



The Rural City of  
**MURRAY  
BRIDGE**

Bridge to Opportunity

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## MEDIA RELEASE

**Subject:** Impact Youth, Kickstart Loans program launch

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Opportunities for young people to work, grow and stay local in Murray Bridge just got better, with the launch of the Impact Youth *Kickstart Loans*.

Young entrepreneurs now have the opportunity to launch (or grow) their small business ideas with a \$2000 loan and professional mentoring support thanks to a new initiative from The Rural City of Murray Bridge's Youth Council – Impact Youth.

Kickstart Loans will support budding entrepreneurs and empower local youth aged 12-25 with the skills and confidence to start or expand their own small business.

Mayor Brenton Lewis said the goal of the program is to foster the entrepreneurial spirit of the region, create more employment opportunities and engage local youth.

"We want more young entrepreneurs to realise their dreams and build their enterprise in our thriving community," Mayor Lewis says.

Impact Youth is a Rural City of Murray Bridge initiative, providing opportunities for youth leadership and a voice on decision-making. The group is led by three Year 12 students from Unity College who aim to assist in creating opportunities for local young people.

Impact Youth Mayor Sallee Shepherd said the Kickstart Loans offered a range of mechanisms to help young people who live, work or study in the Rural City of Murray Bridge area, to create or grow their small business vision.

"A lot of people don't know where to start. The *Kickstart Loans* will equip these young entrepreneurs with a stepping-stone to reach their goal of running a local business," Sallee says.

"We know there are a lot of young people in the district who are unemployed, underemployed, or not sure of whether they can achieve their dreams while still living here. We want to help change that, and the loans and professional support program is one initiative that we hope will help.

"Through the Kickstart Loans scheme, young people can apply for an interest-free loan of up to \$2,000 to help them set up an office, attend regional market fairs, develop new products, increase their marketing efforts and so much more. We want the loans to provide direct support to their business outcomes, and eventually help grow their business to become successful and sustainable."

Mayor Lewis reiterated that the value of the program to young successful applicants is far more than simply the \$2,000 loan.

“Those accepted into the program will undertake three workshops with local industry experts supporting a foundational knowledge base for young start-ups,” Mayor Lewis says.

“They’ll be exposed to sessions on Finance Management presented by Julie Humphreys of Humphreys Consulting, Communications and Branding by Courtney Blacker of Commshake Media and Engagement, and Business Foundations by Steven Walker of Kookaburra Homes. Each helping them set up a great business model from the outset.”

After the workshops are complete, participants will present their business proposal to a panel of mentors and youth councilors, and if successful, will be awarded with the loan.

Throughout the first year Impact Youth will continue to connect participants with networking, advice and support, including partnering people with local professional mentors who can support them with advice and strategy when needed.

For more information including how to apply visit [murraybridge.sa.gov.au](http://murraybridge.sa.gov.au).

