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FEDERATION UNIVERSITY TO HOST FUTURE OF REGIONS WORKSHOP IN ARARAT

As ongoing urbanisation continues to create economic, social and environmental challenges in regional areas, Federation University Australia is hosting a 'Future of Regions' workshop in Ararat with the aim of developing solutions for the sustainable future of regional Australia.

Urbanisation is a global phenomenon where the rural population tends to migrate to cities for better education, health and livelihood opportunities. Australia is highly urbanised, with 86 per cent of people living in cities today; a figure that continues to rise. This high rate of urbanisation has left regional Australia with higher levels of insecurity and income inequality, with few concerted efforts to reverse the growing trend.

With an acute need to address this gap for sustainable and equitable regional economic development, a team of multi-disciplinary experts from the Federation University's health, society, economic and environmental disciplines are converging on Ararat from 14 – 15 November for a workshop at the newly established Ararat Jobs and Technology Precinct (AJTP) on Laby Street in Ararat.

The workshop will focus on developing solutions for the sustainable future of regional Australia, with a particular focus on the Ararat community.

The newly developed AJTP is part of the [Future Regions Research Centre](#) (FRRRC) at Federation University which was established in 2021 and brings together expert research and local knowledge to tackle various challenges facing regional communities.

Professor Duncan Bentley, Vice Chancellor and President of the Federation University, supports the upcoming research workshop and said, "This workshop is another example of Federation University's commitment to transforming lives and enhancing communities.

"We established the Ararat Jobs and Technology Precinct in 2021 as a strategic research initiative to address one of our priority areas, Society and Environment in collaboration with our valued partner, Ararat Rural City Council."

Dr Tim Harrison, CEO of Ararat Rural City, said, "The AJTP is a unique partnership between Federation University and Ararat Rural City for regional economic development. The research workshop will help us establish benchmarks for broad indicators critical for the region's health, social, economic and environmental well-being."

"Researchers from the Federation University are excited to visit AJTP to brainstorm over two days research workshop co-organised with the Ararat Rural City and develop a research plan to

support economic development in Ararat,” said Professor Keir Reeves, Director of the Future Regions Research Centre at Federation University.

“AJTP is focused on engaging tomorrow’s researchers and entrepreneurs, transforming the regional economy, and improving the community’s health, safety and well-being,” said Professor Harpinder Sandhu, Director of AJTP at Federation University.

About Federation University Australia

With a history spanning over 150 years, Federation University Australia is Victoria’s premier regional dual-sector university with campuses located in Ballarat, Berwick, Gippsland and Wimmera. From 2018-2023 Federation ranked number one in Australia for first-generation student enrolments. In a first for Australia, the globally recognised co-operative education model will be embedded across all Federation programs from 2025.