

NORTHERN RIVERS

MEDIA RELEASE

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A New Board for RDA Northern Rivers

The RDA Northern Rivers Chair, Dr Susan Vinnicombe, welcomes the appointment of four new Board members and reappointment of three members to the RDA Northern Rivers Board.

Joining the board are Damian Chapelle, Amanda Kuhn, Bianca Spata, and Byron Wicks, bringing a range of expertise and expanding the capabilities of RDA Northern Rivers.

“As Chair of Regional Development Australia Northern Rivers, it is both a privilege and a pleasure to welcome our new Board members” said Dr Vinnicombe.

“It is incredibly encouraging to see such a strong level of interest from talented, capable, and community-minded individuals who are willing to volunteer their time and expertise in service of our region.”

Damian Chapelle has a background in town planning, is a skilled negotiator, and collaborator and is highly experienced in working with large-scale developments. He is accustomed to dealing with complex issues with a high level of political sensitivity.

Amanda Kuhn is a communications strategist with over 20 years' experience in corporate and not for profit sectors globally. She brings expertise in regional storytelling and a strong commitment to sustainable, community-led growth.

Bianca Spata is a lawyer and financial services professional, with experience obtained across ASX-listed corporates and global private practice law firms. She is passionate

about using her skills and experience to further strengthen the RDA Northern Rivers role in supporting and advancing the local economy and community.

Byron Wicks is an engineer with experience in global and local markets, including the Northern Rivers NSW region, and is an inventor on several patents for successfully commercialised technologies.

The reappointed Board members are Graeme Hargraves, who has been a Board Member since 2015, Mike Pearce since 2018 and Carolyn Parker since 2019. Vaughan Macdonald, who became a Board Member in 2021, is a continuing member.

Dr Vinnicombe said, “The strength of RDA Northern Rivers lies in the diversity, dedication, and strategic insight of our Board. Each member brings a unique perspective shaped by their professional background, lived experience, and commitment to regional growth and resilience.

“Their contributions will be critical as we continue to champion initiatives that drive economic development, support our communities, and position the Northern Rivers as a region of opportunity and innovation”.

Anthony Schreenan, Director, RDA Northern Rivers said, “It is a pleasure to welcome our new Board members to Regional Development Australia Northern Rivers.

“Each new member brings a wealth of knowledge, insight, and lived experience from across our diverse region, and I’m genuinely excited about the perspectives and energy they will contribute to our work.

“As a Board, RDA NR plays a critical role in shaping the future of the Northern Rivers—supporting sustainable economic development, strengthening our communities, and advocating for regional priorities at all levels of government.

“This is a region rich in potential, and the Board’s leadership will be instrumental in ensuring that opportunities are realised in a way that is inclusive, strategic, and future-focused.

“I look forward to working closely with the entire Board to continue to build momentum on key regional initiatives, collaborate with stakeholders, and help our communities thrive.”

Dr Vinnicombe said, “Thank you to everyone who put their hand up to be part of this important work. I’m looking forward to the year ahead and to working together to create a real impact for the Northern Rivers region.”



Left to Right: Anthony Schreenan, Director of Regional Development, RDA Northern Rivers, new board members Byron Wicks, Bianca Spata, Amanda Kuhn, Damian Chapelle, and Chair RDA Northern Rivers, Dr Susan Vinnicombe.

For more information on all our board members visit
www.rdanorthernrivers.org.au/about/our-board/

Media contact: Anthony Schreenan, RDA Northern Rivers Director of Regional Development

P: 0407 724 110 E: director@rdanorthernrivers.org.au

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