

NORTHERN RIVERS

MEDIA RELEASE

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The Welcome Experience Expands into Clarence Valley and Kyogle

The NSW Government's successful program, The Welcome Experience, is expanding into the Clarence Valley and Kyogle Local Government Areas, with delivery to be led by Regional Development Australia Northern Rivers (RDA Northern Rivers).

Announcing the expansion, NSW Minister for Regional NSW Tara Moriarty said the program continues to play a critical role in attracting and retaining essential workers in regional communities.

"The Welcome Experience has already made a real difference in supporting essential workers to relocate and settle in regional NSW, helping them to find housing, schools, childcare, sporting groups, community networks, and even job opportunities for their partner," Minister Moriarty said.

"Expanding the program into the Clarence Valley and Kyogle will ensure more communities can benefit from the tailored, on the ground support that our helpful Local Connectors like Lisa offer, whilst addressing workforce shortages and strengthening local economies."

The Welcome Experience provides personalised assistance to essential workers and their families, supporting relocation and settlement through access to housing, employment opportunities for partners, education pathways, and community connections.

RDA Northern Rivers will lead delivery across the new regions, building on its strong track record of regional workforce development and stakeholder engagement.

Director of Regional Development, RDA Northern Rivers, Anthony Schreenan said the expansion is a significant step in addressing workforce challenges across the Northern Rivers.

"We are seeing strong demand for skilled workers across multiple sectors, particularly in healthcare, education, and community services," he said.

"The expansion of The Welcome Experience into Clarence Valley and Kyogle will provide practical, place-based support to help workers and their families not just relocate, but truly settle and stay in our communities."

To support the program's expansion, additional staffing resources will be required to ensure effective local delivery and maintain the high level of personalised support that underpins the program's success.

"These roles are critical to delivering tailored support on the ground, working directly with individuals, families, employers, and community organisations to remove barriers and improve long term retention outcomes," he said.

The expansion reflects a broader commitment to strengthening regional workforce pipelines and ensuring communities have access to the essential services they need.

RDA Northern Rivers will commence recruitment for additional Local Connector roles to support delivery in Clarence Valley and Kyogle, with program rollout to begin as of July 1, 2026.



Image (L-R):

Lisa Richards – Local Connector, The Welcome Experience, Northern Rivers

Anthony Schreenan – Director of Regional Development, Regional Development Australia Northern Rivers

NSW Minister for Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, and Western New South Wales – Tara Moriarty

Katrina Melville – Northern Rivers Essential Worker

NSW Minister for the North Coast and Member for Lismore – Janelle Saffin

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