

Upstairs opens doors for Central West startups

Central West NSW has a long history of entrepreneurship. From the gold rushes of the 1950s, to producing the first medical X-ray and hosting the country's first experiential technology hub, Gunthers Lane, the Bathurst region has demonstrated that innovation lives outside the city.

Now, that culture of enterprise is set to bloom, with the opening of the Upstairs Startup Hub. Backed by a \$270,000 grant from Jobs for NSW and assistance from Upstairs' founding partners Reliance Bank, Charles Sturt University and Bathurst Regional Council, the Upstairs Startup Hub will help grow new businesses in the Central West and create up to 137 jobs in five years.

Investing in regional NSW

Until now, startups operating in the region have had no centre to turn to for the mentoring, collaboration and support programs provided by metropolitan incubators.

As the main gateway to the Central West, Bathurst and the Upstairs Startup Hub will be a place where local entrepreneurs can develop their ideas, meet mentors and collaborators, and expand their business.

'We can give startups the same opportunities one might get in Sydney, and an even greater runway, but without the higher cost of living', says James Lloyd, manager of the Upstairs Startup Hub.

With support from Jobs for NSW, Upstairs was able to fit-out and operate the 600 square metre space, which comes complete with 32 dedicated workstations, breakout zones, quiet areas, a boardroom, high-speed internet, meeting rooms, 24/7 access and a pitch space.

'Without the Jobs for NSW funding, we would not have been able to complete the Upstairs project', says James. 'Ultimately, it has enabled us to provide an inspirational space that startups want to come and work from.'



An open-plan breakout zone at the Upstairs Startup Hub in Bathurst.



NSW Deputy Premier John Barilaro (fourth from left) with Bathurst community leaders.

Skilling up for the new economy

To help develop the community of talent in the Central West, Upstairs will offer business mentoring programs, kids' coding nights, robotics competitions, hackathon events and 'how-to' sessions for targeted groups. They've also developed a remote membership program to support entrepreneurs who don't live within driving distance of Bathurst.

'From agtech to autonomous driving, 'Software as a Service' and manufacturing, Bathurst and the Central West's diverse fabric of businesses means we have a lot of opportunity to create the jobs of the future', says James.

Find out more

- Email enquiries@jobsfornewsw.com.au
- Call **1300 JOB NSW (1300 562 679)**
- Visit jobsfornewsw.com.au