



# Finding and filling the empty spaces in our communities

- **Vennu awarded Women in Regional Business Innovate with nbn Grant Program category winner**

**Thursday 23 February, 2023** - Berry based businesses Vennu has taken out the Women in Regional Business category at the 2022 Innovate with **nbn** awards, winning a \$15,000 grant.

Vennu won the award for its innovative idea around utilising community spaces. Across Australia there are up to 100,000\* community spaces in Surf Lifesaving Clubs, community, school, scout and church halls available for hire. However, knowing where to find them, or even make a booking inquiry, can be challenging.

Enter Suzanne Campbell. She started [Vennu](#), an online marketplace, to connect community spaces with potential customers. At its core Vennu is trying to lift regional digital participation for those managing, and needing, space.

“Community spaces can be challenging to discover, book and use,” Ms Campbell said.

“We are radically simplifying space finding and hiring processes and delivering liability insurance with every booking.

“I want to stimulate regional economies with more local events where community spaces can become more viable and sustainable.”

Vennu will use its \$15,000 grant to continue development of the online platform.

Run in partnership with the Regional Australia Institute, the Innovate with **nbn** Grants Program is part of **nbn**'s commitment to lift the digital capability of Australia.

In its third year, the program aims to help regionally based businesses and individuals transform their great ideas into game-changing products and services. Up to \$125,000 in grants was awarded to regional businesses in seven categories including: Health, Agriculture, Tourism, Arts, Education, Indigenous Business and Women in Business.

**nbn** Chief Development Officer Regional and Remote Gavin Williams said the winners of Innovate with **nbn** stretched the length and breadth of regional Australia.

“The amazing level of innovative thinking in the bush is underscored by the breadth of clever ideas submitted by all the entrants,” he said.

Regional Australia Institute Chief Executive Officer Liz Ritchie said: “The Innovate with **nbn** Grants Program has been highly successful in helping regionally based businesses and individuals transform their ideas into game-changing innovations. In turn, this has helped lift the digital capability of people and businesses across regional Australia.”

The Innovate with **nbn** Grant Program winners announced last night include:

- **Women in Regional Business** – Vennu (NSW, Berry)
- **Tourism** – Busselton Jetty (WA, Busselton)
- **Health** – Connect Paediatric Therapy Services (WA, Karratha)
- **Agriculture (and overall Innovate with nbn Champion)**– Terra Lab (VIC, San Remo)
- **Arts** – Radio Margaret River (WA, Margaret River)
- **Education** – iClick2Learn (NSW, Dubbo)
- **Indigenous Business** – The Cultural Intelligence Project (Make it happen) – Cable Beach WA.

-ends-

**Note to editors:** Pictures and interview requests with winners can be arranged.

#### **ABOUT THE INNOVATE WITH NBN GRANTS PROGRAM**

- There was \$125,000 in grants awarded to innovative businesses in regional and remote Australia to help them bring their bright ideas to life.
- Finalists and winners are those harnessing the benefits of the **nbn** network to develop products or solutions that improve digital participation, productivity, or social outcomes for regional and remote Australians.
- Finalists are spread across seven categories that include: Health, Agriculture, Tourism, Arts, Education, Indigenous Business and Women in Business.
- The winner of each category received a \$15,000 grant. Each of the category winners were entered into a pool to become the overall winner (and Champion) and receive an additional \$20,000.
- Winners were announced last night (**Wednesday 22 February**) at a ceremony in Canberra.

## **Media inquiries**

**James Kelly**

**M:** 0455-079-295

**E:** [media@nbnco.com.au](mailto:media@nbnco.com.au)