



Sharon Grierson MP
Federal Member for Newcastle

Media Release
THE HON. SIMON CREAN MP
MINISTER FOR REGIONAL AUSTRALIA, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT & LOCAL GOVERNMENT
MINISTER FOR THE ARTS

SHARON GRIERSON MP
MEMBER FOR NEWCASTLE

7 September 2011

Arts and Research Funding for Newcastle's Future

The Member for Newcastle, Sharon Grierson, has welcomed \$7,698,000 in funding approvals under the Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF) for the Hunter Valley Research Foundation (HVRF) and Newcastle Art Gallery today. \$7 million has been approved for stage one of the redevelopment of Newcastle Art Gallery and \$698,000 to expand the capacity of the Hunter Valley Research Foundation's Maryville Research Centre.

"This funding is a real infrastructure win for Novocastrians creating a cultural heart for Newcastle City and help to expand our region's increasing research identity," Ms Grierson said.

"Both of the Regional Development Australia Fund applications for Newcastle have been successful, which is a credit to those who have worked tirelessly to assist Newcastle's transformation into a leader in innovation, productivity and as a cultural icon."

The expansion of Newcastle Art Gallery will increase its usable space to over 2,300 square metres over two levels. New facilities will include a theatrette, function space, cafe and retail shops, and open the Gallery to the Darby Street buzz.

This project will create 69 direct jobs during the construction phase and an additional 28 positions at completion. An estimated 133 positions will be added to overall Hunter region employment in the arts and recreational services sector. The combined flow on effect of the project is estimated to exceed \$17 million with a boost to the tourism and leisure industry.

"With the Newcastle Museum recently opened by Simon Crean, the redeveloped Newcastle Art Gallery will create a focal point for the revitalisation of the Newcastle CBD."

Visiting Newcastle today, the Federal Minister for Regional Australia Simon Crean has congratulated Novocastrians, saying that the funding will ensure the continuation of Newcastle's transformation and enhance capacity to meet the emerging cultural and information needs of the community into the future.

"Attracting and retaining quality research staff at the Hunter Valley Research Foundation will strengthen the knowledge-based sector, a high skills growth area of employment into the region," Mr Crean said.

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