

office for youth

Ignite



Entrepreneur program for young people  
in the agri-food sector



## Ignite

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### Expression of Interest

#### AN ENTREPRENEUR PROGRAM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

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##### Ignite

Ignite is an entrepreneur program that will enable young people (aged 18-30) in the agri-food sector to develop the skills to establish and expand agri-enterprises that are commercially and environmentally sustainable and innovative. If you have a new idea that will grow your business, then this program is for you.

The Ignite program will utilise experts to deliver an integrated professional development program that covers business, financial management, sustainability, managing in a changing climate, family business planning/relationships and entrepreneurial skills. The program will consist of field trips, networking events, lectures and panel discussions. Another key feature of the program is mentoring, where young participants will be teamed with a mentor who will provide support and advice in building entrepreneurial agri-enterprises.

All up, Ignite will provide an experience that helps build both the young entrepreneur and the young entrepreneurs business.

It's all about getting the skills, the contacts, the support and advice to make existing businesses more sustainable and resilient in a changing climate.

Ignite clusters will initially be established for young people located in the following regions:

- Kangaroo Island
- Barossa Valley
- Murray Lands
- Mid North

##### Why Ignite?

Managing a business in the agri-food sector can be challenging. With climate change, increased consumer demands, higher operational costs, and an international economic slowdown (need we say more!) building or expanding a business requires you to be business savvy, financially ready and innovative.

Ignite offers you the opportunity to be proactive and develop new skills and networks so that you can plan for these changes and manage your future.

The vision for Ignite is to give young agri-food entrepreneurs (aged 18-30) a learning opportunity that delivers skills, networks and support to build or expand their business in an innovative and sustainable manner.

### **What's in it for me?**

Ignite is an entrepreneurial program – over the first year there will be 12 days of networking, mentoring events, field trips and professional development / training from a range of experts. Through this program we want to see young entrepreneurs grow innovative commercially and environmentally sustainable businesses.

The program will utilise the skills of academics, lecturers, successful business owners, business consultants and numerous skilled training providers from throughout South Australia. These people will be of high standard with practical experience of regional communities and their needs. Further, the Ignite program combines structured training sessions with an element of self direction – this will ensure you can have your say on what skills you want or need to grow (i.e. marketing, business management, product development, commercialisation or other).

Throughout this program you will develop a business plan tailored to your business and an eco plan to determine how you can save costs through sustainability measures. You will also gain a whole heap of skills and contacts.

Ignite is supported by the state and federal government to build capacity of young people in regional areas. Further, the government is keen to invest in people who are building sustainable and productive businesses in a changing climate. Over a two year period, the Australian Government (through the Targeting Skills Needs in the Regions Programme) will invest \$262,000 to provide professional development events to the Ignite participants in four areas of regional South Australia. The South Australian Government through the Office for Youth in partnership with PIRSA will contribute a further \$294,000 in operational and administration support.

This funding will support the professional development of 10-15 young entrepreneurs / businesses at four Ignite clusters. These clusters will be located in regional South Australia – Kangaroo Island, the Mid-North, Murraylands, and the Barossa Valley (further clusters may be established subject to further funding). Participants will be selected on an application process.

### **Costs**

There are NO costs for successful Ignite participants other than the \$80 registration fee. You will also be responsible for getting to and from the events (unless indicated otherwise). How's that for value for money!

### **Project Outcomes**

The Ignite program will be fun; there will be field trips, panels sessions, networking, mentoring and more. There are however, a number of deliverables required by you. These include:

- The development of a business plan or action plan (we will provide experts to help you develop this);
- The development of an eco-plan; and
- You/your business making a presentation about how the program has influenced your business.

### **Cluster events**

As discussed, each cluster has the opportunity to collaborate and design components of the Ignite program to suit their learning needs. This program might consist of field trips, mentoring, business development activities or training.

From our point of view, there are some elements of the program that are a must for any young rural entrepreneur and so we have made them mandatory.

These 'must do' sessions include:

- Fundamentals of entrepreneurship
- Designing a profitable business model/business planning
- Understanding finances, managing cash flow
- Managing your business in a changing climate (how to plan both financially, environmentally and mentally)
- Sustainable business growth and development
- Managing personal/business relationships

On completion of these modules your business will be eligible for a session of individual business consultancy and activities such as mentorship, coaching and specialist advice.

### **Cluster communication**

Involvement in the program gives you the opportunity to work with a group of like minded businesses – communication between your group and cluster will be important. But it's not just the communication between your cluster that's important... there's the mentors you will engage with, the professionals that speak on the panels and the other business people you will meet. To help keep in touch, and also to keep you in the loop on any grants or research relevant to agri-food businesses, we will establish a new web site with interactive components (blogs, wiki's and the rest!)... This will ensure you are in the know!

Down the track a cluster coordinator will be appointed to help manage efficient communication and cluster activities.

### **How do I get involved?**

To get involved with Ignite, simply complete this Expression of Interest form. This application will be assessed by the Ignite Advisory Group (a panel who have knowledge of agribusiness, local conditions, entrepreneurship, youth and environmental issues including climate change mitigation).

**Successful applicants will be notified by mail by 4 March 2009.**

You will then need to complete a formal application (don't worry this won't be too much paper work!) Essentially, we need to get some information from you for our reporting purposes and ensure you are committed to the program – we will help with this bit!

Once selected you will join a cluster group of up to 15 young entrepreneurs/businesses.

Successful applicants should be available for the first Ignite professional development session (fundamentals of entrepreneurship) which will be held on the following dates:

- 16 March 2009, Clare
- 17 March 2009, Barossa Valley
- 18 March 2009, Murray Bridge
- 19 March 2009, Kangaroo Island

### Other points to consider...

- Ignite participants should live within a reasonable travelling distance of one of the four Ignite clusters;
- Participants should be willing to participate in 12 full days of professional development activities over 12 months;
- As places are limited we ask you to consider your commitment carefully.

### Am I eligible?

This program is for you if you can answer YES to the following...

- I am aged 18–30 and work in the agri-food sector
- I have an idea for (at least one of the following):
  - a new concept or innovation that will enable the business to be more sustainable in a changing climate, **OR**
  - an innovative way to diversify or expand the business through the value chain.
- Can commit to bi-monthly activities (at a time decided by mutual agreement). This will equate to around 12 full days per year. Note: if you nominate a business to attend (i.e. a husband and wife partnership) one member of the business must be present at each session);
- I am located in one of the following regions Barossa Valley, Mid North, Murraylands and Kangaroo Island;
- I am prepared to pay a \$80 Ignite registration fee if selected;
- I have access to the Internet and email; and
- I am prepared to have images of myself used for promotional or educational purposes – for example on the website.

### Some things are not able to be supported as part of this program...

While we are providing and investing a fair amount of money into this program, we need to be clear about some things we won't support (just so we are all on the same page).

We will not fund or support:

- Business projects already completed before the commencement of program period;
- Start-up business costs;
- The purchase of equipment or machinery;
- The purchase of services contracted by you for your business;
- Your travel costs to attend cluster activities unless specifically advised that this is the case. In general, travel to the cluster activities is at your cost. However travel on field trips will be supported and we will advise you on these occasions. Lunch, morning and afternoon teas will be provided at the training days.

We are not liable for any costs you incur as part of establishing your business nor are we liable for the advice offered.

Speak to us if you are unsure about any of these things.

### **Assessment Criteria**

Businesses who are selected to participate in the Ignite program will be selected on the following:

- Response to the selection criteria;
- Demonstrated commitment to the agrifood sector;
- Long term environmental concepts of the new business idea;
- Business sustainability – economic and environmental; and
- Support from referees.

### **Processing**

Expressions of Interest are registered and processed by the Office for Youth and we will acknowledge your expression of interest by email.

Your applications will be forwarded to the peer assessment panel members, who individually evaluate them before the panel meets. If necessary, an application may be sent to additional assessors for comment.

Assessment will be confidential and assessors will be required to sign an agreement not to discuss your business idea out of session with other people. Assessors names will not be published as we would prefer these people are able to make independent judgement without fear or favour.

### **Assessment panel meetings**

The Assessment Panel will assess applications against the given criteria. There may be more eligible applications than the funds can support and so participation will be on the basis of the applicant that best meets the selection criteria.

### **Approval, notification and advice**

All applicants will be notified of the outcome by email, mail or phone as suggested in your application form.

### **Important dates**

Expressions of interest to participate in the Ignite program will close on **18 February 2009**.

Successful applicants will have their first Ignite professional development day in the week beginning 16 March 2009.

### **Further Information**

For further information or any questions please contact:

Belinda Barr  
Barr.Belinda@saugov.sa.gov.au or phone 0423 295 576

Sam LeRay  
Leray.Sam@saugov.sa.gov.au or phone 8226 6609 or 0434 654 916

**Personal Details**

Name

Address

Postcode

Phone (W)

Phone (H)

Mobile

Date of Birth

Website

Email

Citizenship

If you are submitting a joint application with your business partner or spouse please list their details:

Name

Email

Role /position

Tick Ignite cluster you will be located in (tick one box only):

Murraylands

Barossa

Kangaroo

Island Mid North

**Employment/Business details**

Are you (tick one box only):

self employed

employed

family business

What is the name of the business/company that you work for?

What is the nature of the business/company that you work for?

Describe your role/position

How is your business or the business you work for structured (include details such as number of employees, company structure, partners etc)?

**Business Ideas...**

Describe your business idea considering ONE or more of the following points:

- a new concept or innovation that will enable the business to be more sustainable in a changing climate. OR
- an innovative way to diversify or expand the business through the value chain.

Feel free to attach any additional information.

Where would you like your business or the business you work for to be in five years? eg in terms of productivity, sustainability, size, production, economic growth, market position etc.

**Background**

Briefly provide details of your past employment

List any course/s degree/s and or training have you completed or are currently undertaking?

Describe what support /assistance you need to be more entrepreneurial (eg mentoring, business management, market research, financial management etc)?

Please list two referees who we could contact in support of your application

Name

Phone

Email

Name

Phone

Email

Please submit your expression of interest, along with your personal resume and any other supporting documentation via one of the following:

- **Email to:** Barr.Belinda@saugov.sa.gov.au  
Leray.Sam@saugov.sa.gov.au
- **Online at:** [www.officeforyouth.com.au](http://www.officeforyouth.com.au) – apply through YouthSMART, the Office for Youth online application system To access YouthSMART, just head to the Office for Youth home page and click on the YouthSMART icon. This will take you to the login screen where you can register as a new user and submit your application electronically.
- **Fax to:** (08) 8204 8499
- **Post to:** The Ignite Program  
GPO Box 320  
Adelaide SA 5001

*NOTE: All information provided is treated as strictly confidential and will not be disclosed outside of any official Office for Youth business relations. You have the right to access/update this information held by the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology under the Freedom of Information Act.*

