

## SUPPORT FOR CANBERRA BUSINESSES

**\$20.4 million**  
to support businesses and drive investment

close to  
**40,000 jobs** have been created since 2001

**\$4.7 million** for 'One-stop-shop' for business

Promoting Canberra as a tourism & investment destination

**\$300 million** in local investment  
increase in jobs in renewable energy over the last 5 years  
400%

The 2015-16 ACT Budget for Canberra is about supporting local businesses, promoting job growth and continuing to support our economy.

We are doing this by investing in local businesses – the heart of our economy and community – and funding initiatives that play to the Territory's strengths and accelerate innovation.

The Government is spending more than \$20 million in new funding to support Canberra's business community and boost investment. We are upgrading ICT systems, simplifying processes and working in partnership with all sectors to make it easier to do business in the ACT.

### Investing to drive business growth

This Budget will deliver \$11.8 million in new funding over two years to support a range of initiatives in *Confident and Business Ready – Building on Our Strengths* – the Government's Business Development Strategy. This includes:

- **\$6 million** spread across two new programs – the CBR Innovation Development Fund and the CBR Trade and Investment Fund. These programs will support the private sector's expansion in the ACT economy through enterprise focused activities, including commercialisation support, export development, investment attraction and outreach and promotion;
  - **This includes an extra \$300,000** per year for the Canberra Innovation Network to take total annual funding to \$1.1 million.
- **\$1.4 million** to build on the success of the first phase of *Brand Canberra*, promoting the city as a place to live, work, invest, study and/or visit; and
- The Government will increase the payroll tax threshold to \$2 million by 2016-17 to provide a tax cut for all local businesses who are liable for this tax, and to exempt even more businesses from the tax.

### Partnering with local businesses

In 2015-16, the Government will be working in partnership with the private sector to encourage local firms to grow, innovate and do business with the Territory Government. Access to government procurement is a driver of business growth. As part of the **\$11.8 million** Business Development Strategy, the Government announced two procurement initiatives, which the local businesses community identified as priorities.

### Local Industry Advocate

In 2015-16, the Local Industry Advocate will be established. This Office, to be led by a respected and local industry figure, will ensure that ACT Government procurement decisions take into account the capability of the local industry. The first act of the Local Industry Advocate will be to undertake a Local Industry Participation Policy, to help establish best practice in linking ACT Government procurement with local businesses.

### Small Business Innovation Partnership

The Small Business Innovation Partnership will be modelled on similar programs around the world, including the United State's Small Business Innovation Research program. It will provide local companies with an opportunity to provide innovative products and services to the Territory Government with a view to developing these products and services for sale to other governments and clients.

## A one-stop-shop for business

**The Budget will provide \$4.7 million in new funding over four years to enable Access Canberra to make doing business with the Government simpler and easier. Access Canberra will reduce red tape and create a 'one stop shop' for dealing with government. This Budget includes:**

- **\$853,000** for the *Simpler Business Licensing* initiative to drive regulatory reform and reduce red tape across the ACT Government. The funding will be used to create standardised, simplified processes, leading to a single business framework for administering licences and permits through Access Canberra. It will also allow for the further expansion of online services and the integration of face-to-face services across Access Canberra shopfronts;
- **\$2.1 million** for the *Access Canberra – One service, one experience – online services* initiative to meet and deliver more government services and transactions online. The initiative will enable Access Canberra to establish a common customer service IT platform; and
- **\$1.8 million** for the *Land Titles Business Systems Modernisation* initiative to upgrade the current business system that manages ACT land data and land titles. This initiative will lead to a significant change in the way that Land Titles processes are managed in the ACT, including introducing electronic lodgement processes and enabling online access to the Land Title Register.

## Improved services for the building and construction industry

**\$3.9 million in new funding over four years will improve environment and planning services for the building and construction industry. This investment includes;**

- **\$1.4 million** to support a new streamlined approach to processing environmental approvals, reducing red tape for new developments and expediting approvals for potential home owners; and
- **\$2.5 million** to upgrade ageing ICT systems used to process development applications and building approvals. The new systems will be more user friendly, and include faster upload facilities, saving time and money for the building industry as well as government.