

27 June 2022

Mark Arnold  
Byron Council  
PO Box 219  
Mullumbimby NSW 2482

Dear Mark

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you our proposal for a significant promotional and branding campaign as part of the recovery efforts and initiatives across the Northern Rivers.

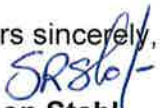
Northern Rivers Together was privileged to outline this proposal at the NORJO meeting in Lismore on May 20. We also took that opportunity to showcase the growth of the Northern Rivers NSW brand since its launch in April 2020, illustrated by more than 250 members using the brand and a social media audience growing from 0 to 16,000. We have seen the Northern Rivers NSW promoted on billboards and television and co-branded with the likes of Southern Cross University, Casino Foods Co-Op, Tweed Council and several more.

But we write to you at a time of critical need across our region, with the pandemic bookended by catastrophic bushfires in 2020 and floods in 2022. The February and March floods have been a body blow to the communities of our region, denting their confidence and hopes. The May 20 NORJO meeting highlighted the incredible amount of repair and recovery work coming down the pipeline over the coming years through multiple agencies. These endeavours need a focal point. The people directly affected need a rallying point. Our communities need a new narrative about their region. We believe strongly in the central and substantial role the Northern Rivers NSW brand can play in that endeavour. Funding will also contribute to the bigger back yard project, connecting local businesses on a platform that facilitates trade between local based businesses.

We are seeking a special contribution of \$50,000 from each council across the Northern Rivers to enable a Regional Marketing and Promotional Campaign like we have never seen before – like we have never needed before. We are acutely aware of the finite nature of local revenue and would hope there would be appropriate recovery-related schemes or programs that this campaign would meet the criteria of.

Attached is an outline of the campaign proposal, Bigger Backyard project and we look forward to sharing milestone reports with you along the way.

Yours sincerely,



**Simon Stahl**

**Interim Chair | Northern Rivers Together**



Connect with the **Northern Rivers NSW**  
[northernriversnsw.com.au](http://northernriversnsw.com.au)  
[hello@northernriversnsw.com.au](mailto:hello@northernriversnsw.com.au)

## **NORTHERN RIVERS TOGETHER**

### **Objective:**

To reinstate confidence and optimism in the Northern Rivers region, internally and externally, as a place to live, invest, pursue a career, visit and identify with.

### **Strategy:**

A high-frequency marketing campaign over 12-18 months across multiple channels and broad audience segments under the theme of *Northern Rivers Together*, responding to this period of natural disaster and uncertainty to rally the population, business community and civic leaders to believe in the qualities, features and future of the region.

### **Context:**

The Northern Rivers has suffered enormously in 2022 with two major floods in five weeks devastating the City of Lismore along with significant areas of Ballina, Byron Bay, Mullumbimby, Murwillumbah, Chinderah, Coraki, Woodburn, Broadwater, Kyogle and Casino. Hundreds of millions of dollars damage has been done and thousands of people displaced, some permanently. Confidence in the region has taken a huge hit, despite the amazing community and agency response to the adversity. The future prospects of the region as a place to invest, live, do business, undertake an education or visit have been severely compromised.

Cast back two years to April 2020, after 18 months collaboration, the new Northern Rivers NSW brand was launched. This new brand has the backing of significant regional players such as Casino Food Co-Op; Norco; Stone & Wood; Summerland Credit Union; Southern Cross University; Northern Rivers Foods; RDA Northern Rivers, Business NSW and Destination North Coast along with the local governments of Tweed, Byron Bay, Ballina, Lismore City, Richmond Valley, Kyogle and Clarence Valley. To date, about 250 businesses have adopted the new Northern Rivers NSW logo in their commerce, but the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have constrained the anticipated momentum of the brand's impact.

There is now a desperate need to bring the Northern Rivers community together. To provide a rallying point of hope and confidence amid the enormous amount of recovery, repair, policy and consultation that is gathering momentum. The regional brand provides that focal point.

Change countries and settings momentarily and in 2007, India was facing a major dilemma due to the ongoing 'brain drain' of its best young people to other countries and a lack of motivation to enter India's public or political life. The *Times of India* and partners launched the landmark **Lead India** campaign. Its centrepiece was a promotional campaign to draw the nation's young people together, give them inspiration and confidence in their nation to stay and become the next generation of MPs, government ministers and leaders. Lead India included a powerful two-minute video and an extensive high-frequency media campaign as well as speaker series, contests and seminars. The video that encapsulates the campaign can be viewed here:

<https://youtu.be/GPeeZ6viNgY>

*Northern Rivers Together can use the Lead India campaign as a template and inspiration for powerful messaging that can shift perception, behaviour and outcomes at our time when of greatest need.*

**Tactics:**

Creating a suite of videos that call on the *Northern Rivers – Together* would be used across digital, television and social media.

**Reach:** These would be supported by geographically targeted reach campaigns, focused primarily on the 300,000 people of the Northern rivers but secondary audiences would include neighbouring regions and decision-making groups in lead agencies.

**Engagement:**

Social Media campaign inviting contributions from the Northern rivers people.

The digital marketing would be complemented by activations that bring various groups “together”. These can be targeted at business and commerce; visitation and tourism; investment and entrepreneurialism; education and training; research and development; governance and policy ... whatever the appropriate couplings are.

A speaker series featuring the regions emerging leaders among the generation that will be critical to keep the Northern Rivers Together.

**Outcomes:**

- Improved confidence among Northern Rivers population, business, and leadership.
- Improved engagement of Northern Rivers young people in the future of the region.
- Improved perception and understanding of the range of advantages the Northern Rivers offers liveability, provenance, investment, and visitation.
- Delivery of a suite of videos -fit for purpose. (Anticipating a 2min video; 30sec; 15sec & 6sec).
- Reach of 90% of adults in the Northern Rivers
- High visibility and recollection of Northern Rivers NSW brand as a rallying emblem for the region
- Higher engagement of Northern Rivers businesses in the cohesive branding of the region for future benefit and growth

**Governance:**

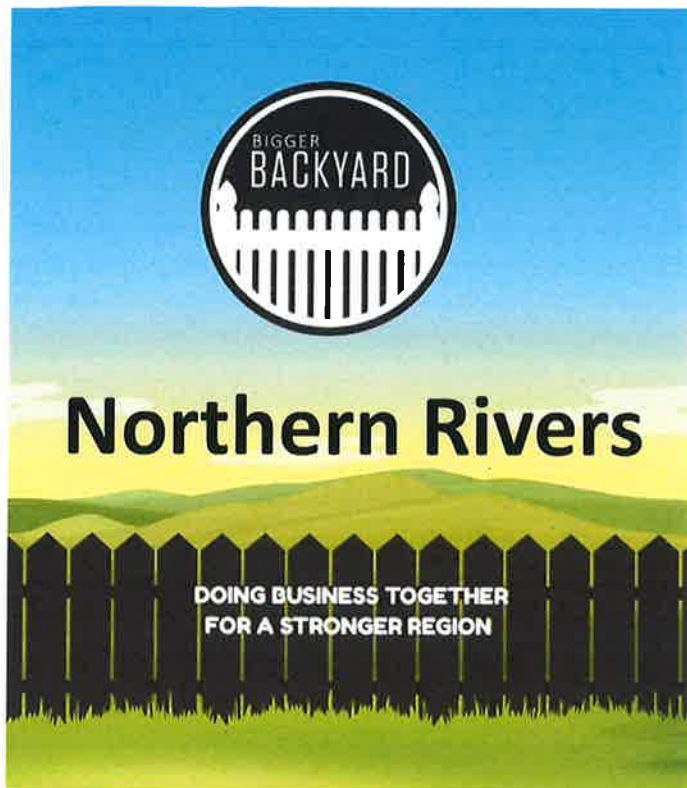
Northern Rivers Together is an Incorporated body and would oversee the program. Founding partner Southern Cross University would be the lead of the project. The University will comply with its own procurement policies and any additional compliance issues associated with the project.

The project would have milestones reportable to the Northern Rivers Together committee.

The project would be undertaken with the principle of utilising Northern Rivers suppliers as a priority.

**Proposed Budget (pending approvals)**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Project Line</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
NRT Founding Partners	\$50,000		
Regional NSW	\$50,000		
Tweed Shire Council	\$50,000		
Byron Shire Council	\$50,000		
Ballina Shire Council	\$50,000		
Lismore City Council	\$50,000		
Richmond River Council	\$50,000		
Kyogle Shire Council	\$50,000		
Clarence Valley Council	\$50,000		
		Scoping and Establishment	\$10,000
		Project Officer (18 months part-time)	\$100,000
		Creative Development and Production	\$110,000
		Advertising media buy	\$200,000
		Speakers Series	\$30,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>



## The Project - Getting Started

### BIGGER BACKYARD (DIGITAL TOOL)

With seed funding support from the Department of Regional NSW we can kickstart the first stage of the Bigger Backyard Northern Rivers program as presented at the May NORJO Meeting.

Bigger Backyard Northern Rivers is a business resilience initiative aimed at bringing us closer as a regional business community by strengthening our supply chains and regional purchasing power - Business to Business.

The initiative is designed as a future proofing project that understands the economic opportunity and impact of increased intra-region business procurement to the economy, community and jobs – keeping spend and investment in the region.

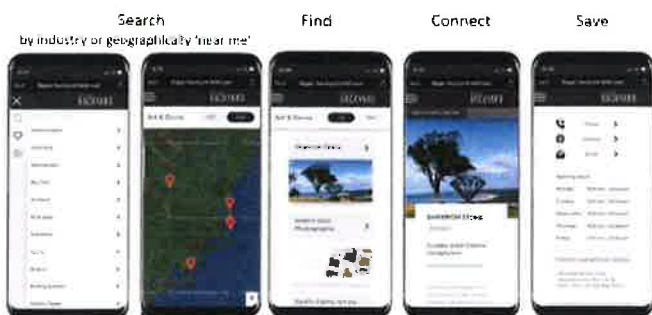
The very nature of business as a customer provides greater stability, once acquired business customers have a higher customer value, are easier to communicate with and require less resources to manage.

The Bigger Backyard Platform tool maintains and grows business relationships. It is the critical driver of the program and enables (stage 2) the Virtual Trade Expo, business matching and supply chain intelligence. The tool is a live directory with easy search functions and overall functionality.

We are also enabling additional features to support linking businesses to services/products for flood recovery and provide real time information on business re-openings.

In stage one we are building the Bigger Backyard Northern Rivers technology tool platform (the App) and capturing business data for launch and integration with the use of the Northern Rivers NSW Brand and support programs.

Critical to success will be the marketing strategy developed and campaigns implemented to drive engagement for data entry and B2B sales via the tool. The tool will also underpin the Regional Virtual Trade Show, a catalyst event further enabling businesses to build a network of regional suppliers.



For more information about Bigger Backyard Northern Rivers please contact [jane.laverty@businessnsw.com](mailto:jane.laverty@businessnsw.com)

