Disability In The Visitor Economy

Minister for Trade and Tourism, Senator the Hon Don Farrell together with Social Services Minister the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP recently announced \$3.3 million to establish a Visitor Economy Disability Pilot to help people living with disability secure sustained jobs in tourism.

The Pilot will focus on supporting businesses in recruiting those living with disabilities into available jobs and will address barriers previously identified by small and medium tourism businesses in recruiting, retaining and progressing staff with disability.

Read [media release](#).

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## New CEO for Welcome To Country

[Welcome to Country](#), the not-for-profit marketplace for First Nations experiences and products, is delighted to announce the appointment of its new CEO, Gurindji/Ngalakan man Desmond Campbell.

Welcome to Country Chairman Troy Rugless said Desmond was chosen after an extensive and competitive selection process. "Desmond is an excellent cultural fit for Welcome to Country. His passion and vision will lead us into the future as a thriving social enterprise" he said. "The Board, of which a majority of Directors are Aboriginal, myself as Chair included, look forward to working with Desmond over the coming years."

Read [Media Release](#).

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## Surf's Up As World Cup Comes To Coffs Harbour

Coffs Harbour will play host to some of the world's elite beach athletes with the popular Summer of Surf World Cup series to host a four-day event, thanks to the NSW Government's \$40 million Regional Events Acceleration Fund.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW Paul Toole said a \$200,000 grant under Round Two of the fund would see an expected 10,000 visitors flock to Coffs Harbour to watch the ocean swim, beach events and fun run among other summer sports.

Find [further information](#), including program guidelines and eligibility criteria.

Read [media release](#).

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## Australian Festival Industry Conference Produces Record Attendance

Over 130 people travelled to the Gold Coast during 30 August - 1 September to attend the country's second [Australian Festival Industry Conference](#) (AFIC) with the event drawing attendance from across Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. Delegates represented a range of private and not-for-profit festival organisers, all tiers of Government, consultancy service providers, educational institutions, operational suppliers, and more.

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## Finalists Announced For The 2022 Industry Awards of Excellence

The Caravan and Camping, Manufactured Homes and Land Lease Living Industry Associations have announced finalists for the 2022 Awards of Excellence. Congratulations to the following North Coast businesses.

Ballina Beach Nature Resort

BIG4 River Myall Holiday Resort

Integrated Site Design

Myall River Camp

Plantations by Ingenia Lifestyle

Tiona Holiday Park

BIG4 Karuah Jetty Holiday Park

Ingenia Holidays White Albatross

Kingscliff Beach Holiday Park

North Star Holiday Resort

Reflections Holiday Parks Evans Head

The winners will be announced at the 2022 Awards of Excellence evening event in Sydney on 6 November 2022.



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## Tourism Industry Insights

### Insight - How Responsible Tourism Contributes To A More Sustainable Visitor Economy

An increasing number of tourists are looking for sustainable travel experiences. More than 70% of travellers indicate they would make more effort to travel sustainably in the coming year which is up 10% from 2021.

The national strategy for the visitor economy, [THRIVE 2030](#), recognises the importance of sustainability to the long-term growth and resilience of Australian tourism.

Find out how you and your business practices can start to contribute to a more sustainable tourism industry.

### National Visitor Survey - Monthly Snapshot June 2022

Domestic tourism continued to recover in June 2022. Overnight spend was up 22% on pre-pandemic levels. However, overnight trips were down 14% and nights spent away were down 8%.

Overall Australian residents took 8.4 million overnight trips and spent \$7.5 billion in June 2022.

Find [more information and detail](#).

### Room Occupancy Rates & Revenue Rise In NSW

Destination NSW has released its [NSW Tourist Accommodation Snapshot](#) for April to June 2022. The data has revealed rising occupancy rates throughout NSW.

NSW, Sydney and regional NSW saw rates above the same quarter in 2021 (up 11 per cent, 15 per cent and 1 per cent respectively).

Regional NSW held the lion's share of the state's properties (77 per cent) and a slightly larger majority of rooms (51 per cent).

North Coast NSW continued to lead regional NSW, accounting for 23.3 per cent of establishments and 22.5 per cent of rooms. It also led in terms of room revenue takings in regional NSW, with 22.7 per cent share.

### 1 in 5 Cruise Passengers Return to Port

New research from Destination NSW has shown that approximately 20% of cruise visitors return independently to ports they visit on cruises.

The trend was highlighted in a new guide from Destination NSW, [Quick Tips for Creating Cruise Shore Experiences](#), which provides practical tips to help businesses tailor experiences and sell them through the cruise distribution network.

Assisting visitor economy stakeholders such as tour operators, attractions and retailers, the guide was created in partnership with the Port Authority of NSW and presents opportunities like selling exclusive and tailored cruise experiences to cruise ship passengers in ports; building awareness of the destination and its experiences; and inspiring high-value travellers to create positive word of mouth and book return visits.

### Hospitality Spending Surges In NSW

July data from the [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#) has revealed NSW had the highest increase in hotel, cafe and restaurant spending in Australia, up 70.5 per cent through the year. South Australia followed in second place, up 42.8 per cent.

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## Funding And Other Opportunities

### [Stronger Country Community Fund Round 5](#)

The Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 5 aims to boost the well-being of communities in regional areas by providing new or upgraded social and sporting infrastructure, or community programs that have strong local support. **Closes 23 September 2022.**

### [Electric Vehicle Destination Charging Grants - Expires Soon](#)

Up to 3500 electric vehicle (EV) chargers will be rolled out across regional NSW, with the NSW Government offering \$20 million in grants to establish Australia's largest destination charging network. **Closes 23 September 2022.**

### [Festivals Australia](#)

Festivals Australia funds high-quality arts projects that invite community participation and audience engagement. Projects can include but are not limited to a parade, performance, workshop, installation or exhibition.

The aim is to give community members living in regional or remote Australia the chance to participate in or attend an arts experience at a festival, or a significant one-off community celebration. **Closes 5 October 2022 for projects commencing from 1 February 2023.**

### [Aboriginal Community And Place Program](#)

Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and groups can apply for funding to meet Closing the Gap targets thanks to the NSW Government's \$30 million Community and Place Grants Program. As part of the NSW Government's 2022-24 Closing the Gap Implementation Plan, grants of up to \$250,000 will be available to fund one-off projects including programs, equipment, vehicles and infrastructure. **Closes 30 September 2022.**

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## Around The Region

### DNC Industry Networking Event - Bangalow

The Destination North Coast Board traditionally rotates around the region for our monthly Board meetings and we have pleasure in planning our September meeting to be in Bangalow.

After the Board meeting, we invite members of the Tourism Industry to a casual get-together and an opportunity to meet and network with the Board, the DNC team and industry peers.

- What: Afternoon Industry Networking
- When: Wednesday, 21 September 2022
- Time: 4.15-6.00pm
- Where: [Common People Brewery](#), 9 Dudgeons Lane, Bangalow

[RSVP is required](#) by Monday 19 September 2022 and for catering purposes, please include any dietary restrictions.

We look forward to connecting with industry in region and meeting in Bangalow.

### Best Beach Towns In NSW | Urban List Sydney

NSW beaches rival some of the best in the world. Urban List has compiled the [10 prettiest beach towns in NSW](#), with 4 located of the best on the North Coast getting a gong being Byron Bay, Kingscliff, South West Rocks and Yamba.

### Short-Term Rental Accommodation Planning Proposal

Byron Shire Council are proposing to reduce non-hosted short-term rental accommodation (STRA) from 180 days to 90-days per year for most of the Byron Shire. For parts of Byron Bay (East and West), Suffolk Park and Brunswick Heads it's proposed to increase STRA to 365-days i.e. all year round.

The STRA Planning Proposal explains the effect and justification for the proposed change. If the changes are supported by Council following consideration of exhibition outcomes, there will be a 12-month transition period for any changes to commence. This means any changes will not come into effect until 2024.

Council has been delegated authority to make the plan subject to the proposal not being amended to reduce non-hosted STRA period on any land to less than 90 days. Provide feedback on the proposal via the [Byron Shire Council survey](#) that is open until 31 October 2022.

In addition to the Byron Shire Council survey, the Byron Bay Chamber of Commerce are also requesting feedback on the issue. The [Byron Bay Chamber of Commerce survey](#) is open until 19 September 2022.

### Mulga's Longest Public Mural At Flynn's Beach

Internationally renowned public artist '[Mulga](#)' has finished his Port Macquarie-Hastings Council-commissioned piece covering over 100m of wall at Flynn's Beach. It's super colourful and full of his usual cheeky humour. A number of talented local artists also helped with the installation, which is definitely one for the Instagram.

### Nimbin's Rainbow Road Walking Track

The Nimbin Rainbow Road Walking Track is finally coming to fruition, and Lismore City Council are [looking for feedback](#). Now they have a preliminary design, Council is seeking input on what this walking track will look like and how it may best serve the community of Nimbin and provide a wonderful tourist attraction for visitors to the township of Nimbin.

The project includes concrete pathways, lighting, interpretive signage, way-finding signage, artwork, small bridges erected over the nearby creek system, park furniture and native plantings, more than 1km long for the community of Nimbin and its visiting tourists.

The total budget of \$2.5 million is fully funded by the NSW Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF).

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## Industry Development

### Digital Solutions - Australian Small Business Advisory Services

Looking for tailored advice for your small business? The [Digital Solutions program](#) works with you to adopt digital tools to save you time and money, and to help grow your business. It will help with your business needs such as:

- how digital tools can help your small business
- websites and selling online
- social media and digital marketing
- using small business software
- online security and data privacy.

Digital Solutions is a 7 hour packaged service that offers 3 hours of one-on-one tailored support as well as group workshops or webinars. The Digital Solutions program is \$44 for 7 hours of support and your first interaction with the service is free.

### Alfresco Restart Rebate:

Small and medium food and beverage businesses have until tomorrow, 16 September to register for the NSW Government's [Alfresco Restart rebate](#). The rebate of up to \$5000 can be used to create, expand or improve outdoor dining areas. Eligible businesses can claim for expenses incurred between 14 October 2021 to 30 September 2022.

### Northern Rivers Rail Trail - Product & Experience Development Resources

Tourism businesses interested in developing a rail trail focused product or experience in the Northern Rivers can access a free [Online Education Program](#) via Ispring available until 16 November 2022.

Other resources available on the [DNC website](#) include the Northern Rivers Rail Trail Product and Experience Development Audit Report and a Best Practice Case Study Report. These resources have been made available as part of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail Product and Experience Development Project.

### New Program To Get Wine Tourism Ready

Wine Australia has launched a free online course to help Australian wineries welcome back international travellers. [Wine Tourism Ready](#) provides expert guidance in six modules, with 21 wine-specific tourism lessons covering topics ranging from establishing experiences to mastering marketing for global audiences. Prior to COVID-19, Tourism Research Australia estimated one in eight international tourists to Australia visited at least one winery in 2018-19.

### Social Media Training

ART and Tourism Tribe are offering free online training sessions outlining the best practices for Facebook and Instagram to get the most out of content and posting. The webinar will be held on 5 October 2022. [Register here](#).

### Save The Date For Destination Australia 2023

Tourism Australia will host Destination Australia 2023 at the International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney on Thursday 16 March. The event, themed 'Come and Say G'day', will look to celebrate the opportunities for the future of Australian tourism and will be followed by a networking event. Register your interest and tell us what topics you'd like to hear about [here](#).

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## North Coast Product Development

### Guulabba Precinct At Cowarra State Forest

**Wild Koala Breeding Centre - Sod Turning Event** - Destination North Coast attended a sod turning event at Guulabba in the Cowarra State Forest near Port Macquarie to herald the beginnings of the build of the new Wild Koala Breeding Centre. Local dignitaries and followers came out to support the celebratory event which included a smoking ceremony, plenty of cake and words from local MP, Leslie Williams.

[Wildnets](#) - the new treetop adventure park is opening in the new Guulabba precinct on 19 September 2022. This is no ordinary treetops park either...it's **Australia's biggest suspended netted playground** - 7,048 square metres of nets to be exact! With 39 kilometres of rope and cable amongst the treetops, treehouses, slides and bridges, visitors will be able to discover the forest's flora and fauna from Australia's most incredible high-tops! Plus, 50% of their profits will go towards the new [Wild Koala Breeding Program](#) taking shape at Guulabba.







#### **Tel Aviv-Yafo - Ballina**

Tel Aviv - Yafo is a place where the old and the modern Israeli food join together to create a unique middle eastern dining experience. Located in the heart of the CBD and one of Ballina's newest cafes, this is one to visit.

#### **Aussie Trike Tours**

Trike tours and joy rides Coffs Coast area. Day tours, wine tasting, attractions, special occasions or create your own customised itinerary.

#### **Taste North Coast Picnics And Hampers**

Taste North Coast Picnics and Hampers are a local tourism operator supplying gorgeous bespoke local pop-up picnic's, hampers and gifts. They support local growers, wineries, distillers, brewers, artisans, makers and producers to shine a light on their business, whilst showcasing the beautiful region. In addition to picnic hampers they also create hampers and gifts with a taste of the North Coast for local delivery, throughout Australia and internationally.

#### **North Coast Regional Botanic Gardens - Coffs Harbour**

The new Glasshouse is open - warm, moist and green! Visitors enter via the arid garden path to experience the warmth of the tropical house (32C) with rare and unusual tropical plants.

The Botanic Garden has also received a Tripadvisor 2022 Travellers Choice award.

#### **The Community Project (Play Quest) - Ballina**

Play Quest Lismore has opened an indoor play space in Ballina, a great new rainy day activity called the Community Project. Open Wednesday to Friday 9:30am-1:30pm.

#### **Ross Park - Lennox Head**

New playground installed and landscape works being undertaken. Stage 1 and 2 of the Lennox Village upgrade are now completed.

#### **Captain Cook Memorial and Lighthouse - Tweed**

Work is set to begin on the upgrade of Captain Cook Memorial and Lighthouse on the NSW-QLD border. The \$5.5m project will see the Marine Rescue NSW Point Danger facilities rebuilt, alongside a new café and wheelchair-accessible viewing deck and artwork by local Fingal artist Christine Slabb.

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## North Coast Events

To aid your planning and to support local events, please note these upcoming events on the North Coast or find [all events on our website](#).

### [Motofest Wauchope](#)

Motofest returns to Wauchope and promises to be a huge celebration of all things moto, with a show 'n shine, gymkhana, parade and other family-friendly events. **17 September 2022.**

### [6th Annual Hello Koalas Festival Treasure Hunt](#)

Just in time for the school holidays is the Hello Koalas Festival Treasure Hunt in the Port Macquarie-Hastings Region **24-25 September 2022.**

### [Lismore Joeys Mini World Cup](#)

The Joeys Mini World Cup is an annual regional football tournament like no other, played in the September/October School Holidays. This year the prestigious event will be hosted in Lismore at various football clubs from **26 September to 1 October 2022.**

### [Oceania Cup](#)

Alstonville Football Club's All Female Oceania Cup is two days of competition for females aged 10 to adult culminating in finals to determine the Oceania Cup champions across various grades. This is a great spectator sport to watch teams compete for the overall Oceania Cup trophy. **1 - 2 October 2022.**

### [Old Bar Beach Festival](#)

The iconic Old Bar Beach Festival is back over the October Long Weekend...register for the kombi parade or join the team and volunteer to help make this awesome day happen.

The jam-packed four days of fun has something for everyone. Enjoy the iconic kombi parade, mega markets, all day live music, kombis and classic car display, carnival rides, street food, the aerobatics display, and awesome fires Saturday night. The kids are sorted too, with entertainment from the Jolly Pirates, plus a kids area, amusements, a movie night, carnival games and loads more. **30 September - 2 October 2022.**

### [Spring Great Lakes Food Trail](#)

The date for the Spring Great Lakes Food Trail has been set for Sunday 2 October with 'hubs' in Forster, Wootton and Bulahdelah offering locals and visitors to the area the opportunity to hear and experience first-hand from local producers and providers.

Now in its sixth year, the Food Trail not only provides an opportunity for our community to garner a greater understanding of the region's produce but at the same time, has raised awareness, stimulated demand and strengthened markets for producers and providers of the Great Lakes/Barrington region. Read [Media Release](#). **2 October 2022**

### ['Taste The Tweed One Farm At A Time'](#)



This year's Taste The Tweed program will fuse producers with chefs to create a unique program that captures the essence and tastes of the Tweed. From the art deco surrounds of Murwillumbah to the quaint Tumbulgum Valley, across the dreamy Duranbah Plateau to the expansive coastline, there will be a selection of events and workshops to suit all.

With a focus on native foods and indigenous culture, the Tweed Artisan Week collaborates with the Minjungbal Aboriginal Cultural Centre for the opening ceremony with selected events that tell the indigenous stories of the region. **21-30 October 2022.**

#### [Peach Festival](#)

Peach Festival at Southview Orchard Hogarth Range is back. Activities for kids and delicious food with peaches. Plenty of stalls with produce from Hogarth Range and Richmond Valley area and of course pick your own peaches. **16 October 2022.**

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#### **COVID-19 Resource Centre**

The DNC [COVID-19 Resource Centre](#) makes it easy to access relevant information and find links to appropriate Government and other resources.