



## PROJECT BRIEFING | South Coast Centre of Excellence

### Background

The 2019/20 bushfire crisis and COVID-19 pandemic have had a compounding effect on the South Coast tourism and hospitality industries, and its workforce.

Destination Sydney Surrounds South (DSSS) have successfully secured grant funding of \$995,023 to establish an industry-led, virtual tourism and hospitality Centre of Excellence (CoE) for the South Coast. Funding was received through the [Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund \(BLERF\)](#), jointly funded by the Commonwealth and NSW Governments.

### Project objective

The industry-led project will create a pipeline of skilled workers by promoting career pathways in hospitality and tourism to encourage staff attraction and retention, whilst providing lasting careers for residents including young and Indigenous workers. Working closely with [Destination Southern NSW](#), the CoE will aid the economic recovery of bushfire-impacted Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla and Bega Valley LGAs by addressing workforce shortages; elevating visitor experiences; and supporting product diversification, to drive increased tourism yield (visitor spend), reduce seasonality and support resilient local businesses.

The CoE will support a 'career' pathway into the sector, rather than simply creating 'jobs', and address current perceptions that hospitality and tourism has limited long-term career opportunities.

To ensure cost-effective delivery, the CoE will avoid duplication in its service delivery by leveraging the region's existing networks and training initiatives. Funding has been allocated to engage two highly qualified and experienced officers, who will be responsible for the coordination of services and delivery of the virtual CoE over the initial two-year period. Success of the project during this timeframe will contribute to the long-term sustainability of the CoE.

### Project inclusions

The CoE key deliverable program encompasses:

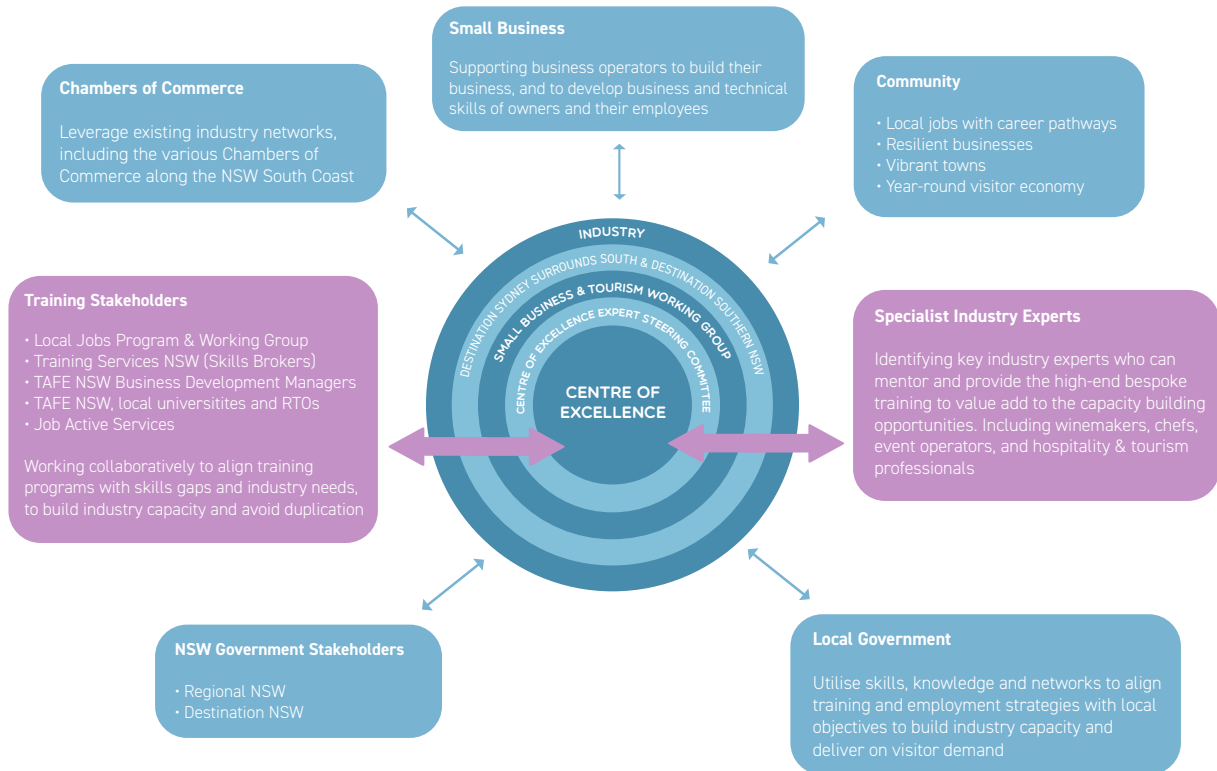
- Industry networking events and functions
- Familiarisations & site visits for potential employees and employers
- Industry expert and career Mentor Program

*Industry includes all existing and potential employers/ business owners, and their current and future employees. Future employees include, school based and post-school trainees and apprentices, program mentees, career changers and staff looking to upskill or expand their current skillset.*





## Project partners



## Strategic alignment

The project aligns and will directly contribute to achieving objectives outlined in various State, Regional and Local plans and strategies, by:

- Upskilling local workers and connecting them to local employers
- Strengthening local career opportunities across hospitality and tourism industries
- Improve sector resilience by reducing seasonal visitation impacts
- Support economic recovery through encouraging higher-yield visitation

## Next steps

Work will go on behind the scenes over the coming months, to bring together the expert steering committee, to appoint project staff and to design program activities.



Stay in touch for project updates, announcements will be made via our regular *Destination Download* industry update - scan the QR code here to [join our mailing list](#), and also through our [LinkedIn](#) page.

## Key Contacts

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