

## **The Bega Valley Innovation Hub (BVIH) offers free work space to bushfire-affected businesses**

The Bega Valley Innovation Hub, supported by the University of Wollongong and iAccelerate, is opening its doors to the business community, offering a free work space to any business that is directly or indirectly affected by the bushfires.

We invite businesses to experience the benefit of education and co-working alongside our entrepreneurs, mentors, and industry experts. You will be able to connect and collaborate with other local businesses that are also sharing the impact of the bushfires, and share your challenges.

We will be offering 10 temporary, free co-working spaces, with modern desks, meeting facilities and internet connectivity for those businesses affected either directly or indirectly by the bushfires across our region.

Kay Saarinen, Saarinen Organics, says: *“The Innovation Hub has been our saviour, our strength, and is continuing to support our future.”*

Jo Lane, Sea Health Products says: *“The Innovation Hub is a great experience, not only for the valuable and informative content and excellent presenters, but also the support and connections from the rest of the team. Being able to share ideas, ups and downs and feel supported is so comforting.”*

The desks will be offered at two places per business, on a rolling 30-day basis, as we gauge community needs and space availability.

**“If you are ready to bounce back and work in a nurturing and collaborative co-working environment, supported by education and mentoring come and join us” – programme manager Mia Maze**

In addition, we are planning education and mentoring sessions aimed at assisting you to re-focus, stabilise and plan in the recovery and rebuilding of your business.

The focus will be on adopting technology for resilience using digitalisation and promotion techniques for your business. These opportunities will be offered in the same building as the desks, within the office suites of the Sapphire Market Place in central Bega.

*“Bega Valley Shire Council is a keen supporter and investor in the Bega Valley Innovation Hub and this announcement supports our existing business connect better and support each other more effectively in challenging times. By being part of this hub businesses will build relationships and be exposed to fantastic business development and networking opportunities.”* – Daniel Murphy, Economic Development Officer BVSC

John Watkin, President of the Bega Chamber of Commerce says *“The Bega Chamber of Commerce are proud to be founding supporters of the Innovation Hub and it’s great that they are now able to give back in the way of co-working space for those businesses affected by the Bushfires.”*

Over the past year, and in collaboration with iAccelerate and University of Wollongong our local Innovation Hub has connected, promoted and accelerated the growth of Bega Valley entrepreneurs and businesses. We are now looking to provide as much support as we possibly can to help regional businesses impacted to recover, reset and reimagine.

Applications for the 10 desks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and additional resources will be made available after listening to our local business chambers, partners and the local and regional business community.

**To take part in this offer, please contact us at: [bega@iaccelerate.com.au](mailto:bega@iaccelerate.com.au)**

**To find out more:**

[www.iaccelerate.com.au](http://www.iaccelerate.com.au)

[www.begavalleyinnovationhub.com.au](http://www.begavalleyinnovationhub.com.au)

**To view current and past business residents go here:**

<http://www.begavalleyinnovationhub.com.au/australian-startups/>

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