

MEDIA RELEASE

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Maleny Community Centre upgrade will provide employment opportunities

Upgrade work to the Maleny Community Centre is expected to start after Easter, creating up to 16 new jobs during construction and ongoing long term employment opportunities.

RDA Sunshine Coast Chair Prof Max Standage said the redevelopment was a major community infrastructure project which received a \$1.6 million grant from the Australian Government's Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF).

He said the funding would contribute towards the Centre's \$1.72 million Social Enterprise Capacity Building Renovation to service the region's ongoing cultural and social needs.

"Maleny Community Centre is an importance cultural hub for the Sunshine Coast Hinterland area. Its expanded facilities will foster new community and social enterprises in areas such as events management, performing and visual arts, cultural tourism and hospitality."

Redevelopment plans include a concert-ready modern main hall, installation of solar power and water tanks plus modern performance technology with broadband internet access. It will also create several rentable retail spaces to guarantee the centre's financial sustainability.

Regional Australia Minister Simon Crean said the upgrade, due to be completed in November, was expected to create sixteen jobs during construction, eight positions in the long term, and five new apprenticeships.

"The redeveloped community centre will be a focal point for local businesses and community groups across the region, and enable greater access to a range of cultural events and experiences," Mr Crean said.

"The Regional Development Australia Fund is providing communities across Australia with vital funding to improve local community infrastructure and diversify their economic base. This RDAF project at Maleny brings together National Broadband readiness, improved water and energy efficiency and new technologies to deliver cultural and economic benefits to the region."

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Maleny Community Centre President Heather Spring said the redevelopment would allow the centre to provide a modern, performance-ready hall and community space at affordable rates for use by the people of Maleny and the surrounding region.

"The provision of new commercial spaces will also ensure the future financial sustainability of the centre. This project also includes a web-based events management system to help promote the region's creative arts sector," Ms Spring said.

"We cannot underestimate the boost to our community that this redevelopment will bring about. The Maleny community owns this facility and we are committed to making it a place of excellence for use by local groups, visitors and touring performances."

Maleny Community Centre was one of seven Queensland projects to be funded in Round One of the RDA Fund program last year.

The Australian Government's RDA Fund provides \$1 billion over five years to support regional development initiatives through councils and not-for-profit organisations.

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