



## **THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP**

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts

## **THE HON MARK COULTON MP**

Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government

### **JOINT MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Regional Digital Tech Hub tender now open**

The Morrison McCormack Government has opened a competitive tender process for the delivery of the new Regional Digital Technology Hub that will support regional Australians in building digital capabilities

Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, and the Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government, the Hon Mark Coulton MP, called for all interested providers to apply now for the design, build and operation of the state-of-the-art Digital Tech Hub.

Australians living in regional areas typically have lower levels of digital inclusion than those in metropolitan areas, scoring below the national average on access, affordability and digital ability.

“We understand that our regions have distinct digital needs and that those living in rural and remote Australia can face more barriers in finding the right solution for their communication needs,” Minister Fletcher said.

“The Digital Hub will support regional Australians in building their digital capabilities and provide independent, factual information about the range of digital services and solutions available to them.”

Minister Coulton said the hub is being developed in response to the 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review and that prospective applicants should focus on putting the needs of regional Australians first.

“The Digital Tech Hub will help regional Australians get the most out of their phones and internet,” Minister Coulton said.

“It will provide regional consumers with a range of practical resources from how to trouble-shoot mobile phone and internet issues right up to how to escalate faults with a connected service, and helping users understand their consumer rights.”

Interested parties have until Monday 6 July 2020 to submit applications to the competitive tender process. To apply, and for more information, visit the [Austender website](#).

The Digital Tech Hub is expected to be operational from late October 2020.

## **Background**

The 2018 Regional Telecommunications Review (the Review) found that consumers in regional communities often lack knowledge of how to use different technologies, including what they can be used for and how to trouble-shoot issues.

The Review recommended the development of an online technology hub to provide independent and factual information on digital choices to people in regional areas. The Review also recommended deploying technical advisors to provide on-the-ground support to connectivity.

In its response to the Review, the Government committed to developing a Digital Tech Hub. Current legislative authority does not extend to on-the-ground support but the response to the Review stated the need for this would be considered after the Digital Tech Hub was implemented.

**ENDS**

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