

# THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

# MEDIA RELEASE

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**Regional Grant Opportunity Program Recipients**

The Morrison Government today announced that 62 small and regional publishers across Australia would share in around $9 million of Regional Grant Opportunity program funding to support local journalism.

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher, congratulated the recipients who have demonstrated solid business cases to increase the sustainability of publishing activities, including news gathering, production and distribution.

“The Morrison Government recognises the challenges facing regional publishers and local newspapers as they reshape their business models to deal with the digital landscape and put themselves on more sustainable footings for the future,” Minister Fletcher said.

“These grants provide regional publishers with the opportunity to invest in new technologies to support news gathering skills development and digital initiatives.”

The Regional Grant Opportunity program is overseen by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), which received 113 applications for the grants.

Each application was assessed according to three merit criteria: public interest journalism; editorial policy and complaints handling process; and the quality of the business case. Of the 62 grant recipients, 25 will be funded in full and 37 will be part funded.

Successful recipients include:

* Gippslandia Ltd, publisher of *Gippslandia* magazine in Victoria, which will receive a grant of $265,000 to upgrade its website and produce podcasts;
* Graziher Publishing Pty Ltd, publisher of *Graziher Magazine* in Queensland, which will receive a grant of $170,000, to employ journalists in rural and remote areas, develop an integrated content platform, and appoint a dedicated designer; and
* Condobolin Argus Pty Ltd, publisher of *The Condobolin Argus* in New South Wales, which will receive a grant of $84,072 to update critical equipment and increase staff capabilities to improve digital and print circulation.

The Regional Grant Opportunity is part of the $60.4 million Regional and Small Publishers Jobs and Innovation Package delivered as part of the Government’s 2017 media sector reforms. The Government has also committed $43.7 million over three years for the ABC to continue with the enhanced news measures in regional and rural areas, and supporting local news and current affairs.

The full list of recipients is available on ACMA’s website at: <http://www.acma.gov.au/innovationfund>

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**Additional information**

24 recipients are located in Victoria, 18 in New South Wales, 12 in Queensland, three in Tasmania, two in South Australia, and one each in Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.