

# **Brokering business skills development for horticulture**

Amabel Fulton  
RDS Partners Pty Ltd

Project Number: HG06160

## HG06160

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Brokering business skills  
development for horticulture

Final Report (October 2008)

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### **Purpose**

The purpose of this final report is to summarise and evaluate project HG06160, Brokering business skills development for horticulture, which ran from July 2007 – September 2008.

This project was funded via Voluntary Contributions from the host company, Rural Development Services Pty Ltd, Voluntary Contributions from participants, and matching funding from Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL).



### **Date of report**

October 2008

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## Media summary

A pilot training program, Coordinating Business Services in Regional Australia, was developed and delivered to a group of twelve women from New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, and Victoria. The program was designed by Amabel Fulton, Jeanette Long and Cathy McGowan. The program aimed to develop and test the model of demand driven industry development using the process of service brokerage. The program also developed the skills and knowledge of regional business operators, in brokering, as a model for ensuring demand driven industry development.

Outcomes included:

- development of brokerage skills amongst regional level service brokers
- development of skills of small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in horticulture by coordinating services in response to demand
- development of a business model for coordination of brokering services

A four day workshop was held in Sydney in March 2008. Participants also participated in regular phone links, and a follow up workshop was held in Melbourne in September 2008.

Training brokerage (identifying needs and matching training to meet these needs) was studied as a mechanism for delivery of client focused education and training in the agricultural sector in a Cooperative Venture for Capacity Building project by Sue Kilpatrick and Amabel Fulton in 2005. Following this, five pilot Training Broker projects were commissioned by the FarmBis Targeted Training Initiative in Tasmania. Each of these projects resulted in significant industry benefits and demonstrated the effectiveness of brokering as a means of ensuring demand driven industry development.

The success of the Tasmanian pilot Training Broker projects demonstrated a need in the area of training brokerage. It was seen that this concept could be applied to all types of industry development services, not just training. As such, the term Service Broker was adopted. There was an opportunity to develop the skills amongst regional level service brokers, so they could ensure demand driven industry development for the horticultural sector.

The pilot program was successful in developing the skills and knowledge of participants. However, it has become evident that there is a need for establishment of an ongoing service, servicing the needs of participants, including initial training program, annual conference, and professional development/ business development training. This would prepare participants (private sector consultants) for an increasing role for delivery of demand driven industry development for horticulture.

The project team also recognised that a network of regional service brokers could be developed, for coordinating broker services and creating a national capacity for demand driven industry development, in the horticultural sector. A business model has been developed for continuation of the project. This involves funding for a

further three years to establish the service. After three years, consideration would be given to becoming a self funded commercial business.

It is recommended to deliver the training program annually to new participants, primarily aimed at private service deliverers. The training could be incorporated with an annual “Demand Driven Industry Development” conference, providing an opportunity for past participants to network with industry guests and new participants.

Following the success of the project, HAL could consider using the demand driven industry development model with its Industry Advisory Committees. Each Industry Advisory group could be aligned with a broker (private service deliverer).

## Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide historical background to the project, why it was undertaken, its significance for industry and the aims of the project.

### ***Historical background to project***

Training brokerage (identifying needs and matching training to meet these needs) was studied as a mechanism for delivery of demand driven industry development, in the agricultural sector, in a Cooperative Venture for Capacity Building project by Sue Kilpatrick and Amabel Fulton in 2005. Following this, five Training Broker projects were commissioned by the FarmBis Targeted Training Initiative in Tasmania. Each of these projects resulted in significant industry benefits by identifying and matching, demand for industry development, in a range of industry sectors (identification of training needs, organisation of training, and access to funding for training).

### ***Why it was undertaken***

The success of the Tasmanian Training Broker projects, demonstrated a need in the area of training brokerage.

It was seen that this concept of demand driven training, through brokerage, could be applied to all types of industry development services, not just training. As such, the term Service Broker was adopted. There was an opportunity to develop the skills amongst regional level service brokers, so they could ensure demand driven industry development for the horticultural sector.

There was an opportunity to:

- develop the skills amongst regional level service brokers to identify horticultural business service needs and coordinate the delivery of services to address these needs (ensuring private sector consultants developed the skills necessary to deliver demand driven industry development services); and
- develop the skills of small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in horticulture by coordinating services to address limitations to horticultural business performance at a management, financial, marketing and human resource level (by matching services to meet the industry development demands of the SMEs).

### ***Significance for industry***

The knowledge and skills of regional service brokers have been developed including:

- identification of client service needs,
- services and resources available,
- awareness of funding available and
- progression towards a coordinated approach to demand driven industry development, using the service brokerage process.



This will provide a mechanism, by which small to medium enterprises in horticulture (and other rural industries), can improve their business skills, and access resources.

A process was developed and tested by which the above can be achieved.

***Project aims***

To develop a process to:

- develop the brokerage skills amongst private sector regional level service brokers;
- develop the skills of small to medium (production) enterprises in horticulture by coordinating services, in response to demand;
- development of a business model for coordination of demand driven industry development, using the process of service brokerage.

## Technology transfer strategy and activities

The purpose of this section is to outline methodology of the project design, delivery and activities.

The project included six major components:

- Engagement of stakeholders
- Development of the business model for coordination of demand driven industry development (using the process of service brokerage)
- Engagement of participants
- Design of training programme
- Delivery of training programme (two workshops)
- Evaluation of training programme and the potential of service brokerage as a process, for delivering demand driven industry development in the horticultural sector.

Project outputs included:

- pre workshop survey of participants
- pre workshop participant phone link
- a four-day workshop in Sydney (March 2008) including two networking dinners
- post workshop survey and evaluation of workshop
- six participant phone links
- a one-day workshop in Melbourne (September 2008)
- participant brokering project reports (example report attached – Appendix A)
- post workshop survey and evaluation
- legacy plan for continuation of the project
- 

## Evaluation and measurement of outcomes

The purpose of this section is to evaluate the extent to which the project outcomes were met.

### ***Cost benefit analysis***

It was not practicable to quantify return on investment for individual participant projects at this early stage in the process. Experience with other brokerage pilots has shown that benefits do not start to flow until the second year of service brokerage. As such, a cost benefit analysis of service brokerage for Simplot potatoes is used to demonstrate the potential benefits to industry. Over three years, Simplot contributed \$105.86K. This investment generated additional cash funds of \$1.09m for delivery of services to growers and field staff, accessed from a wide range of funding and service providers (not just the service broker). The total value of outputs was \$1.15m.

The outputs delivered have taken the form of:

- Training for growers and field officers
- Funding submissions
- Project management
- Facilitation
- Simplot company to growers communication

The outcomes already delivered have been:

- Improved skills amongst growers and field staff
- Access to \$1.094m of additional funds for Simplot growers
- Increased confidence in Simplot by growers
- Access to new production technology"

### ***Impact and adoption***

## **Outcome 1. Development of skills amongst private sector regional level service brokers**

### **WORKSHOP ONE:**

The objective of the workshop was to provide training and support, for the participants to set themselves up as service brokers, to deliver demand driven industry development services. The post workshop survey indicated that this objective was met in terms of the knowledge and skills gained from participating in the workshop. Results indicated that in all key areas, there was an increased level of knowledge and skills. This was particularly evident for:

- Q1 (engaging and working with community groups/industry groups);
- Q3 (understanding business systems, and brokering); and
- Q6 (knowledge of and ability to access horticultural industry training products and services).

The workshop evaluation process consisted of the following components:

- Pre-workshop survey of participants
- In-workshop participant evaluation (as described above)
- In-workshop evaluation by facilitators (as above)
- Post-workshop survey of participants
- Post-workshop evaluation by facilitators.

Evaluation indicated a very high level of participant satisfaction with all components of the programme. Participant evaluation of the workshop overall was an average score of 9.1 out of 10.

During the workshop, the programme was amended to include extra sessions requested by participants, including business analysis tools. The downside of this was that some other sessions were shorter than adequate. However, participants recognised this, and greatly valued the flexibility of the project team in responding to their needs.

Participants were asked for feedback on each session (Table 1).

<b>Session</b>	<b>Comments</b>
MBTI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard to cover sufficiently in such a small space in time. Wonder if it is worthwhile including in such a short conference</li> <li>• Met these expectations and more</li> <li>• Very powerful information in any aspect of</li> </ul>

	<p>communication i.e marketing through to general communication. Has given me some tools on how I present myself to different people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great foundation to the workshop</li> <li>• Fantastic, confirmation of prior knowledge.</li> <li>• Things clicked.</li> </ul>
Personal skills audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop awakened skills and improved others</li> <li>• I didn't feel we had enough time for this topic (but I say that with understanding of the time limitations).</li> </ul>
Conducting a needs analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extremely helpful</li> <li>• Achieved my original expectations</li> <li>• Thinking on a more critical level, to be able to ID risk</li> <li>• Recognise how to do it and have more skills after participating. Look forward to practising and seeing results!!</li> <li>• Gained greater understanding of what needs analysis is and its role in business development.</li> </ul>
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The content, effort and time spent on this was fantastic.</li> <li>• Achieved my original expectations</li> <li>• My favourite session!</li> <li>• Really enjoyed the coaching in this area - very valuable</li> <li>• 10 for the value in the participation, and 8 for the skills to be converted to a 10 with practice and implementation.</li> <li>• Fantastic coaching by Cathy.</li> <li>• Thoroughly enjoyed learning "how to work the room". How to get through a business function as a non people person.</li> </ul>
Service brokerage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extremely helpful</li> <li>• Achieved some of my original expectations</li> <li>• Addressed very well. Now have the background knowledge.</li> <li>• Access to the CBS network will help to make this a success in my business.</li> <li>• This was well covered but I don't aspire to the training thing.</li> </ul>
Financial analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learned about some excellent tools</li> <li>• A good tool</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very practical</li> <li>• Now I have the motivation to make it happen (financial analysis of my business).</li> <li>• Very good examples by Amabel - gave great clarity.</li> <li>• Amabels business insights in this topic were FABULOUS. The facilitated panel in this section worked well.</li> </ul>
Business risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good discussion and examples from the group</li> <li>• Achieved my original expectations</li> <li>• We looked at risk/problem, may be could have looked more.</li> <li>• Access to corporate governance.</li> <li>• Gave me lots of issues to consider!</li> <li>• Perhaps a little rushed (once again I am well aware of why).</li> </ul>
Marketing our services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A little short (but only because you made the most of all the better bits</li> <li>• A little brief</li> <li>• Now I have the knowledge to make this happen</li> <li>• A light bulb in terms of marketing benefits rather than features.</li> </ul>
Strategic and action planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good plan. Could use templates perhaps</li> <li>• Extremely well done</li> <li>• Working together with Sally on project.</li> <li>• The Business Plan software looks great. Business Plan will be my project.</li> </ul>
Working together post workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great discussion</li> <li>• Fantastic</li> <li>• Keep CBS for women going.</li> <li>• For me it will need to have a purpose to get together rather than getting together for its own sake (I think).</li> </ul>

**Table 1: Participant comments on each session in workshop one**

**Participant comments – workshop one, overall:**

- I was a bit worried to start with, as I was not sure what I would gain from the course. However I was very pleasantly surprised with the level of understanding I gained from an industry I really did not know much about. Thank you for the opportunity
- Overall score 9.5/10. I would have given 10/10 except I found 2 of the sections on Wednesday too rushed, e.g. marketing plan. The overall

program is equal to or better than any other PD I have done (i.e. many) for many reasons, e.g. skill development, increased knowledge, sharing of strategies, networking (within and outside the group), meeting my needs, enhancing my personal development and seeing how I might work within regional groups. I have enjoyed and valued the contributions of everyone in the group as well as the fun. A BIG BIG THANKYOU! I look forward to a continued working relationship as well as valuable friendship.

- Hard to fit everything in such a short space of time. However, the flexibility to adjust to what the group felt was important was very valuable.
- This is a fantastic opportunity. Not alone. Thankful/grateful. Lots of skills I can use to develop others.
- Well done girls, a BIG BANG just went off!!
- Amabel, Cathy and Jeanette deliver an inspiring program that provides the tools for women to develop their careers through their own business regardless of location. A truly worthwhile program that has made a real difference to my life.
- I would strongly recommend the experience to other women working in consulting across regional Australia, especially those in start up and growth stage. Very motivating, well structured, dynamic leadership. Helpful friendly environment. Yes this old work horse was challenged and found it very beneficial.
- This has been the most valuable training experience I have been to. The investment I have made will be returned many times. Thank you to those with the vision to make this happen.
- This workshop helped to open my eyes to the possibility of my own business and surrounded me with the people and inspiration I need to make it a reality.
- Workshop was the most rewarding on a personal and business level that I have been to. To have such a mixture of skills and personalities to be inspired by, was exciting and exhilarating. I now have the support of 12 other likeminded women who will push me forward, challenge me, cheer for me and pick me up if I fall.

Highlights of workshop one included:

- Two networking dinners with industry guests
- Business panel session
- Myers Briggs Type Indicator session
- An introduction to brokering
- Business analysis tools
- Participation of a diverse group of women, with a wide range of skills and experiences

The evaluation process for workshop one, resulted in the following recommendations:

1. That the basic content and structure of the workshops be retained.
2. That business analysis tools be included in the programme.
3. That a business panel be included in the programme.
4. The basic content of the workbook be retained, with some minor changes, so that the workbook better reflects sessions and tasks
5. Presentation by HAL to overview horticulture in Australia, horticultural businesses, their needs and HAL products and services.
6. The skills audit session should be more focused, and include more on skills (not just key strengths); perhaps some background work could be done by participants prior to the workshop in order to save time.
7. That the facilitation team maintain the flexibility in workshop delivery (ie in response to needs of participants)

An evaluation report of workshop one was prepared; please refer to the attached report (Appendix B).

A workshop facilitator's guide has also been produced, for similar workshops in the future (Appendix C).

#### PARTICIPANT PHONE LINKS / MENTORING

Following workshop one, participants were invited to participate in monthly phone links. These phonelinks provided an opportunity to provide an update on brokering projects, and allowed sharing of information between participants and the project team. Special discussion topics for phonelinks included:

- Online meeting room demonstration and training
- Marketing
- Business blunders – what tips would you give now
- Skills audit

#### WORKSHOP TWO

Participants were surveyed following the second workshop (September 2008), of the extent that the project had contributed to their skill development. Participants scored each question from 0 to 5, where 0 was to no extent and 5 was to a full extent.

The average score for most areas was 4 out of five, with some being three out of five. The average for all questions was 3.7 out of five.

	<i>For each statement, nominate the extent to which (where 0 is to no extent, and 5 is to a full extent) you feel this project has contributed to your skill development in this area:</i>	Average score out of five	Average score for each component
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	<i>For each statement, nominate the extent to which (where 0 is to no extent, and 5 is to a full extent) you feel this project has contributed to your skill development in this area:</i>	Average score out of five	Average score for each component
1.1	Are equipped with the <b>knowledge and skills</b> to engage with <b>community and industry groups</b> in productive projects	4	
1.5	Understand how the networks function within the community/ industry	4	
1.6	Are well networked within local community and/or industry	4	4
2.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> of the business service needs in the local region or industry	3	
2.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to research the business service needs in the local region or industry	4	
2.3	Understand what motivates industry in a region	4	
2.4	Understand the family farming business and the needs of the various members	4	4
3.1	Have an understanding of the business service systems in Australia	4	
3.2	Are able to take a strategic view and understand how to get the best results for the region with regard to meeting business service needs	3	
3.3	Understand the service brokerage process of identifying needs and matching these to opportunities	4	4
4.1	Are able to work effectively with industry and community groups	4	
4.3	Be able to identify key industry contacts and networks, and then use these for maximum benefit	4	
4.5	Are able to act as brokers of productive industry information and support	4	
4.7	Are able to build the capacity of communities/groups to undertake productive training projects	4	4
5.1	Have the <b>knowledge and skills</b> to design a training program to meet the needs of an industry or a specific group	4	
5.3	Have the skills to meet the service needs of the various members of the farming business	4	4
6.1	Have knowledge of the horticultural industry training products and services available to family farm businesses	3	
6.2	Are able to access horticultural industry training products	3	3
7.1	Have the <b>skills</b> and knowledge to run a business from home	4	
7.4	Have the <b>knowledge</b> and skills to develop and implement a business plan	4	



	<i>For each statement, nominate the extent to which (where 0 is to no extent, and 5 is to a full extent) you feel this project has contributed to your skill development in this area:</i>	Average score out of five	Average score for each component
7.7	Have access to support to be effective in brokering the delivery of business services in a local region	4	
7.8	Have the skills to market own services to industry/community	4	
7.9	Are able to manage work/life balance	3	4
8.1	Have the <b>knowledge and skills to</b> access funding within an industry	3	
8.3	Have the knowledge of training providers/deliverers available	3	
8.5	Have the skills to write funding proposals	4	3
	Average score	3.7	

Table 2: Skills evaluation - whole of project

Participants were asked to describe what they had gained from participating in the project (Table 3).

<b>Participant descriptions of what they had gained from participation in the project</b>
Networking skills
Better direction for my business
Better understanding of myself and where I need to challenge myself
An understanding that there is plenty of work for everyone
The confidence to make my dream of my own consulting business a reality
Fantastic network of highly skilled rural women.
Support to recognise and build on my own skills
Gained confidence to utilise skills to a greater degree
Our business can grow and develop by partnering with other like businesses around Australia, thus increasing and improving the condition of Australian rural and regional business and industries
I no longer work in isolation; I have a peer support group who can assist me in growing my rural business.
I have been given an avenue where I can share my experience and expertise and support up and coming business.
Empowering and engaging; worth every dollar and hour out of my business.

Table 3: Participant comments

Following participation in the first workshop, several participants, as a direct result of participation in the project, undertook further in depth training (e.g. marketing course; Facilitating Family Business Meeting workshop), or commenced further study (e.g. Postgraduate Diploma in Conflict Resolution).

Participants gained increased awareness of horticultural publications and resources available.

The process was effective in developing the skills amongst regional level service brokers, with a high level of participant satisfaction. Participant feedback indicated that the process could be improved by:

- more formal mentoring/coaching,
- establishment of an interactive website, and
- an annual conference.

The website would provide a mechanism for communication, training and business development. The website could also be an important part of the mentoring/coaching system. An annual conference would provide networking, professional development and business development opportunities. A conference would also provide a link to horticultural industries. Participants were also keen to learn more about the horticultural industries, and to expand the brokerage concept beyond training, and into 'services'.

## **Outcome 2. Development of skills of small to medium (production) enterprises (SMEs) in horticulture, by coordinating training, in response to demand**

Participants have worked with a range of clients in horticultural and related industries. Examples of projects delivered by participants include:

- Delivery of *Recovery from drought business planning*
- “*Strengthening communities*” drought relief project
- Service brokerage for vegetable growers
- Web training (e.g. Will and Trust Workshops)
- Training regional women’s group in use of online training tools
- Training sessions for DPI staff (networking skills)
- Centrelink Farm Advice Grants
- “*Women in Business*”
- Facilitation and training – Partners in Grain

Participants have extended their networks and contacts, especially in horticultural industries including various industry groups (e.g. Orange Region Orchard Industry Action group), HAL, Women in Hort, State Departments of Primary Industries, Landcare, and DAFF.

Participants have also expanded their client base to include more horticultural business, including those in the viticultural and grain industries.

The development of skills of SMEs in horticulture (and other rural industries) as a result of this project, will continue to develop into the future, especially as more participants become skilled and trained utilising the brokerage model, for delivery of demand driven industry development services.

This pilot was effective in developing the skills of SMEs in horticulture, but this could be improved by:

- increased participation of horticultural members (e.g. industry development officers);
- increased involvement of horticultural guests (e.g. Horticulture Australia Limited);
- access to FarmBis funding; and
- needs assessment tool incorporated into course (as per HAL process).

### **Outcome 3. Development of a business model for coordination of demand driven industry development, using the process of service brokerage**

It is recommended that a service be developed for providing professional and business development for participants (private sector service deliverers).

This service could be funded initially for three years, to establish the service/network. After three years, it is envisaged that the service could become a commercial project (self funded). This service would be led by one of the current project team, and a partnership has not been ruled out.

The three year project would include training a new group each year. Groups would come together annually for a conference.

There may be different levels of membership – for example: participation in training, or accredited businesses.

The service would be structured in a way that works for women (but not exclusively for women), and there would be a strong focus on regional business.

Participants provided input (at workshop two) on various elements of the proposed service. This information will be incorporated/considered in development of the service. Participants brainstormed the following:

- What are the emerging opportunities?
- What activities should be included?
- What elements would the network include?
- What products and services should the network provide?
- Which sectors should business development be provided to (e.g. private, government)
- Which sectors should the network focus on for 'collaboration with', and 'collaboration for'
- Governance (advisory group, steering committee)
- Ideas for name of the business or network.

This pilot program demonstrated that there is a demand for delivery of a service, servicing the needs of regional service brokers. The process could be improved by incorporating a mentoring/coaching system, an interactive website, ongoing training and an annual conference.

## Discussion

### *What went well, what could be better about this project?*

What Went Well?	What Could Be Better?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The whole engagement of the group and the different business mixes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HAL on the steering committee</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fabulous job of choosing the mix</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Setting up a mentoring/coaching process from the beginning</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have such a cohesive group, to be able to call anyone at anytime</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A chance or more time, to discuss business opportunities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Networking and development of trust over a very short time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop first collaborative projects</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gained the confidence to make my dream to make my own consulting business a reality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation of all group members in interim activities and final workshop</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting with likeminded women and learning from their experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More participants?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absolutely invaluable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better project application (budget and model)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The coaching mentoring working together with Cathy and Kristy that has kept my enthusiasm going, and also gives you a deadline for doing things</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Horticultural focus?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Valued and appreciated the opportunity to work with everyone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Horticultural participants?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coming together again to be able to touch base. And the trust, and the development of ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mentoring between sessions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I no longer work in isolation; I have a peer support group where I can share my business. Thanks for the opportunity great mixing with other rural women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in phone links</li> </ul>

What Went Well?	What Could Be Better?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our business can grow and develop by partnering with other like businesses around Australia, thus increasing and improving the condition of Australian rural and regional businesses and industries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More time in second session would be nice</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Second workshop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No suggestions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitating on the run, adapting to circumstances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other funding sources</li> </ul>

**Table 4: What went well, what could be better**

Benefits to horticultural businesses and industry will continue beyond the life of the project. The outcomes for industry are expected to increase with increased awareness of the brokering model (as a process for delivering demand driven industry development services), increased participation in training, and increased participation in the service or ‘network’.

## Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Improve the training program, including consideration of participant feedback (e.g. more formal mentoring/coaching of participants), and the recommendations as per the evaluation of workshop one (see attached report - Evaluation of workshop one).

Recommendation 2: Deliver the training program annually to new participants. Incorporate this training with an Annual Conference, providing an opportunity for past participants to network with industry guests and new participants.

Recommendation 3: That HAL investigate the demand driven industry development model as a framework for industry development in the horticultural sector, including skill development of private sector consultants. Ideally, this would involve linking each Industry Advisory Committee with a dedicated broker.

Recommendation 4: Establishment of service, servicing the needs of participants, including initial training program, annual conference, and professional development/ business development training. This would prepare participants for an increasing role for delivery of demand driven industry development for horticulture.

Recommendation 5: Investigate the possibility of developing a formal training course e.g. *Diploma in Small Business Management (Regional Consultant)*

## **Acknowledgements**

The authors of this report would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following organisations and individuals and thank them for their contribution to this project:

Sarah Pennell of HAL, Robbie Sefton of Sefton and Associates, Phil Thompson of The Land, Peter Peterson of Adult Learning Australia, Pat Abraham of Geddes Parker and Partners, Nick Burton Taylor of the Australian Agricultural Company, Jane Fisher of RIRDC, Dzintra Horder of HAL, Brigid Glanville of the ABC, Alison Anderson, of Arris, and Jane Weatherley of Meat and Livestock Australia.



## **Appendix A: Example participant report**

### **Project report - Samantha Hain**

#### **My regional business**

Regional Integrated Marketing (RIM) based in Orange Central NSW, offers results oriented consultancy services in a range of functional areas including:

- Strategic marketing
- Business Planning
- Outsourced marketing management
- Marketing services – positioning, branding & image
- Publishing
- Project management
- Independent project evaluation
- Co-ordination of community groups to achieve targets
- Commercialising community projects & start up initiatives
- Facilitation

With experience sourced from over 20 years working with and within entrepreneurial businesses – RIM's approach is savvy and results focused. A mandate to make a client budget work as hard as it possibly can is delivered through strategic, organized and deadline driven projects.

RIM uses a consultative approach ensuring stakeholder 'buy-in' and works as a team with our business partners. Groups are facilitated to own their decisions to maintain motivation during change and easy to use tools to assist with implementation are provided.

Many are surprised by what RIM has deliver to clients.

#### **My project**

The project was to determine how I could integrate a brokering service into my portfolio offer – particularly relating to the horticultural industry.

Results and update from the project follow:

##### **1. On-line research – HAL Australia.**

Researched Projects section of HAL website to determine types of projects proposed and funded to see where my skills base could fit.

Determined:

- General call for projects open January & close March
- Industry call for projects open October & close November

- Skills base of facilitation (via TAFE teaching), management (via TAFE teaching and industry experience) and marketing (degree qualifications/industry + teaching experience) could be applied through a wide range of areas.
- Projects of significant interest that may possibly be applied to my region were:
  - Tasmanian Horticulture Industry network.
  - Murray Valley Citrus Leadership development
  - The future of Winhort Australia

## **2. Meeting with Orange Region Orchard Industry Action group**

Met with Tim Hall, Chairman of Towac Fruit Export Co-operative and David Gartrell Chairman of Appledale Processors co-op.

We discussed the marketing requirements of the group and potential on-going involvement in the 'Taste Orange' regional marketing plan.

We discussed a range of unique packaging options they currently have in place and the distribution chain links to the metropolitan markets and large chains such as the supermarkets.

I made mention of my brokering role. As I understand more about the industry I hope to identify opportunities for brokering business services. (At least I have now met them and have their cards!)

## **3. Meeting with John McKenzie, Leadership and Development programs manager HAL**

Discussed opportunities for involvement in HAL programs and how the system works – the industries managed by HAL, what needs to be done to apply for a project, types of projects that were relevant to his section of the business, what HAL were looking for when reviewing a project application.

We reviewed several projects that had been funded and discussed my skills base as to where it could be applied.

We also reviewed the opportunities with the HAL Industry Development portfolio plan, in particular the needs assessment process and how my consultancy could assist with implementation.

John has put my name forward as a consultant for consideration to implement the needs assessment process. I will be involving Cynthia Jarrett from our program with a joint application should this progress.

He also advised I should review the RIRDC website as to their project 'call' timelines.

## **4. Next steps**

John has given me a wealth of information to consume and digest. I will hope to develop some ideas/concepts from this information and consult with my Orchard industry contacts as to the suitability of these concepts to assist with industry outcomes as identified by HAL.

I have diarised the call dates for HAL and will do the same for RIRDC.

I will pursue the opportunities with the HAL needs assessment process for the Industry Development portfolio plan

I will consult and share non-confidential information with my network.

### **What was learned with respect to Coordinating Business Services**

- There are women running businesses in regional Australia with similar goals and ideals.
- There are funds available from peak industry bodies for projects that could be potentially managed by my business
- Peak bodies have plans which require assistance in implementation by businesses such as mine
- My business should be broader than purely marketing services – offering a range of consultancy services to businesses and organisations
- It is hard to get a project running without the one on one assistance of a mentor who has done it before
- Perhaps a project could have been allocated which would give the participants more direction – and assistance by the organising group
- Perhaps each of the participants in the network could be allocated a clear role – eg Marketing for me, NSW funding opps for another, Federal funding opps for another, reporting and documentation for another, ideas for matching funding for another business.....

### **What services a network could offer my business**

- Once I had a project in train (ie applying etc etc) I would look to my network for peer review.
- A fortnightly e-bulletin – what funding is opening/closing, examples of past projects, marketing hints and tips, funding matching from overseas examples, application writing tips, anecdotes and ideas, members forum. Each member of the network allocated a particular section to be responsible for content.
- Names and contacts in certain areas.
- Ideas for ways to do business with peak bodies
- Sharing examples of what has been achieved to promote thought and discussion

**Appendix B: Milestone report (including evaluation  
report of workshop one)**

**Reference No. HG06160**

*Milestone 102 Report*

**Brokering business skills  
development for horticulture**

***May 2008***

***Rural Development Services Pty Ltd.***

This document has been undertaken to report on the 4 day workshop “Coordinating Business Services in Regional Australia”, and provide a summary of community / regional service broker plans.

## **Summary of project progress to date**

### ***Workshop 1***

Initially a three-day workshop was proposed, but it was necessary to extend this to a four-day workshop, in order to cover the needs of participants. This four-day workshop included two networking dinners with high profile guests. A one-day follow up workshop will be held in September.

The four-day workshop was held in Sydney, being central to most participants, and high profile guests.

Expressions of interest were received from 39 potential participants, and the standard of applicants was very high. All were evaluated by the project team using the following criteria:

1. Experience in running a professional service business
2. Level of interest in the Coordinating Business Services project
3. The nature and extent of horticulture in the applicant’s region
4. Diversity and strength of business management skills

All applicants were scored and ranked. The top 15 places went to women with at least 5 years experience in running a professional service business; a high level of interest in the project; who were based in a region with a strong horticultural industry; and possessed strong business management skills.

### ***Workshop evaluation***

Participants were asked to score each workshop session out of 10 (see appendix 1) and also provide comments on each session. The average score for each session, and the score for the workshop overall, indicated a very high level of participant satisfaction, the most well regarded sessions included Networking, Financial analysis, MBTI and working together post workshop.

Participants were also asked to score the overall workshop, and the average score was 9.1 out of ten.

## ***Community / regional service broker plans***

On day four of the workshop, participants were asked to identify their brokering project. One of the outcomes of the workshop was a brief plan for each participant project (see appendix 2). Ten service broker plans were developed addressing the following topics:

- Networking and building relationships with a view to initiating projects
- Business planning
- Training new business owners on brokering
- Needs analysis of local regions to identify opportunities

- Development of a Rural Business Management training course, using an online learning room
- Online learning room – business plan
- Needs analysis of ex tobacco growers

Participants are invited to join a monthly phone link to discuss progress on their project with other group members. The objective of these phone links is to maintain participant engagement in their project; provide easy access to expertise and information; and to support participants in addressing hurdles in the project process. In addition, participants were encouraged to access mentoring and coaching support from a horticultural mentor.

Participants were allocated to one of the project team, as a first point of call, for guidance with projects.

## Next steps

A follow up workshop is planned for September 2, 2008 to report on progress of participant projects, share learning's, provide feedback and help with the evaluation of the project.

A range of business models has been considered for the continuing coordination of brokering services: commercial, not for profit and consortium. It is suggested at this stage to apply to Horticulture Australia and Meat and Livestock Australia to support a three year project to:

- establish an advisory group,
- run another workshop series (with a new group of participants)
- establish a commercial network
- after three years re-evaluate the next stage of business development.

The commercial network could be a stepping-stone to another business model. The initial commercial network would start as a business providing professional development for regional businesses. This could evolve into providing client services. Taking this approach allows time for the business to set up membership/accreditation systems.

## Communications / extension activities

Following the success of the Sydney workshop, a workshop was planned for Adelaide in June. There was not sufficient interest in this workshop, probably due to the time frame, and it was therefore cancelled.

Participants have indicated interest in a Business Success Planning tool, both for analysis of their own businesses, and also becoming accredited training providers. The project team is currently planning the delivery of this training prior to and at Workshop 2.

Media releases were prepared prior to the workshop, and post workshop.

## **Additional commercialisation and/or intellectual property issues**

There are no issues to report on under this topic.

## **Are there any other issues that HAL should be aware of (include any changes to details for contact person[s]).**

A four day workshop was delivered rather than a 3 day workshop – will be seeking to reduce costs (or increase income) of the final workshop to accommodate for the additional expenses incurred.

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## Appendix 1

### Participant evaluation score for each workshop session

Session	Average score (out of 10)	Range
MBTI	9.3	8 - 10
Personal skills audit	7.9	4 - 10
Conducting a needs analysis	8.4	7 – 10
Networking	9.8	9 – 10
Service brokerage	8.3	7 – 10
Financial analysis	9.4	8 – 10
Business risks	8.4	6 - 10
Marketing our services	8.4	6 - 10
Strategic and action planning	8.6	7 - 10
Working together post workshop	9.3	8 - 10
Workshop overall score	9.1	8 - 10

## Appendix 2

### Outline of service broker plans

<p><i>Cynthia</i> Project - Broaden my network and build relationships within my network. Network has been too small, and impeding growth of business. Will use Regional Business Network, Women out West; desk top research; to initiate projects through that network that might be able to help industry and local community.</p>
<p><i>Phoebe</i> Project – develop a solid business plan. Brainstorm business ideas.</p>
<p><i>Lois</i> Project - successfully integrate a new owner into Focus Consulting. Important for continuity of business; need to do needs analysis with new owner first up; passing over new clients directly for her to make contact with; helping her with tender / proposal / taking this up; have her attend training courses (Westpac 2 day workshop; women's course)</p>
<p><i>Sam</i> Project – identify opportunities available for funding using my skills base. Connecting with three possible funding providers. Identifying one needs based activity in my region, which my skills can assist. Will use networks; internet research; contacting the RDCs for their research findings; brainstorming; meetings; needs analysis</p>
<p><i>Jane</i> Project - Needs analysis for Shire Economic Development Department (EDD) Will read over EDD plan and budget – look at potential areas that I can place myself or be of assistance, develop plans around that, do needs analysis with the staff</p>
<p><i>Sally and Leanne</i> Project - Rural Business Management live on-line Sally - Gives me an opportunity to roll out something that I have had in my mind for a very long time Leanne – giving me that avenue to deliver it to the people Important to provide link between people who are geographically challenged – and can't easily come to Victoria to undertake that course Important to provide professional development link to primary producers</p>
<p><i>Leanne</i> Project - business plan for on-line learning Researching and documenting options for costing and support. Need to improve documentation. Exploring options for storing recordings and sharing them and brainstorming some networks – tapping into a couple e.g., Robbie S and Jane W</p>

<p><i>Donna</i></p> <p>Project – coordinate from here – where go with this group</p> <p>To follow up with the group and keep the momentum going; provide a point of contact</p>
<p><i>Kristy, Cheryl and Cathy</i></p> <p>Project - Explore needs of the ex tobacco farmers for development.</p> <p>Because they need something – in need of what to do post-tobacco</p> <p>There is lots of concern out there.</p> <p>DPI colleague doing needs analysis with this group. Local GP has also done health analysis about what done. Have divided up contacts to talk to</p> <p>Info seeking exercise – go through networks</p>
<p><i>Zel</i></p> <p>Project - Follow up the contacts. Need to refine some of my skills e.g., business planning stuff – because that is one of the areas I want to go into – done a bit in the past – more academic that practical</p> <p>Know there is a need to work with women in the community about 1-1.5hrs of where I live. Want to keep up some of the counselling stuff I do and link that in – because there is a growing need for that</p> <p>Committed to developing a website within next 6 months</p> <p>Need to do extra skilling and working with people</p> <p>Want to find a mentor – really valuable – had them in the past in other areas – incredibly valuable – especially when changing direction</p>

# **Report on 4 day workshop and summary of community/regional service broker plans provided:**

## **Brokering business skills development for horticulture**

30/05/08

By Rural Development Services

HAL project code: HG06160  
RDS Jobcode: CoordBus

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## ***Executive summary***

This report evaluates workshop I “Coordinating Business Services in Regional Australia” held in Sydney March 2008, and presents a summary of participant projects. Workshop II will be held in September 2008. These workshops form part of a pilot programme, and evaluations will provide for the development of a resource kit for similar workshops/programmes.

The objective of the workshop was to provide training and support, for the participants to set themselves up as service brokers. The post workshop survey indicated that this objective was met in terms of the knowledge and skills gained from participating in the workshop. Results indicated that in all key areas, there was an increased level of knowledge and skills. This was particularly evident for:

- Q1 (engaging and working with community groups/industry groups);
- Q3 (understanding business systems, and brokering); and
- Q6 (knowledge of and ability to access horticultural industry training products and services).

Evaluation of the pilot workshop indicated a very high level of participant satisfaction with all components of the programme. Participant evaluation of the workshop overall was an average score of 9.1 out of 10.

After presenting a description of workshop I and project summaries, the report presents evaluation results. Recommendations are then made for improving the workshop in accordance with the feedback.

Highlights included:

- Two networking dinners with industry guests
- Business panel session
- Myers Briggs Type Indicator session
- An introduction to brokering
- Business analysis tools
- Participation of a diverse group of women, with a wide range of skills and experiences

During the workshop, the programme was amended to include extra sessions requested by participants, including business analysis tools. The downside of this was that some other sessions were shorter than adequate. However, participants recognised this, and greatly valued the flexibility of the project team in responding to their needs.

Ten service broker plans were developed addressing the following topics:

- Networking and building relationships with a view to initiating projects
- Business planning
- Training new business owners on brokering
- Needs analysis of local regions to identify opportunities
- Development of a Rural Business Management training course, using an online learning room
- Online learning room – business plan

- Needs analysis of ex tobacco growers

The following recommendations are made:

1. That the basic content and structure of the workshops be retained
2. That business analysis tools be included in the programme
3. That a business panel be included in the programme
4. The basic content of the workbook be retained, with some minor changes, so that the workbook better reflects sessions and tasks
5. Presentation by HAL to overview horticulture in Australia, horticultural businesses, their needs and HAL products and services
6. The skills audit session should be more focused, and include more on skills (not just key strengths); perhaps some background work could be done by participants prior to the workshop in order to save time.
7. That the facilitation team maintain the flexibility in workshop delivery (ie in response to needs of participants)

## **Introduction**

This report evaluates workshop I “Coordinating Business Services in Regional Australia” held in Sydney March 2008, and presents a summary of participant projects. Workshop II will be held in September 2008. These workshops form part of a pilot programme, and evaluations will provide for the development of a resource kit for similar workshops/programmes.

After presenting a description of workshop I and project summaries, the report presents evaluation results. Recommendations are then made for improving the workshop in accordance with the feedback.

## **Aim**

The aim of this report is to address Milestone 102 of the project: Brokering business skills development for horticulture, as follows:

Milestone: Report on 3 day workshop and summary of community/regional service broker plans provided

The evaluation will concentrate on the feedback received from the participants and the presenters. Recommendations will then be made as a result of the evaluation for modifying the workshop design, content, materials and resources, for use in a resource kit for organising similar workshops.

The evaluation process includes:

1. Pre workshop participant survey
2. In-workshop participant evaluation
3. In-workshop evaluation by facilitators
4. Post-workshop evaluation survey of participants
5. Post-workshop evaluation by facilitators

## **Background**

The purpose of the workshop (and the participant projects and participant phone links) was to:

- Develop the skills amongst regional level service brokers to identify horticultural business training needs and coordinate the delivery of training to address these needs;
- Develop the skills of the small to medium enterprises in horticulture by coordinating training to address limitations to horticultural business performance at a management, financial marketing and human resource level.

## **Training product development**

Initially a three day workshop was proposed, but it was necessary to extend this to a four day workshop, in order to cover the needs of participants. This four day



workshop included two networking dinners with high profile guests. A one day follow up workshop will be held within six months.

Amabel Fulton, Jeanette Long and Cathy McGowan developed the workshop content and format.

Pre workshop phone links were run with participants such that the project team:

1. Had clear roles and responsibilities for the project team, participants and invited guests
2. Was informed of the specific training needs (in relation to the expected outcomes) of potential participants
3. Developed an effective strategy for engaging participants
4. Identified potential guest speakers
5. Obtained on-going feedback on the workshop content and format

The most appropriate mix of activities / processes was selected for delivering on the expected outcomes of the workshops (as listed above). From this, a detailed workshop plan was drawn up (Figure 1 Agenda for workshop).

**Figure 1 Agenda for workshop**

Coordinating Business Services  
Workshop agenda  
March 10 2008 to March 13 2008  
Mercure Hotel 818-820 George St Sydney, Ph 1800 633948.

**Day 1: Monday March 10<sup>th</sup>**

5 pm Introduction to program, Expectations of the course  
7 pm Dinner including activities

**Day 2: Tuesday March 11<sup>th</sup>**

8:30 am Welcome and outline of the day  
Understanding your personality  
12:30-1:00 Lunch  
1.00pm Skills audit  
Needs analysis  
Networking  
6:30-9:30 Networking dinner with guests

**Day 3: Wednesday March 12<sup>th</sup>**

8:30 am Welcome and outline of the day  
Brokering  
12:30-1:00 Lunch  
1.00pm Financial Analysis of brokering  
Business Risks  
Marketing Business Services  
Development of action plans  
6:30-9:30 Networking dinner with guests

**Day 4: Thursday March 13<sup>th</sup>**

8:30 am Welcome  
 Action Plan reporting Back  
 Working together in the Future  
 Summary  
 12:30-1:30 Lunch and CLOSE

**Engaging the target audience and identifying needs**

The project team identified relevant networks and these were allocated to project team members for follow up (Table 5 Networks identified.).

A communication strategy was prepared to engage participants, stakeholders, the wider audience, and industry project partners (see appendix 3).

The project team acted as the reference group.

**Table 5 Networks identified.**

Network	Amabel/Naomi	Cathy	Jeanette
Tassie contacts - DPIW, farmers	x		
APEN	x		
WinHort contacts (Tassie?)	x		
HAL/IDO network	x		
Victoria contacts - DPI, farmers		x	
Qld contacts - DPI Officer		x	
National networks - AWiA, Dairy, Sugar		x	
SA contacts - DPI, farmers			x
Partners in Grains			x
WA contacts			x
RIRDC			x

**Development of workshop resources and materials**

The materials and resources developed were added into a folder for each participant. These folders provided participants with all the worksheets required to engage in the various activities throughout the workshop along with contact details of all the participants and invited guests.

See separate document for workshop booklet.

**Workshop delivery**

Organising workshops

The four day workshop was held in Sydney, being central to most participants, and high profile guests.

Expressions of interest were received from 39 potential participants, and the standard of applicants was very high (See Appendix 1 for Expression of interest form). All were evaluated by the project team using the following criteria:

5. Experience in running a professional service business
6. Level of interest in the Coordinating Business Services project
7. The nature and extent of horticulture in the applicant's region
8. Diversity and strength of business management skills

All applicants were scored and ranked. The top 15 places went to women with at least 5 years experience in running a professional service business; a high level of interest in the project; who were based in a region with a strong horticultural industry; and possessed strong business management skills.

Two other groupings were evident – those newer to running a professional service business; and those located in regions with a strong livestock base. The project team decided to offer places in the pilot workshop to the women in the top 15. A total of twelve women took the opportunity to be part of the pilot.

#### Training workshop delivery

The workshop was delivered by Amabel Fulton (Rural Development Services), Jeanette Long (Ag Consulting Co) and Cathy McGowan (Catherine McGowan Consulting).

These three facilitators brought a wealth of expertise, knowledge and experience in community engagement, rural sociology, agricultural industry development, project management, business management, marketing and training.

High profile guests were invited to attend two networking dinners. The dinners aimed to both inspire and engage all participants, and train them in effective networking skills. The project team identified several criteria for selecting guests: marketing, horticulture, grower organisation, government, media, agribusiness, stakeholders, leaders

The workshops were delivered in a participative manner, using adult learning principles. A combination of personal, paired, small group and large group work were used to take participants through their learning journey.

#### Participant projects

On day four of the workshop, participants were asked to identify their brokering project. One of the outcomes of the workshop was a brief plan for each participant project (see Table 6 Outline of participant projects).

**Table 6 Outline of participant projects**

<b>Cynthia</b>
----------------

<p>Project - Broaden my network and build relationships within my network. Network has been too small, and impeding growth of business. Will use Regional Business Network, Women out West; desk top research; to initiate projects through that network that might be able to help industry and local community.</p>
<p><b>Phoebe</b></p> <p>Project – develop a solid business plan. Brainstorm business ideas.</p>
<p><b>Lois</b></p> <p><i>Project - successfully integrate a new owner into Focus Consulting.</i></p> <p><i>Important for continuity of business; need to do needs analysis with new owner first up; passing over new clients directly for her to make contact with; helping her with tender / proposal / taking this up; have her attend training courses (Westpac 2 day workshop; women's course)</i></p>
<p><b>Sam</b></p> <p>Project – identify opportunities available for funding using my skills base. Connecting with three possible funding providers. Identifying one needs based activity in my region, which my skills can assist. Will use networks; internet research; contacting the RDCs for their research findings; brainstorming; meetings; needs analysis</p>
<p><b>Jane</b></p> <p>Project - Needs analysis for Shire Economic Development Department (EDD) Will read over EDD plan and budget – look at potential areas that I can place myself or be of assistance, develop plans around that, do needs analysis with the staff</p>
<p><b>Sally and Leanne</b></p> <p>Project - Rural Business Management live on-line Sally - Gives me an opportunity to roll out something that I have had in my mind for a very long time Leanne – giving me that avenue to deliver it to the people Important to provide link between people who are geographically challenged – and can't easily come to Victoria to undertake that course Important to provide professional development link to primary producers</p>
<p><b>Leanne</b></p> <p>Project - business plan for on-line learning Researching and documenting options for costing and support. Need to improve documentation. Exploring options for storing recordings and sharing them and brainstorming some networks – tapping into a couple e.g., Robbie S and Jane W</p>
<p><b>Donna</b></p> <p>Project – coordinate from here – where go with this group To follow up with the group and keep the momentum going; provide a point of</p>

contact
<p><b>Kristy, Cheryl and Cathy</b></p> <p>Project - Explore needs of the ex tobacco farmers for development.          Because they need something – in need of what to do post-tobacco          There is lots of concern out there.          DPI colleague doing needs analysis with this group. Local GP has also done health analysis about what done. Have divided up contacts to talk to          Info seeking exercise – go through networks</p>
<p><b>Zel</b></p> <p>Project - Follow up the contacts. Need to refine some of my skills e.g., business planning stuff – because that is one of the areas I want to go into – done a bit in the past – more academic that practical          Know there is a need to work with women in the community about 1-1.5hrs of where I live. Want to keep up some of the counselling stuff I do and link that in – because there is a growing need for that          Committed to developing a website within next 6 months          Need to do extra skilling and working with people          Want to find a mentor – really valuable – had them in the past in other areas – incredibly valuable – especially when changing direction</p>

#### Follow-up phone links, emails, coaching and mentoring

Participants were invited to join a monthly phone link to discuss progress on their project with other group members. The objective of these phone links was to maintain participant engagement in their project; provide easy access to expertise and information; and to support participants in addressing hurdles in the project process. In addition, participants were encouraged to access mentoring and coaching support from a horticultural mentor.

#### Follow-up workshop

A follow up workshop is planned for Sep 2. This workshop will include: reporting on progress; sharing of learning; provide feedback; develop a strategic plan for on-going Coordination of Business Services in rural and regional Australia; and project evaluation.

A range of business models has been considered for the continuing coordination of brokering services: commercial, not for profit and consortium. It is suggested at this stage to apply to Horticulture Australia and Meat and Livestock Australia to support a three year project to:

- establish an advisory group,
- run another workshop series (with a new group of participants)
- establish a commercial network
- after three years re-evaluate the next stage of business development.

The commercial network could be a stepping-stone to another business model.

The initial commercial network would start as a business providing professional development for regional businesses. This could evolve into providing client services. Taking this approach allows time for the business to set up membership/accreditation systems.

#### In-workshop participant evaluation

Effective participant evaluation and follow up mechanisms were built into the workshop, to ensure the learnings from the workshop were being put into practice and to allow for improvements to workshop delivery and content. These included simple, feedback sessions such as an analysis of what went well, and what could be better; formal evaluation of participants at the end of Day 4, and a post workshop survey.

Adaptive management was used to continuously improve workshop delivery over the course of the workshop. Evaluation sessions during the workshop were also held between the facilitators.

#### Evaluation of workshop delivery, content, materials and resources

The workshop evaluation process consisted of the following components:

- Pre-workshop survey of participants
- In-workshop participant evaluation (as described above)
- In-workshop evaluation by facilitators (as above)
- Post-workshop survey of participants
- Post-workshop evaluation by facilitators.

## **Evaluation results**

The feedback provided by participants is presented below, plus some suggested actions in response to their ideas.

## **Reflections – Day 2**

- I felt really pleased about the way people have embraced being involved – and open to the programme
- Enjoyed speed networking – poignant moments of aha – good listening or exchange
- Haven't been networking very well
- Feel quite challenged by that
- Feel – I hope I get something out of this – so busy
- After – pleased I came
- Need to further expand on my networks – think there are opportunities for my business with wider and more proactive networking
- Learned lots
- Got a much clearer idea of brokering
- Learned I need to network more effectively – learned about a range of new networks
- Quite excited about today's activities before this morning
- Documenting the networks you have and seeing them on paper – and going oh wow – not capitalising on them
- Thinking about the tips to engage introverts – write down thoughts before the discussion
- Feel – useful meeting all the different people, businesses and skills
- Learned – better understanding of different personality types
- Need to improve networking – lots of networks – useful to go through them and get ideas from others
- Good networker, process gave me some ideas on how I can expand that for the benefit of other rural people
- Lots of good interaction. Variety of things was excellent. Kept me engaged all day.
- Loved being put in a box. Now I know why I am who I am.
- Actively plan for outcomes
- Amazing amount of skills in this room – really exciting to see what people are doing
- Learned about myself – the skills that I can bring
- Feel exhausted – like an introvert perhaps
- Bloody fantastic
- Looking forward to today and tomorrow
- Different to what I do day in and day out
- Lovely change
- Group dynamics great, positive, room full of talent
- Today full of lots of information and tools that will help me personally and professionally
- Learned that there are opportunities in regional Australia

- Marketing is such a capital city focused thing
- To be able to live where I want to live and gain income – has given me new ideas of where I want to go in regional Australia

### Networking Dinner Tuesday evening WWW (What went well):

- Flow, comfortable
- One person allocated to each guest
- Phoebe introducing each guest, then introduce themselves – not too long or too short
- Moving of tables
- Guests were well briefed, thank you to Cathy
- Openness of guests to support and follow through
- Moving of tables
- Getting a few more of the participants in a social setting, learning about their everyday lives
- Nothing to add
- Phoebe's words were precise and meaningful
- Everyone open, enjoyed access to speakers first, the way we went from meeting downstairs to bring them up, and talking to them. Open, came up with interesting insights, open to follow up
- The way the whole night was organised, briefing of speakers and briefing of us made it easy. Easy to talk to people, easy to have an opportunity to talk to everyone
- Reiterate what everyone said, particularly what a great job Phoebe did as MC for the evening
- Ditto

### Networking Dinner Tuesday evening WCBB (What could be better):

Table 7 Networking dinner Tuesday evening - What could be better

What could be better	Action
Being more prepared	Well prepared introductions
Could have worked the room a lot more	Tips from Cathy on working the room
Energy levels – all we wanted to do was sit down and chat to each other	Be well prepared
Drinks to be in here, so can come straight in here	Organise with venue staff
Waiters should be better briefed – coming in to serve the meals and banging the door	Ask waiters to be careful with door especially during speeches.
Nil	
Facilitate that third table move – didn't get to talk to Peter	Good training for participants to work the room, to talk to other guests, rather than facilitated move.
Exhausted at beginning, energy came back by the end	Be well prepared



of the night – 3 <sup>rd</sup> table move	
Being prepared for each person	Well prepared introductions
Mental preparation – ok for first introduction, not prepared for second stage of the conversation	Smart introductions, and homework on guest background
Difficult to talk about myself – could engage others, when comes back to me was really unusual – what was that about – how to get around it? Couldn't break into the groups	See above
First drink pregnant pause – shape of room, ended up with two of guests for large amount of time, nobody could get through – somebody save me – move in here	Move pre dinner drinks to function room.
Table layout – too much space between the two sides – then the bridal table	Table positioning
When arrived – pushing issue of teamwork and introducing each other – extremely disappointed that I was left in the cold, standing next to Peter, nobody introduced me. Turned to Peter, introduced myself, and bought him a drink – tried to move around.	Be more sensitive – make it happen
Dealing with people who are hard to work with?	Find the link to the person

### Reflections - Day 3 (I think, I feel, I've learned)

- I think of opportunity
- I feel like I can make this work
- I have learned you can have a city style lifestyle in the country
- I think lots of potential
- I feel excited about tools we saw today especially worksheet
- I have learned.
- Think rural Australia has a revived future
- Feel exhausted
- Learned the subtlety of networking
- Think – Enjoyed the start – starting with activity
- Feel honoured - involved in panel
- Sequencing really good
- Learned - follow up on funding agencies I haven't used for that activity
- Nervous, excited, exhausted
- Learning about me
- Opportunities for business to follow through on
- Opportunities
- Privileged to be here
- Learned a lot from listening to people including the panel
- Insight into Rural Development Services (RDS)
- Think – lot of opportunity in the room
- Enthusiastic in participating in activities and with everybody
- Learned I need to work on my introduction

- Feel exhausted – but have been energised by today and network and the possibilities
- Learned – be more confident in what I do and what it can offer
- Encouraged and inspired about my business – not sure it was what I wanted to do
- So many opportunities
- Surrounded by inspiring women – going to go out there and do it
- Think – lucky to be here – with the experience and the opportunity – don't know many businesses that get together and talk like we have – amazing opportunity
- Feel – a bit more confident than yesterday
- Learned a couple of things – possible way of influencing MLA (over lunch); more about selling myself
- Think – much more confident than when I came
- Feel – exhausted today – good exhausted – overloaded
- Learned – business plans, blown away by all the opportunities, funding groups
- Enjoyed the interaction about things, on-line room, Cynthia
- Think – today was full and busy
- Feel – hopeful for a future of a network and how we might work together
- Learned – need to do some work on our introduction.
- Many opportunities
- More comfortable about finding a path forward for me
- Learned the benefit of the support of like minded people

### **Reflections - Networking Dinner Wednesday evening:**

- Enjoyed doing the wrap up – learned a lot
- How to do my introduction, felt the benefits of having done this the night before
- Choice of guests was exceptional, everyone comfortable, better knowledge of each other – able to cope with lull in information
- All entrepreneurs – not just bureaucrats in diff organisations; understood ourselves a lot better – could remember each person individually and then introduce them
- Do homework beforehand – ring up and find out who is going to be there, what are their interest
- Table rotation worked really well – glad we had that. Enjoyed Sally's wrap up – nice way to build up and then finish
- Dzintra loved the table moving – thought we should do that at weddings
- Knew each other better so much easier to introduce people – learned to do that more effectively

### **Reflections – Day 4 (I think, I feel, I've learned)**

- I think how nice it has been to meet you all
- Rang you up and met you on the phone – excited then, hugely pleased now
- Looking forward to knowing you all better
- Feel happy, go home content

- Learned to trust my instincts – knew it was a good idea, long time to pull it off – with persistence
- Think – continue to surround myself with other people travelling in my direction
- Feel – excited and inspired
- Learned – if jump, there will be a net to catch me
- Think – my life has changed – can't believe we sat around saying is this really going to be worthwhile
- Feel – privileged to have met you all
- Learned – too much to mention, wonderful experience
- Think – great experience with great models – facilitators and participants
- Feel – energised, put defragging on hold for a while
- Learned – young and new consultants can do with assistance
- Oestrogen has benefits
- Feel – confident about walking out the door
- Learned – INTJs are wonderful
- Think - Really excited about coming – didn't realise the mixture of skills we were going to have – thought all in agriculture and education. To have such broad experience and skills magnificent
- Feel – I am going to be pushed by a lot of people in the room, going to be challenged, not going to be a sole voice in my head – which really excited about
- Fabulous
- Exhilarated, renewed, privileged to be surrounded by others
- Learned so much about networking and how to really make that effective
- In future pilot programmes – building on relationships would be a great asset to have – do one project – how maintain and continue to build on it
- Think – fantastic opportunity to meet other people in similar situations, now have a sounding board
- Feel – thankful and grateful that I have had this opportunity to be involved in the group and get a taste of the dynamics
- Learned – lots of skills in my own business to take back and develop other people
- One of the most valuable professional development experiences I have ever had. Thank you, and all the participants
- Enjoyed variation in activities
- Exposed to people outside as well
- Feel enthusiastic and motivated
- Enjoyed the fun
- Great to work with a group of women
- Learned so much
- Lucky to have been party of this – thank Cathy for her encouragement – never been to something that has been this powerful, useful, learned so much
- Feel – really inspired, but also really challenged to live up to the expectations of myself
- Learned – so much, the practical nature of what we learned – going out and doing it – to be coached through doing it – that has been so powerful for me, and learning more about myself
- Think – love to improve on workshop and deliver it again, personally got so much out of it

- Feel – excited about working together in the future, pleased gone so well and got so much out of it
- Learned – learned lots, lots of skills within the workshop, managing projects over distance and working with other people

### Participant evaluation of each session

Participants were asked to score each session out of 10 (Table 8 Participant evaluation score for each workshop session) and also provide comments on each session (Table 9 Participant comments on each workshop session). The average score for each session, and the score for the workshop overall, indicate a very high level of participant satisfaction, the most well regarded sessions included Networking, Financial analysis, MBTI and working together post workshop.

Only three sessions received any individual score below 7: Personal skills audit; Business risks; and Marketing our services. Based on participant comments, these sessions were too short, and/or should cover more. The least well-regarded session was the Personal Skills Audit.

**Table 8 Participant evaluation score for each workshop session**

Session	Average score (out of 10)	Range
MBTI	9.3	8 - 10
Personal skills audit	7.9	4 - 10
Conducting a needs analysis	8.4	7 – 10
Networking	9.8	9 – 10
Service brokerage	8.3	7 – 10
Financial analysis	9.4	8 – 10
Business risks	8.4	6 - 10
Marketing our services	8.4	6 - 10
Strategic and action planning	8.6	7 - 10
Working together post workshop	9.3	8 - 10

Workshop overall score	9.1	8 - 10
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**Table 9 Participant comments on each workshop session**

Session	Comments
MBTI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard to cover sufficiently in such a small space in time. Wonder if it is worthwhile including in such a short conference</li> <li>• Met these expectations and more</li> <li>• Very powerful information in any aspect of communication i.e marketing through to general communication. Has given me some tools on how I present myself to different people.</li> <li>• Great foundation to the workshop</li> <li>• Fantastic, confirmation of prior knowledge.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Things clicked.</li> </ul>
Personal skills audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop awakened skills and improved others</li> <li>• I didn't feel we had enough time for this topic (but I say that with understanding of the time limitations).</li> </ul>
Conducting a needs analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extremely helpful</li> <li>• Achieved my original expectations</li> <li>• Thinking on a more critical level, to be able to ID risk</li> <li>• Recognise how to do it and have more skills after participating. Look forward to practising and seeing results!!</li> <li>• Gained greater understanding of what needs analysis is and its role in business development.</li> </ul>
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The content, effort and time spent on this was fantastic.</li> <li>• Achieved my original expectations</li> <li>• My favourite session!</li> <li>• Really enjoyed the coaching in this area - very valuable</li> <li>• 10 for the value in the participation, and 8 for the skills to be converted to a 10 with practice and implementation.</li> <li>• Fantastic coaching by Cathy.</li> <li>• Thoroughly enjoyed learning "how to work the room". How to get through a business function as a non people person.</li> </ul>
Service brokerage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extremely helpful</li> <li>• Achieved some of my original expectations</li> <li>• Addressed very well. Now have the background knowledge.</li> <li>• Access to the CBS network will help to make this a success in my business.</li> <li>• This was well covered but I don't aspire to the training thing.</li> </ul>
Financial analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learned about some excellent tools</li> <li>• A good tool</li> <li>• Very practical</li> <li>• Now I have the motivation to make it happen (financial analysis of my business).</li> <li>• Very good examples by Amabel - gave great clarity.</li> <li>• Amabels business insights in this topic were FABULOUS. The facilitated panel in this</li> </ul>

	section worked well.
Business risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good discussion and examples from the group</li> <li>• Achieved my original expectations</li> <li>• We looked at risk/problem, may be could have looked more.</li> <li>• Access to corporate governance.</li> <li>• Gave me lots of issues to consider!</li> <li>• Perhaps a little rushed (once again I am well aware of why).</li> </ul>
Marketing our services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A little short (but only because you made the most of all the better bits</li> <li>• A little brief</li> <li>• Now I have the knowledge to make this happen</li> <li>• A light bulb in terms of marketing benefits rather than features.</li> </ul>
Strategic and action planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good plan. Could use templates perhaps</li> <li>• Extremely well done</li> <li>• Working together with Sally on project.</li> <li>• The Business Plan software looks great. Business Plan will be my project.</li> </ul>
Working together post workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great discussion</li> <li>• Fantastic</li> <li>• Keep CBS for women going.</li> <li>• For me it will need to have a purpose to get together rather than getting together for its own sake (I think).</li> </ul>

### Participant comments – workshop overall

- I was a bit worried to start with, as I was not sure what I would gain from the course. However I was very pleasantly surprised with the level of understanding I gained from an industry I really did not know much about. Thank you for the opportunity
- Overall score 9.5/10. I would have given 10/10 except I found 2 of the sections on Wednesday too rushed, e.g. marketing plan. The overall program is equal to or better than any other PD I have done (i.e. many) for many reasons, e.g. skill development, increased knowledge, sharing of strategies, networking (within and outside the group), meeting my needs, enhancing my personal development and seeing how I might work within regional groups. I have enjoyed and valued the contributions of everyone in the group as well as the fun. A BIG BIG THANKYOU! I look forward to a continued working relationship as well as valuable friendship.

- Hard to fit everything in such a short space of time. However, the flexibility to adjust to what the group felt was important was very valuable.
- This is a fantastic opportunity. Not alone. Thankful/greatful. Lots of skills I can use to develop others.
- Well done girls, a BIG BANG just went off!!
- Amabel, Cathy and Jeanette deliver an inspiring program that provides the tools for women to develop their careers through their own business regardless of location. A truly worthwhile program that has made a real difference to my life.
- I would strongly recommend the experience to other women working in consulting across regional Australia, especially those in start up and growth stage. Very motivating, well structured, dynamic leadership. Helpful friendly environment. Yes this old work horse was challenged and found it very beneficial.
- This has been the most valuable training experience I have been to. The investment I have made will be returned many times. Thankyou to those with the vision to make this happen.
- This workshop helped to open my eyes to the possibility of my own business and surrounded me with the people and inspiration I need to make it a reality.
- Workshop was the most rewarding on a personal and business level that I have been to. To have such a mixture of skills and personalities to be inspired by, was exciting and exhilarating. I now have the support of 12 other like minded women who will push me forward, challenge me, cheer for me and pick me up if I fall.

## Participant survey

Participants were surveyed pre workshop (Table 10 Pre workshop survey) and again post workshop (Table 11 Post workshop survey of participants) regarding their level of knowledge and skills in relation to the goals of the workshop. The change in average scores, between pre and post workshop surveys are also shown (Table 12 Comparison of pre and post workshop survey scores).

Where individual participants did not return pre workshop surveys, the post workshop survey was excluded. Otherwise, including the post workshop survey may have confounded the results of change in level of skills/knowledge.

Some participants reported that after the workshop, they changed their pre workshop survey scores, because participation in the workshop had highlighted how little they really knew prior to the workshop. Some participant scores were lower after the workshop, for the same reason. However, even when these were included in the analysis, the results still indicate that in all key areas, participation in the workshop resulted in improved knowledge and skills. This was particularly evident for:

- Q1 (engaging and working with community groups/industry groups);
- Q3 (understanding business systems, and brokering); and
- Q6 (knowledge of and ability to access horticultural industry training products and services).

It was also evident that participant skills were improved in the specific area of:

- understanding Myers Briggs personality types;
- understanding own strengths and weaknesses;
- understanding the service brokerage process of identifying needs and matching those to opportunities;
- identifying industry contracts for maximum benefit;
- ability to act as brokers of productive industry information and support;
- ability to access horticultural industry training products; and
- have access to support to be effective in brokering the delivery of business services in a local region.

Generally, where there was little change in skills/knowledge, participants probably already had reasonable skills/knowledge in these areas, or in some cases, participant scores were lower after the workshop (because they didn't realise how little they knew prior to the workshop).

One participant commented that, after completing the pre workshop survey they did some research prior to attending the workshop, for example, research on the National Training Framework (see survey Q5.4).

**Table 10 Pre workshop survey**

Pre workshop				Score 0 = to no extent Score 5 = to full extent					
		Av	N	0	1	2	3	4	5
				No. giving this score					



1.1	Are equipped with the <b>knowledge</b> to engage with <b>community groups</b> in productive projects	2.9	9	0	1	3	2	2	1
1.2	Are equipped with the <b>skills</b> to confidently engage with <b>community groups</b> in productive projects	2.8	9	0	1	3	3	1	1
1.3	Are equipped with the <b>knowledge</b> to engage with <b>industry groups</b> in productive projects	2.6	9	0	1	4	2	2	0
1.4	Are equipped with the <b>skills</b> to confidently engage with <b>industry</b> groups in productive projects;	2.8	9	0	1	3	3	1	1
1.5	Understand how the networks function within the community/ industry	3.1	9	0	1	2	3	1	2
1.6	Are well networked within local community and/or industry	3.1	9	1	0	2	1	4	1
2.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> of the business service needs in the local region or industry	2.7	9	1	0	3	2	3	0
2.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to research the business service needs in the local region or industry	3.8	9	0	0	1	3	2	3
2.3	Understand what motivates industry in a region	3.2	9	0	0	2	4	2	1
2.4	Understand the family farming business and the needs of the various members	3.8	9	0	0	0	2	7	0
3.1	Have an understanding of the business service systems in Australia	2.7	9	0	2	2	2	3	0
3.2	Are able to take a strategic view and understand how to get the best results for the region with regard to meeting business service needs	2.7	9	0	2	1	4	2	0
3.3	Understand the service brokerage process of identifying needs and matching these to opportunities	2.6	9	0	3	2	1	2	1
4.1	Are able to work effectively with industry groups	3.2	9	0	1	1	3	3	1
4.2	Are able to work effectively with community groups	4.0	9	0	0	0	2	5	2
4.3	Be able to identify key industry contacts and networks	3.7	9	0	0	1	3	3	2
4.4	Be able to identify how to use industry contacts for maximum benefit	2.6	9	1	0	4	2	1	1
4.5	Are able to act as brokers of productive industry information and support	2.3	9	2	0	3	1	3	0
4.6	Are able to act as providers of information and support	3.2	9	0	0	3	2	3	1
4.7	Are able to build the capacity of communities/groups to undertake productive	3.1		0	1	2	2	3	1

	training projects		9						
5.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to design a training program to meet the needs of an industry or a specific group	3.1	9	0	0	4	2	1	2
5.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to design a training program to meet the needs of an industry or a specific group	3.4	9	0	0	2	3	2	2
5.3	Have the skills to meet the training needs of the various members of the farming business	3.0	9	0	1	3	2	1	2
5.4	Have an understanding of the National Training Framework	2.7	9	1	1	2	2	2	1
6.1	Have knowledge of the horticultural industry training products and services available to family farm businesses	1.9	9	2	2	2	1	2	0
6.2	Are able to access horticultural industry training products	1.8	9	1	3	3	1	1	0
7.1	Have the <b>skills</b> to run a business from home	3.6	9	0	2	0	2	1	4
7.2	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to run a small business from home	3.7	9	0	2	0	2	0	5
7.3	Understand own strengths and weaknesses	3.2	9	0	1	1	3	3	1
7.4	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to develop a business plan	3.9	9	0	0	0	4	2	3
7.5	Have the <b>skills</b> to develop a business plan	3.8	9	0	0	0	5	1	3
7.6	Have the <b>skills</b> to implement a business plan	3.9	9	0	0	0	4	2	3
7.7	Have access to support to be effective in brokering the delivery of business services in a local region	2.8	8	0	0	4	3	0	1
7.8	Have the skills to market own services to industry/community	3.7	9	0	0	1	4	1	3
7.9	Are able to manage work/life balance	3.0	9	0	2	1	2	3	1
8.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> about accessing funding for training within an industry	2.9	9	0	1	2	3	3	0
8.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to access funding for training within an industry	2.9	9	0	1	2	4	1	1
8.3	Have the knowledge of training providers/deliverers available	3.0	9	0	1	3	1	3	1
8.4	Are skilled at project design	3.4	9	0	1	2	1	2	3
8.5	Have the skills to write funding proposals	4.0	9	0	0	1	1	4	3
9.1	Are skilled at project initiation	3.8	9	1	0	0	2	2	4

9.2	Are skilled at project implementation	3.8	9	0	1	0	3	1	4
9.3	Have the skills to track project progress against milestones	4.0	9	0	0	0	4	1	4
10.1	Have the skills to design an evaluation for an event or project	3.8	9	0	1	0	3	1	4
10.2	Have the skills to prepare project reports	3.7	9	0	1	0	3	2	3
10.3	Have the skills to analyse evaluation material	4.0	9	0	0	1	2	2	4
11.1	Are skilled at facilitation	3.8	9	0	0	1	3	2	3
11.2	Are able to work as part of a team over distance	3.9	9	0	1	0	1	4	3
11.3	Are skilled at giving presentations	4.3	9	0	0	0	2	2	5

12.1	Are skilled at qualitative research techniques in assessing training needs	3.6	9	0	0	1	4	2	2
12.2	Are skilled at quantitative research techniques in assessing training needs	3.6	9	0	0	1	4	2	2
13.1	Are skilled at recognising and building on business opportunities	3.6	9	1	0	0	3	2	3
14.1	Are skilled at building networks	3.9	9	1	0	0	0	5	3
15.1	Understand your Myers Briggs personality type	3.3	9	1	1	1	0	3	3
15.2	Are able to use the understanding of your personality type in the workplace	3.3	9	0	2	1	0	4	2
15.3	Are skilled at recognising and working with other personality types	3.2	9	0	2	1	1	3	2
16.1	Are skilled at program and business planning	3.7	9	0	0	0	5	2	2
17.1	Are skilled at staying focussed and on track with program/business plans	3.3	9	0	1	1	3	2	2

Table 11 Post workshop survey of participants

Table 11 Post workshop survey of participants											
	Post workshop			Score 0 = to no extent Score 5 = to full extent							
		Av	N	0	1	2	3	4	5		
				No. giving this score							
1.1	Are equipped with the <b>knowledge</b> to engage with <b>community groups</b> in productive projects	3.9	9	0	0	1	1	5	2		
1.2	Are equipped with the <b>skills</b> to confidently engage with <b>community groups</b> in productive projects	3.9	9	0	0	1	0	7	1		
1.3	Are equipped with the <b>knowledge</b> to engage with <b>industry groups</b> in productive projects	3.8	9	0	0	1	2	4	2		
1.4	Are equipped with the <b>skills</b> to confidently engage with <b>industry</b> groups in productive projects;	4.0	9	0	0	1	0	5	2		
1.5	Understand how the networks function within the community/ industry	4.1	9	0	0	1	0	4	3		
1.6	Are well networked within local community and/or industry	3.2	9	0	1	1	3	3	1		
2.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> of the business service needs in the local region or industry	3.3	9	0	1	2	1	3	2		
2.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to research the business service needs in the local region or industry	4.6	9	0	0	0	1	2	6		
2.3	Understand what motivates industry in a region	3.8	9	0	0	0	4	3	2		
2.4	Understand the family farming business and the needs of the various members	3.8	9	0	0	0	3	5	1		
3.1	Have an understanding of the business service systems in Australia	3.6	9	0	0	1	3	4	1		
3.2	Are able to take a strategic view and understand how to get the best results for the region with regard to meeting business service needs	3.4	9	0	1	0	2	6	0		
3.3	Understand the service brokerage process of identifying needs and matching these to opportunities	4.1	9	0	0	1	1	3	4		
4.1	Are able to work effectively with industry groups	3.9	9	0	0	0	2	6	1		
4.2	Are able to work effectively with community groups	4.2	9	0	0	0	0	7	2		
4.3	Be able to identify key industry contacts and networks	4.4	9	0	0	0	0	5	4		
4.4	Be able to identify how to use industry contacts for maximum benefit	3.9	9	0	0	0	3	4	2		
4.5	Are able to act as brokers of productive industry	3.9	9	0	1	0	0	6	2		

	information and support								
4.6	Are able to act as providers of information and support	4.2	9	0	0	0	1	5	3
4.7	Are able to build the capacity of communities/groups to undertake productive training projects	3.9	9	0	0	1	1	5	2
5.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to design a training program to meet the needs of an industry or a specific group	3.8	9	0	0	1	3	2	3
5.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to design a training program to meet the needs of an industry or a specific group	3.9	9	0	0	1	2	3	3
5.3	Have the skills to meet the training needs of the various members of the farming business	3.7	9	0	0	0	5	2	2
5.4	Have an understanding of the National Training Framework	3.3	9	0	1	1	2	4	1
6.1	Have knowledge of the horticultural industry training products and services available to family farm businesses	3.0	9	0	1	2	2	4	0
6.2	Are able to access horticultural industry training products	3.2	9	0	1	1	3	3	1
7.1	Have the <b>skills</b> to run a business from home	4.2	9	0	0	0	2	3	4
7.2	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to run a small business from home	4.3	9	0	0	0	2	2	5
7.3	Understand own strengths and weaknesses	4.3	9	0	0	0	1	4	4
7.4	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to develop a business plan	4.3	9	0	0	0	2	2	5
7.5	Have the <b>skills</b> to develop a business plan	4.2	9	0	0	0	2	3	4
7.6	Have the <b>skills</b> to implement a business plan	4.3	9	0	0	0	1	4	4
7.7	Have access to support to be effective in brokering the delivery of business services in a local region	4.2	8	0	0	0	2	3	4
7.8	Have the skills to market own services to industry/community	4.2	9	0	0	0	2	3	4
7.9	Are able to manage work/life balance	3.8	9	0	0	0	3	5	1
8.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> about accessing funding for training within an industry	3.9	9	0	0	0	3	4	2
8.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to access funding for training within an industry	3.9	9	0	0	0	2	6	1
8.3	Have the knowledge of training providers/deliverers available	3.6	9	0	0	1	1	6	0

8.4	Are skilled at project design	3.9	9	0	0	0	4	2	3
8.5	Have the skills to write funding proposals	4.0	9	0	0	0	3	3	3
9.1	Are skilled at project initiation	4.1	9	0	1	0	0	4	4
9.2	Are skilled at project implementation	4.1	9	0	0	1	1	3	4
9.3	Have the skills to track project progress against milestones	4.2	9	0	0	0	2	3	4
10.1	Have the skills to design an evaluation for an event or project	3.9	9	0	1	1	0	3	4
10.2	Have the skills to prepare project reports	4.0	9	0	1	0	1	3	4
10.3	Have the skills to analyse evaluation material	4.2	9	0	0	1	0	4	4
11.1	Are skilled at facilitation	4.0	9	0	0	1	3	0	5
11.2	Are able to work as part of a team over distance	4.6	9	0	0	0	0	4	5
11.3	Are skilled at giving presentations	4.4	9	0	0	0	1	3	5
12.1	Are skilled at qualitative research techniques in assessing training needs	3.7	9	0	0	1	3	3	2
12.2	Are skilled at quantitative research techniques in assessing training needs	3.6	9	0	0	2	2	3	2
13.1	Are skilled at recognising and building on business opportunities	4.1	9	0	1	0	1	2	5
14.1	Are skilled at building networks	4.3	9	0	1	0	0	2	6
15.1	Understand your Myers Briggs personality type	4.6	9	0	0	0	1	2	6
15.2	Are able to use the understanding of your personality type in the workplace	4.2	9	0	0	1	1	2	5
15.3	Are skilled at recognising and working with other personality types	3.9	9	0	1	1	0	3	4
16.1	Are skilled at program and business planning	4.0	9	0	0	0	3	3	3
17.1	Are skilled at staying focussed and on track with program/business plans	3.8	9	0	0	1	2	4	2

Table 12 Comparison of pre and post workshop survey scores

Comparison of pre and post workshop surveys		Average score		
		Pre-workshop	Post-workshop	Change
1.1	Are equipped with the <b>knowledge</b> to engage with <b>community groups</b> in productive projects	2.9	3.9	1.0
1.2	Are equipped with the <b>skills</b> to confidently engage with <b>community groups</b> in productive projects	2.8	3.9	1.1
1.3	Are equipped with the <b>knowledge</b> to engage with <b>industry groups</b> in productive projects	2.6	3.8	1.2
1.4	Are equipped with the <b>skills</b> to confidently engage with <b>industry groups</b> in productive projects;	2.8	4.0	1.2
1.5	Understand how the networks function within the community/ industry	3.1	4.1	1.0
1.6	Are well networked within local community and/or industry	3.1	3.2	0.1
2.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> of the business service needs in the local region or industry	2.7	3.3	0.7
2.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to research the business service needs in the local region or industry	3.8	4.6	0.8
2.3	Understand what motivates industry in a region	3.2	3.8	0.6
2.4	Understand the family farming business and the needs of the various members	3.8	3.8	0.0
3.1	Have an understanding of the business service systems in Australia	2.7	3.6	0.9
3.2	Are able to take a strategic view and understand how to get the best results for the region with regard to meeting business service needs	2.7	3.4	0.8
3.3	Understand the service brokerage process of identifying needs and matching these to opportunities	2.6	4.1	1.6
4.1	Are able to work effectively with industry groups	3.2	3.9	0.7
4.2	Are able to work effectively with community groups	4.0	4.2	0.2
4.3	Be able to identify key industry contacts and networks	3.7	4.4	0.8
4.4	Be able to identify how to use industry contacts for maximum benefit	2.6	3.9	1.3
4.5	Are able to act as brokers of productive industry information and support	2.3	3.9	1.6
4.6	Are able to act as providers of information and support	3.2	4.2	1.0
4.7	Are able to build the capacity of	3.1	3.9	0.8

	communities/groups to undertake productive training projects			
5.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to design a training program to meet the needs of an industry or a specific group	3.1	3.8	0.7
5.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to design a training program to meet the needs of an industry or a specific group	3.4	3.9	0.4
5.3	Have the skills to meet the training needs of the various members of the farming business	3.0	3.7	0.7
5.4	Have an understanding of the National Training Framework	2.7	3.3	0.7
6.1	Have knowledge of the horticultural industry training products and services available to family farm businesses	1.9	3.0	1.1
6.2	Are able to access horticultural industry training products	1.8	3.2	1.4
7.1	Have the <b>skills</b> to run a business from home	3.6	4.2	0.7
7.2	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to run a small business from home	3.7	4.3	0.7
7.3	Understand own strengths and weaknesses	3.2	4.3	1.1
7.4	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to develop a business plan	3.9	4.3	0.4
7.5	Have the <b>skills</b> to develop a business plan	3.8	4.2	0.4
7.6	Have the <b>skills</b> to implement a business plan	3.9	4.3	0.4
7.7	Have access to support to be effective in brokering the delivery of business services in a local region	2.8	4.2	1.5
7.8	Have the skills to market own services to industry/community	3.7	4.2	0.6
7.9	Are able to manage work/life balance	3.0	3.8	0.8
8.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> about accessing funding for training within an industry	2.9	3.9	1.0
8.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to access funding for training within an industry	2.9	3.9	1.0
8.3	Have the knowledge of training providers/deliverers available	3.0	3.6	0.6
8.4	Are skilled at project design	3.4	3.9	0.4
8.5	Have the skills to write funding proposals	4.0	4.0	0.0



## Appendix B: Milestone report (including evaluation report of workshop one)

9.1	Are skilled at project initiation	3.8	4.1	0.3
9.2	Are skilled at project implementation	3.8	4.1	0.3
9.3	Have the skills to track project progress against milestones	4.0	4.2	0.2
10.1	Have the skills to design an evaluation for an event or project	3.8	3.9	0.1
10.2	Have the skills to prepare project reports	3.7	4.0	0.3
10.3	Have the skills to analyse evaluation material	4.0	4.2	0.2
11.1	Are skilled at facilitation	3.8	4.0	0.2
11.2	Are able to work as part of a team over distance	3.9	4.6	0.7
11.3	Are skilled at giving presentations	4.3	4.4	0.1

12.1	Are skilled at qualitative research techniques in assessing training needs	3.6	3.7	0.1
12.2	Are skilled at quantitative research techniques in assessing training needs	3.6	3.6	0.0
13.1	Are skilled at recognising and building on business opportunities	3.6	4.1	0.6
14.1	Are skilled at building networks	3.9	4.3	0.4
15.1	Understand your Myers Briggs personality type	3.3	4.6	1.2
15.2	Are able to use the understanding of your personality type in the workplace	3.3	4.2	0.9
15.3	Are skilled at recognising and working with other personality types	3.2	3.9	0.7
16.1	Are skilled at program and business planning	3.7	4.0	0.3
17.1	Are skilled at staying focussed and on track with program/business plans	3.3	3.8	0.4

## Post workshop evaluation by facilitators

**Table 13 Post workshop evaluation by facilitators**

Activity	What went well	What could be better
<b>Monday</b>		
Introduction to the workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cards</li> <li>• Warmth and enthusiasm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perhaps set guidelines about length of time to speak, set up a way of shutting people down that all agree on?</li> <li>• Try to get everyone there on first night rather than some coming in next morning</li> </ul>
Photocards		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By third time explained, some may have been a bit bored with explaining the same info again or listening to the same info again. People could simply explain their photo once to the whole group</li> </ul>
Informal dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone chatted and got to know each other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move people around between courses</li> </ul>
<b>Tuesday</b>		
Tuesday warm-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good fun – better if all there</li> <li>• New people were given opportunity to introduce themselves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to allow for this time in program as we seemed to be pushed for time</li> <li>• Didn't really get info. on each persons business.</li> <li>• Was designed to make new people welcome, but not sure it achieved that.</li> </ul>
MBTI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Those new to MB learnt from about the personality types, and an understanding of how to deal with different types.</li> <li>• Those with previous experience with MB, learnt about functions</li> </ul>	
Introduction to brokering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good overview, lights went on</li> <li>• Good timing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I think we need more time for the brokering component – not sure how!</li> </ul>
Speed dating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good – everyone enjoyed sharing there stories</li> <li>• Lots of noise and interaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructions should be clearer.</li> <li>• Fewer repetitions may be better.</li> <li>• Participants expected to</li> </ul>

		give a 5 min talk on themselves and their businesses.
Skills audit		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needed more time and to be more focused.</li> <li>• We got broad strengths rather than skills</li> <li>• Desired outcome should be clear.</li> <li>• Instructions should be clearer</li> <li>• We didn't revisit this. Should have done that OR stated that we had changed plans.</li> </ul>
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cathy does a great job with this.</li> <li>• Good to fill in the diagram and raise awareness of networks that you have</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directions should be clearer</li> <li>• Question for round (name one network) was unclear. Some responded with a network not already mentioned, others were reporting the most important network they used. Need to be clear on question e.g. writing it on the board, or have it written in the manual.</li> </ul>
Reflections on the day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good to get to know how each person is feeling</li> </ul>	
ORID		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some participants handed these forms in, and we should have recorded their comments.</li> </ul>
Preparations for networking dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good – worked well</li> <li>• Excellent coaching</li> </ul>	
Networking dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good – I now understand why it is important to have two dinners even tho they are exhausting</li> </ul>	
Wednesday		
Wednesday morning warm up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good fun once again</li> <li>• giving compliments worked well</li> </ul>	
Debrief on dinner		
Business panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was important to squeeze</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to plan for it</li> </ul>

	this in. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answered their burning questions</li> <li>• Voting was a good idea</li> <li>• Questions from participants were good</li> </ul>	differently next time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tiring work for panel members (consider this for timing)</li> </ul>
Break even analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent – well done at pulling this together at the last minute Amabel</li> <li>• Provided some participants with the type of information they were looking for.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name of this session (was it really a BEA or was it a charge out rate calculation).</li> <li>• Could cover both setting of rates and break even analysis</li> <li>• Include this in the booklet</li> <li>• Could do benchmarking, but may be some issues with participants who are not yet in business.</li> <li>• May have been too simple for experienced business people.</li> </ul>
Business success plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good overview of a business plan as a tool for them in their business and to use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would have liked to have time to spend on the other brokering materials</li> <li>• Could do benchmarking (but how much time would be involved?, and probably not suitable for participants to send figures before workshop)</li> <li>• Include in booklet</li> </ul>
Needs analysis		
MLA presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important to have an RDC present to gain an insight into their needs and products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needed to be shorter</li> </ul>
Develop marketing plan (working in small groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good to do small group work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need to change the structure for this, I think some of them needed some of the theory before they could do the practical.</li> <li>• allow more time so that participants are not feeling rushed</li> <li>• need more instruction/ background information for those not familiar with marketing</li> </ul>

Business risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not enough time</li> </ul>
Feedback from today (Wed)		
ORID		
Preparation for dinner tonight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good ownership of process by the group</li> </ul>	
Networking dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• excellent</li> </ul>	
Thursday		
Thursday morning warm up		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• didn't work as well as Wednesday warm up, should it be something completely different?</li> </ul>
Debrief on dinner		
Action plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good – important to allow the reporting back time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• should there be clearer direction for participants e.g. how this fits with project agreement</li> </ul>
How could a network work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jeanette's facilitation and method in use of shower curtain was excellent.</li> </ul>	
Reflections		
OTHER		
Participant survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• handing out pre-workshop survey was good - some participants altered their pre-workshop ratings, while adding their post-workshop rating. Otherwise would be difficult to quantify how much they thought they had learnt.</li> <li>• Good to have names on survey, could therefore follow up if necessary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructions should be clearer (some participants didn't complete as required)</li> </ul>

## Other comments from facilitators:

- Too much in program – need to run to time
- Good flexibility to meet needs of participants.
- Best if all participants are there at the start.

- As presenters while we need to adjust for their skill level and we must make sure that we don't leave some behind. Draw on the experience of the group members
- Try and select participants to be at a similar skill and experience level if possible.
- Develop strategies to deal with people or behaviours that we find challenging
- Improve pre workshop publicity to be more explicit as to who the target group is – expectations of the course and of the participants
- Improve evaluation process

## ***Discussion and recommendations***

The evaluation indicated a high level of participant satisfaction with all components of the workshop programme.

Highlights included:

- Two networking dinners with industry guests
- Business panel session
- Myers Briggs Type Indicator session
- An introduction to brokering
- Business analysis tools
- Participation of a diverse group of women, with a wide range of skills and experiences

The following recommendations are made:

8. That the basic content and structure of the workshops be retained.
9. That business analysis tools be included in the programme.
10. That a business panel be included in the programme.
11. The basic content of the workbook be retained, with some minor changes, so that the workbook better reflects sessions and tasks
12. Presentation by HAL to overview horticulture in Australia, horticultural businesses, their needs and HAL products and services.
13. The skills audit session should be more focused, and include more on skills (not just key strengths); perhaps some background work could be done by participants prior to the workshop in order to save time.
14. That the facilitation team maintain the flexibility in workshop delivery (ie in response to needs of participants)

## Appendix 1 : flier (Expression of interest form)



# Coordinating business services in regional Australia: expression of interest form

## PROJECT TEAM

Amabel Fulton,  
RDS Partners

Cathy McGowan,  
Catherine McGowan  
Consulting

Jeanette Long,  
Ag Consulting Co

Naomi McGrath-Kerr,  
RDS Partners

Workshop dates:  
March 10  
(from 6pm) to  
March 13, 2008  
(finish 1pm)

A follow up  
workshop will be  
held September 2,  
2008.

Venue:  
Sydney (TBC)

Expressions of  
Interest Welcome:  
October 1, 2007  
To  
December 15, 2007



- Are you passionate about making your region a better place to live and work?
- Are you interested in operating a consultancy business in your community?
- Are you looking for ongoing professional development and support?
- Would you like to join a network of people with similar business goals?

We are a group of self-employed consultants and trainers interested in agriculture, rural development and creating opportunities for others. With assistance from Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL) we plan to deliver a pilot program supporting consultants in rural Australia to act as training and funding brokers.

This pilot is about coming together to learn from each other, develop skills and support each other in building business opportunities and networks.

Our goals for this program are to:

- significantly increase the delivery of business skill training and provision of services to primary industries.
- provide a foundation for participants to create a self-reliant, profitable and proactive rural community.

### PILOT WORKSHOP PROGRAM

The program will be designed around adult learning principles and include workshops, skills sharing sessions and networking. Final topics will be negotiated prior to the event, however, current ideas include:

- linking into funding networks in agriculture and rural development
- what does brokering involve?
- setting up business systems
- business and strategic planning
- marketing yourself and your business
- maintaining and building a balance between business and family needs
- running a business from a regional location, what are the traps and how can they be avoided?

### COST

HAL will pay for venue hire, workshop meals and coordination. Participants must cover the workshop deposit, travel, accommodation and non-workshop meals.





## Coordinating business services in regional Australia: *expression of interest form*

*"I see so many opportunities for women operating their own consultancy businesses:  
Working from home  
Making money  
Building networks and skilling up their communities.  
I know its also an area which interests the Research and Development Corporations.  
I am very interested in being part of a network of like minded people"*  
Jeanette Long

*The main challenge I face in running my own business is building project teams and sharing the work.  
I am keen to have a system of business partners to work with.  
It would be especially useful in balancing the work load."*  
Cathy McGowan

For more information contact  
Cathy Mc Gowan  
02 6024 6834

Jeanette Long  
08 88373993  
Or  
Amabel Fulton  
03 6231 9033

### HOW TO EXPRESS INTEREST IN THIS EVENT

Please complete the two pages of this form and return to:  
Naomi McGrath-Kerr at RDS Partners, 2/111 Warwick Street,  
West Hobart, TASMANIA 7000.

Ph: 03 6231 9033, Fax: 03 6231 1419

Email: [naomi.mcgrathkerr@ruraldevelopmentservices.com](mailto:naomi.mcgrathkerr@ruraldevelopmentservices.com)

#### Section 1

Name .....

Occupation.....

Business name .....

ABN .....

Address.....

.....

Ph: (...) .....

Mobile .....

Email.....

Industry .....

#### Section 2

Current qualifications .....

.....

.....

Skills I can share.....

.....

.....

**Form continues over page**

Training attended previously.....

.....

.....

Why I would like to be part of this pilot.....

.....

.....

### **Section 3**

Structure of your business/enterprise? (circle one):

Company          Partnership          Sole trader          Trust

Number of years in operation?.....

Business/enterprise focus?.....

.....

Challenges my business faces .....

.....

### **What happens now?**

Expressions of interest are open for the pilot workshop between October 1 and December 15, 2007.

Expressions of interest will be reviewed by the project team after the closing date of December 15, 2007, with successful applicants will be notified prior to close of business Friday, December 21.

Successful applicants will be supplied with a registration form and asked to return it as well as make a payment of \$100 to secure their place at the workshop.

On receipt of the deposit, registrants will be sent information on venue details and the workshop program.

For more information, please contact Naomi on 03 6231 9033 or email [naomi.mcgrathkerr@ruraldevelopmentservices.com](mailto:naomi.mcgrathkerr@ruraldevelopmentservices.com)



## Coordinating business services in regional Australia: *expression of interest form*



Amabel Fulton

### INTRODUCING THE PROJECT TEAM:

**Amabel Fulton** is a rural social researcher and consultant with Rural Development Services with 20 years experience in rural journalism, agricultural extension, rural social research, rural training and business management. Amabel is a current member of the national Regional Women's Advisory Council

Amabel started Rural Development Services, now RDS Partners with her life and business partner David Fulton in 2000; David and Amabel were joined by business partner Dr Tom Lewis in December 2006. The business is based in Hobart, Tasmania, and employs eight Full Time Equivalents.

RDS Partners delivers training including Property Management Planning, Leadership, Strategic Planning and Business Skills Development to enterprises and organisations involved in agriculture, aquaculture and food industries at a state and national level.

Contact details—Ph: 03 6231 9033;

Email: [amabel.fulton@ruraldevelopment-services.com](mailto:amabel.fulton@ruraldevelopment-services.com)

Website: [www.ruraldevelopmentservices.com](http://www.ruraldevelopmentservices.com)



Cathy McGowan

**Cathy McGowan** has been running her consultancy business since 1983. Her main area of work is with leadership programs mostly in agriculture and rural community development.

She lives in the Indigo Valley in North East Victoria where she also runs a small farm and enjoys being an aunt, daughter, sister and community member.

Over the past 10 years Cathy has worked with the research and development corporations of the dairy, horticulture, meat, wool, sugar and rural industries.

Cathy has a BA, Dip Ed., Master of Applied Science in Agriculture and an AO - Officer in the Order of Australia.

Contact details—Ph: 02 60 246834; Email: [cathy@cathymcgowan.com](mailto:cathy@cathymcgowan.com)

Website: [www.cathymcgowan.com](http://www.cathymcgowan.com)



Jeanette Long

**Jeanette Long** and husband, Bill, began their consultancy business, Ag Consulting Co, in 1996. The business includes agronomic advice, whole farm management and research. Jeanette focuses her work on training, facilitation and project management.

Jeanette is the national coordinator Partners in Grain and a board member of Australia Women in Agriculture.

Bill and Jeanette also manage a cropping and sheep property at Ardrossan on Yorke Peninsula and a vineyard in the Clare Valley of South Australia.

Jeanette has a MBA (Agribusiness), Bachelor of Applied Science in Agriculture and a Graduate Diploma in Education.

Contact details— Ph: 08 88373993; Email: [jeanette@agconsulting.com.au](mailto:jeanette@agconsulting.com.au)

## Appendix 2 : pre workshop participant survey

Coordinating business services in regional Australia

### Participant survey

This survey has two aims

- It will help us design a program which is tailored to meet your needs, ensuring the workshop is effective, informative, invigorating and fun.
- We will use the results to benchmark where you are now so you can re-visit this after you have completed the training program as part of the evaluation.

The survey takes an hour or so to complete, so set aside some time to allow yourself to give considered answers.

Please email your completed survey form to Naomi McGrath-Kerr at RDS  
([naomi.mcgrathkerr@ruraldevelopmentservices.com](mailto:naomi.mcgrathkerr@ruraldevelopmentservices.com)) by close of business February 29th 2008

### About You

*This information will be included with your photo, along with those of the other participants, in the training booklet.*

*Please keep this to 1 A4 page in length*

Name Address Phone Mobile Email	
Current role	
Qualifications	
Brief overview of your professional background	
<b>Overview of your business</b>	
Vision for your business	
Business products and services provided	
Business structure	
Key Networks	
Two Key business strengths	
I am passionate about?	
<b>Expectations from participating in this programme</b>	

### Workshop outcomes

All information hereon is confidential and anonymous within the project team. Aggregate results will be presented. Each participant will receive a copy of the survey for you to benchmark your results after the training is completed to measure the skills and knowledge gained.

This series of questions explores your knowledge and skills in relation to the goals of the workshop. While some statements may seem similar to one another – they are all different in one aspect of the question.

For each statement, nominate the extent to which (where 0 is to no extent, and 5 is to a full extent) you feel you:

		To no extent		To a full extent				
		0	1	2	3	4	5	
1.1	Are equipped with the <b>knowledge</b> to engage with <b>community groups</b> in productive projects							
1.2	Are equipped with the <b>skills</b> to confidently engage with <b>community groups</b> in productive projects							
1.3	Are equipped with the <b>knowledge</b> to engage with <b>industry groups</b> in productive projects							
1.4	Are equipped with the <b>skills</b> to confidently engage with <b>industry groups</b> in productive projects;							
1.5	Understand how the networks function within the community/ industry							
1.6	Are well networked within local community and/or industry							
2.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> of the business service needs in the local region or industry							
2.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to research the business service needs in the local region or industry							
2.3	Understand what motivates industry in a region							
2.4	Understand the family farming business and the needs of the various members							
3.1	Have an understanding of the business service systems in Australia							
3.2	Are able to take a strategic view and understand how to get the best results for the region with regard to meeting business service needs							
3.3	Understand the service brokerage process of identifying needs and matching these to opportunities							
4.1	Are able to work effectively with industry groups							
4.2	Are able to work effectively with community groups							
4.3	Be able to identify key industry contacts and networks							
4.4	Be able to identify how to use industry contacts for maximum benefit							
4.5	Are able to act as brokers of productive industry information and support							
4.6	Are able to act as providers of information and support							

		To no extent		To a full extent			
		0	1	2	3	4	5
4.7	Are able to build the capacity of communities/groups to undertake productive training projects						
5.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to design a training program to meet the needs of an industry or a specific group						
5.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to design a training program to meet the needs of an industry or a specific group						
5.3	Have the skills to meet the training needs of the various members of the farming business						
5.4	Have an understanding of the National Training Framework						
6.1	Have knowledge of the horticultural industry training products and services available to family farm businesses						
6.2	Are able to access horticultural industry training products						
7.1	Have the <b>skills</b> to run a business from home						
7.2	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to run a small business from home						
7.3	Understand own strengths and weaknesses						
7.4	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to develop a business plan						
7.5	Have the <b>skills</b> to develop a business plan						
7.6	Have the <b>skills</b> to implement a business plan						
7.7	Have access to support to be effective in brokering the delivery of business services in a local region						
7.8	Have the skills to market own services to industry/community						
7.9	Are able to manage work/life balance						
8.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> about accessing funding for training within an industry						
8.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to access funding for training within an industry						
8.3	Have the knowledge of training providers/deliverers available						
8.4	Are skilled at project design						
8.5	Have the skills to write funding proposals						
9.1	Are skilled at project initiation						
9.2	Are skilled at project implementation						
9.3	Have the skills to track project progress against milestones						

		To no extent		To a full extent				
		0	1	2	3	4	5	
10.1	Have the skills to design an evaluation for an event or project							
10.2	Have the skills to prepare project reports							
10.3	Have the skills to analyse evaluation material							
11.1	Are skilled at facilitation							
11.2	Are able to work as part of a team over distance							
11.3	Are skilled at giving presentations							

Any comments or other expected outcomes?

### Workshop Skills

This series of questions explores your knowledge and skills in relation to the goals of the workshop in developing your community and industry engagement skills. While some statements may seem similar to one another – they are all different in one aspect of the question.

For each statement, nominate the extent to which (where 0 is to no extent, and 5 is to a full extent) you feel you:

		To no extent		To a full extent				
		0	1	2	3	4	5	
12.1	Are skilled at qualitative research techniques in assessing training needs							
12.2	Are skilled at quantitative research techniques in assessing training needs							
13.1	Are skilled at recognising and building on business opportunities							
14.1	Are skilled at building networks							
15.1	Understand your Myers Briggs personality type							
15.2	Are able to use the understanding of your personality type in the workplace							
15.3	Are skilled at recognising and working with other personality types							
16.1	Are skilled at program and business planning							
17.1	Are skilled at staying focussed and on track with program/business plans							

**Expectations and support needs from the training activities**

15. What do **you** hope to get out of participating in **each part** of the program? (Please be specific. If a topic is not of interest please indicate.)

The aim of this section is to find out if you have any specific needs or any specific contributions you would like to make.

<b>15.1</b>	<b>Myers Briggs Indicator – Understanding your ways of communicating and operating</b>
16.1	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.2</b>	<b>Personal Skills Audit</b>
16.2	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.3</b>	<b>Conducting a Needs Analysis</b>
16.3	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.4</b>	<b>Networking</b>
16.4	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.5</b>	<b>Service brokerage</b>
16.5	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.6</b>	<b>Financial analysis</b>
16.6	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?



<b>15.7</b>	<b>Business Risks</b>
16.7	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.8</b>	<b>Marketing our services</b>
16.8	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.9</b>	<b>Strategic and Action planning</b>
16.9	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.10</b>	<b>Working together post workshop</b>
16.10	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?

**What skills do you bring that you would be willing to share with others?**

**What concerns do you have about participating in this program?**

**How long did this survey take you to do?**

**In regard to the survey what worked well for you and what could be better?**

**Are there any other comments or information you would like to add?**

**Is there anything else that you think is important for us to know that has not been covered in these questions?**

**Last job**

Please send this completed form back to Rural Development Services, Naomi McGrath-Kerr Naomi.McgrathKerr@ruraldevelopmentservices.com  
(or phone 03 6231 9033 if you have any queries or concerns)

Once you have done this, please also send you're a photo of yourself by email, saved with your name as the filename, to Naomi at the above address.

*Thankyou for taking the time to complete the survey.*

*We look forward to meeting you in Sydney in March.*

*Amabel, Cathy and Jeanette*

### Appendix 3 : Communication plan

Actions	Stakeholder	Outcome	KPI	When
<b>Communication with ppts and stakeholders</b>				
Develop pilot workshop flier, circulate to stakeholder groups	Potential ppts (need to append list of these), Industry project partners	Interest and engagement in project generated in target audiences	Registrations in project received in timely manner	Oct 2007-Dec 15 2007
<i>Circulate flier and media release 1 to previously discussed networks</i>	Networks: local farmers, industry groups, state DPIs	Interest and engagement in project generated in target audiences	EOIs for project received	5-Oct-07
<i>Expressions of interest close, project team choose workshop ppts</i>	Networks: local farmers, industry groups, state DPIs	Interest and engagement in project generated in target audiences, and demonstrated to project team	EOIs for project analysed and prioritised according to criteria on form	15-Dec-07
<i>Potential ppts contacted by project team, invited to register/pay security deposit</i>	EOIs;	Workshop participants confirmed by end of business year for 2007; workshop attended by ppts with diverse skills/experiences	Registrations in project received in timely manner; security deposits processed	21-Dec-07
<i>Pilot workshop program, (pre-workshop survey?) and venue details circulated to registrants</i>	Registrants	Registrants engaged in pilot workshop, able to organise travel in timely manner	Registrants informed and confident about event; ditto project team?	31 Jan 08?
<i>Circulate flier and media release 2 to networks</i>	Networks: local farmers, industry groups, state DPIs	Interest and engagement in project generated in target audiences	Coverage of event in different media outlets/regions	Beg to mid Feb 2008
<i>Circulate flier and pre and post event media releases to media and industry stakeholders</i>	Media: local area and larger state or industry publications	Interest and publicity for event/event's results generated in target audiences	Coverage of event in different media outlets/regions	Mid March 2008
Preparation of letters of invitation, project outline for VIPs and guest speakers, following up with them to chase RSVPs and biographies for booklets	Industry organisations (need to append list of these), RDCs (etc), Agribusinesses (etc), VIPs	Find out about project aims and objectives, engage with brokers to deliver services as needed; VIPs and guest speakers briefed on aims of project/needs of participants and can contribute most valuable information in keeping with these	Good selection of VIPs and guest speakers booked to attend workshop; Good networks; high scores on evaluations; participation in event valuable/meaningful	Mid October - Mid November 2007

## Appendix B: Milestone report (including evaluation report of workshop one)

<b>Communication of general project details to wider audience</b>				
Media release to accompany flier	Potential ppts, Industry project partners, Media organisations, farmer networks local networks	Interest in project generated in target audiences,	Expressions of interest/registrations received	Oct-07
Media release to accompany flier	Potential ppts, Industry project partners, Media organisations, farmer networks local networks	Interest in project generated in target audiences,	Expressions of interest/registrations received	Feb-08
Media release prior to pilot and during/after pilot	Potential ppts, Industry project partners, Media organisations, farmer networks local networks	Interest in project generated in target audiences, recognition for industry partners fo their role	Expressions of interest in remainder of program by ppts or industry organisations	Mar-08
<b>Communication with engaged participants/registrants</b>				
Preparation and emailing of pre-workshop materials	Participants	Ppts thinking about workshop before get there and can hit the ground running	Ppts feeling nervous and apprehensive about attending	Early Feb
Pre-workshop phonelink with ppts	Participants	Ppts have a chance to allay concerns prior to workshop	Positive feedback on "how feeling" question at end of phonelink	Mid Feb 2008
Email/phone correspondence with ppts to chase up pre-workshop survey and 1 page business plan, confirm starting time for workshop	Participants	Another chance to ask questions and allay concerns; professionalism of project taken seriously	Pre-workshop survey received from all participants 2 weeks prior to workshop 1	Mar-08
Post workshop - monthly 2 hour phone hook-up with participants of each workshop W1	Participants	Progress, scope, changes, learnings from projects discussed, re-engagement of ppts in project	75% of workshop 1 participants present at each phonelink	Mar 2008 - Sep 2008
<b>Communication with Industry Project Partners</b>				
Phonelink meeting with Reference Group (funding bodies)	Reference group members/project partners	Kept up to date and confident in achievement of project outcomes	Ongoing opportunities for engagement/funding of latter stages of project	By Dec 07, Feb 08, Apr 08, Sep 08

## Appendix B: Milestone report (including evaluation report of workshop one)

Publish Phase 1 Report: report on design, engagement, delivery and evaluation of project	Industry project partners; Industry organisations, funding bodies	Benefits of project methodology underlined	Analysis of what would be repeated and what would be improved on next time	Feb-08
Publish Phase 2 report: progress of DEDE phases of program	Industry project partners; Industry organisations, funding bodies, participants?	Cost/benefit analysis of project for project team and also for participants/industry bodies with a view to return on their investment	Project afforded project team a sound return on investment; project afforded partners and participants demonstrable returns	Apr-08
Publish Phase 3 Report: final status of project design, engagement, delivery and evaluation	Industry project partners; Industry organisations, funding bodies, participants?	Cost/benefit analysis of project for project team and also for participants/industry bodies with a view to return on their investment	Project afforded project team a sound return on investment; project afforded partners and participants demonstrable returns; participant testimonials	Sep-08

## **Appendix C: Workshop facilitators guide**

# **Coordinating Business Services in Regional Australia: Workshop facilitators guide**

prepared by Donna Lucas and Amabel Fulton, Rural Development  
Services (RDS)

as part of a project funded by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL), with  
voluntary contributions from participants (of pilot workshop) and RDS

October 2008



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## Introduction

This guide has been produced as part of a project titled *Brokering business skills development for horticulture*. The project was funded by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) with voluntary contributions from participants in the 2008 program, and Rural Development Services (RDS).

This HAL funded project included delivery of a pilot program, including a four day workshop (March 2008 in Sydney). A follow up workshop was held six months later in Melbourne (September 2008).

The pilot program was developed by Amabel Fulton (Rural Development Services), Jeanette Long (Ag Consulting Co) and Cathy McGowan (Catherine McGowan Consulting Pty Ltd).

The project final report is available from HAL (HAL project code HG06160).

Following the success of the pilot workshop, one of the recommendations from the above HAL project, was to deliver the training workshop to further groups of participants.

This guide is intended for use by facilitators delivering future workshops, based on the pilot workshop delivered in Sydney in March 2008, and is designed to be used in conjunction with the workshop workbook. Clearly, the program should be amended where appropriate, to suit the needs of participants.



## **Workshop objectives**

The objectives of the workshop are:

1. To develop the skills amongst regional level service brokers to identify business training needs and coordinate the delivery of training to address these needs (demand driven industry development).
2. Provide access to a network of regional brokers.

## Important information for facilitators

### ***Expressions of interest***

Please refer to Appendix 1 for a copy of the flier and expression of interest form, as used for the pilot program. Please refer to Appendix 2 for a copy of the letter of invitation.

If applicable, workshop facilitators and coordinators should consider the target group for any workshop. The mix of skills and knowledge that participants have to share may be important when considering expressions of interest.

A group size of 12-15 is recommended, to allow for effective group participation.

### ***Briefing participants prior to the workshop***

It is recommended to brief participants, for example via phone link, on what is expected at the workshop. It is also important to provide participants with notes on brokering and it is suggested to provide the case studies from Matching training needs and opportunities: a guide book (Fulton et al, 2005). [The guidebook was produced as part of a project titled A responsive training market: The role of brokers, funded by the Cooperative Venture for Capacity Building (CVCB) through the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC)].

Participants should complete a personal profile and pre workshop survey (see template used for pilot workshop – Appendix 3). This provides a reference of participant contact details, skills and businesses, to include in the workbook.

Where applicable, it is also important that participants understand what is expected after the workshop. For example, reporting back to the group.

### ***Introductions at the workshop***

If participants come in on the night before, e.g. for a welcome dinner and introductions, it is important that all participants attend that session. This provides a more effective start to the workshop the next morning, compared to some participants joining the group the next day. Participants should be provided with a workshop booklet or folder.

At the start of the workshop, there should be agreement on guidelines for working together.

### ***Presenting the workshop***

The workshop workbook is provided in electronic form, with PowerPoint presentations provided for various sections. These should be tailored to suit the needs of the participant group.

It is recommended that facilitators follow the general workshop outline, but importantly, allow for flexibility in delivery.

The Myers-Briggs session should be facilitated by an accredited facilitator.

Allow time for participants to record responses in their workbook, and allow time to share responses with the group in discussion.

Facilitators should consider including:

- a presentation from an experienced broker, if available
- a presentation from an RDC (e.g. HAL, MLA, RIRDC), including products and services available

It is recommended that the workshop be held over four days; introductions on the first night, and the main workshop over three days. This time is necessary to cover the workshop material, but will depend on the skill level of the group.

The pilot program held in 2008, included mostly those running their own businesses. Where the workshop is run for less experienced participants, the program should be tailored to meet participant's needs.

Facilitators should have a strong understanding of adult learning principles, and a strong understanding of how brokering works.

### ***Workshop evaluation***

A pre workshop survey (see Appendix 3) should be completed by participants at least one week prior to the workshop. The same survey should be completed at the conclusion of the workshop, to enable an evaluation of the extent to which the workshop contributed to improving participants skills.

If possible the same survey sheet should be handed back for the post workshop survey, and/or names provided on the surveys, to allow better evaluation of skill and knowledge development.

In the pilot workshop, some participants found that they would score their own skills and knowledge lower after the workshop (compared to their score pre workshop), as participation in the workshop highlighted that there was much more to learn than originally anticipated. So, although they felt that their skills and knowledge had developed substantially, in some cases the post workshop score was lower than the pre workshop score.

Evaluation should also be incorporated into the workshop each day.

### ***Networking dinners***

Industry guests should be invited to attend the networking dinners. These dinners provide an opportunity for participants to network with potential business contacts,

and also provide an opportunity to improve networking skills (see networking session in workshop workbook).

The network dinners requires some planning during the afternoon prior to each dinner:

- Participants should be briefed on each guest, including their background.
- One or two participants should be allocated to each guest, to greet them on arrival and host them for the evening.
- Tables places should be arranged, including movement of participants during the evening around tables (e.g. between entree and main course).
- One participant should be Master of Ceremonies for the evening. This volunteer should be briefed by the facilitator prior to dinner.

Industry guests should be asked (in advance) to give a **brief** talk.

## **Useful resources:**

*Brokering business skills development for horticulture* (2008) Final report, including workshop evaluation. HAL project code HG06160

Kilpatrick, S., Fulton, A., and Johns, S. (2005) *Matching training needs and opportunities: a guide book*. CVCB, RIRDC Project No: UT-41A

Workshop notes (Workshop one), Coordinating Business Services in Regional Australia, pilot program. The Mercure Hotel, Sydney, March 2008

Workshop notes (Workshop two), Coordinating Business Services in Regional Australia, pilot program. The Holiday Inn, Melbourne Airport, September 2008

## Appendix 1: Flier and expression of interest form



Know-how for Horticulture™

### Coordinating business services in regional Australia: *expression of interest form*

#### PROJECT TEAM

Amabel Fulton,  
RDS Partners

Cathy McGowan,  
Catherine McGowan  
Consulting

Jeanette Long,  
Ag Consulting Co

Naomi McGrath-Kerr,  
RDS Partners

Workshop dates:  
March 10  
(from 6pm) to  
March 13, 2008  
(finish 1pm)

A follow up  
workshop will be  
held September 2,  
2008.

Venue:  
Sydney (TBC)

Expressions of  
Interest Welcome:  
October 1, 2007  
To  
December 15, 2007



- Are you passionate about making your region a better place to live and work?
- Are you interested in operating a consultancy business in your community?
- Are you looking for ongoing professional development and support?
- Would you like to join a network of people with similar business goals?

We are a group of self-employed consultants and trainers interested in agriculture, rural development and creating opportunities for others. With assistance from Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL) we plan to deliver a pilot program supporting consultants in rural Australia to act as training and funding brokers.

This pilot is about coming together to learn from each other, develop skills and support each other in building business opportunities and networks.

Our goals for this program are to:

- significantly increase the delivery of business skill training and provision of services to primary industries.
- provide a foundation for participants to create a self-reliant, profitable and proactive rural community.

#### PILOT WORKSHOP PROGRAM

The program will be designed around adult learning principles and include workshops, skills sharing sessions and networking. Final topics will be negotiated prior to the event, however, current ideas include:

- linking into funding networks in agriculture and rural development
- what does brokering involve?
- setting up business systems
- business and strategic planning
- marketing yourself and your business
- maintaining and building a balance between business and family needs
- running a business from a regional location, what are the traps and how can they be avoided?

#### COST

HAL will pay for venue hire, workshop meals and coordination. Participants must cover the workshop deposit, travel, accommodation and non-workshop meals.



Know-how for Horticulture™

## Coordinating business services in regional Australia: *expression of interest form*

*"I see so many opportunities for women operating their own consultancy businesses: Working from home Making money Building networks and skilling up their communities. I know its also an area which interests the Research and Development Corporations. I am very interested in being part of a network of like minded people"*  
Jeanette Long

*The main challenge I face in running my own business is building project teams and sharing the work. I am keen to have a system of business partners to work with. It would be especially useful in balancing the work load."*  
Cathy McGowan

For more information contact  
Cathy McGowan  
02 6024 6834

Jeanette Long  
08 88373993  
Or  
Amabel Fulton  
03 6231 9033

### HOW TO EXPRESS INTEREST IN THIS EVENT

Please complete the two pages of this form and return to:  
Naomi McGrath-Kerr at RDS Partners, 2/111 Warwick Street,  
West Hobart, TASMANIA 7000.  
Ph: 03 6231 9033, Fax: 03 6231 1419  
Email: [naomi.mcgrathkerr@ruraldevelopmentservices.com](mailto:naomi.mcgrathkerr@ruraldevelopmentservices.com)

#### Section 1

Name.....

Occupation.....

Business name .....

ABN .....

Address.....

.....

Ph: (...) .....

Mobile .....

Email.....

Industry .....

#### Section 2

Current qualifications.....

.....

.....

Skills I can share.....

.....

.....

**Form continues over page**

Training attended previously.....

.....

.....

Why I would like to be part of this pilot.....

.....

.....

### **Section 3**

Structure of your business/enterprise? (circle one):

Company          Partnership          Sole trader          Trust

Number of years in operation?.....

Business/enterprise focus?.....

.....

Challenges my business faces .....

.....

### **What happens now?**

Expressions of interest are open for the pilot workshop between October 1 and December 15, 2007.

Expressions of interest will be reviewed by the project team after the closing date of December 15, 2007, with successful applicants will be notified prior to close of business Friday, December 21.

Successful applicants will be supplied with a registration form and asked to return it as well as make a payment of \$100 to secure their place at the workshop.

On receipt of the deposit, registrants will be sent information on venue details and the workshop program.

For more information, please contact Naomi on 03 6231 9033 or email [naomi.mcgrathkerr@ruraldevelopmentservices.com](mailto:naomi.mcgrathkerr@ruraldevelopmentservices.com)





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## Coordinating business services in regional Australia: *expression of interest form*



Amabel Fulton

### INTRODUCING THE PROJECT TEAM:

**Amabel Fulton** is a rural social researcher and consultant with Rural Development Services with 20 years experience in rural journalism, agricultural extension, rural social research, rural training and business management. Amabel is a current member of the national Regional Women's Advisory Council

Amabel started Rural Development Services, now RDS Partners with her life and business partner David Fulton in 2000; David and Amabel were joined by business partner Dr Tom Lewis in December 2006. The business is based in Hobart, Tasmania, and employs eight Full Time Equivalents.

RDS Partners delivers training including Property Management Planning, Leadership, Strategic Planning and Business Skills Development to enterprises and organisations involved in agriculture, aquaculture and food industries at a state and national level.

Contact details—Ph: 03 6231 9033;

Email: [amabel.fulton@ruraldevelopment-services.com](mailto:amabel.fulton@ruraldevelopment-services.com)

Website: [www.ruraldevelopment-services.com](http://www.ruraldevelopment-services.com)



Cathy McGowan

**Cathy McGowan** has been running her consultancy business since 1983. Her main area of work is with leadership programs mostly in agriculture and rural community development.

She lives in the Indigo Valley in North East Victoria where she also runs a small farm and enjoys being an aunt, daughter, sister and community member.

Over the past 10 years Cathy has worked with the research and development corporations of the dairy, horticulture, meat, wool, sugar and rural industries.

Cathy has a BA, Dip Ed., Master of Applied Science in Agriculture and an AO - Officer in the Order of Australia.

Contact details—Ph: 02 60 246634; Email: [cathy@cathymcgowan.com](mailto:cathy@cathymcgowan.com)

Website: [www.cathymcgowan.com](http://www.cathymcgowan.com)



Jeanette Long

**Jeanette Long** and husband, Bill, began their consultancy business, Ag Consulting Co, in 1995. The business includes agronomic advice, whole farm management and research. Jeanette focuses her work on training, facilitation and project management.

Jeanette is the national coordinator Partners in Grain and a board member of Australia Women in Agriculture.

Bill and Jeanette also manage a cropping and sheep property at Ardrossan on Yorke Peninsula and a vineyard in the Clare Valley of South Australia.

Jeanette has a MBA (Agribusiness), Bachelor of Applied Science in Agriculture and a Graduate Diploma in Education.

Contact details—Ph: 08 86373993; Email: [jeanette@agconsulting.com.au](mailto:jeanette@agconsulting.com.au)

## Appendix 2: Letter of offer

16/1/08

Dear

We are delighted to offer you a place in the pilot project “Coordinating Business Services in Regional Australia”, sponsored by Horticulture Australia Ltd.

If you accept this offer, you will be brought together with about 15 other women in business in regional Australia to expand your networks, develop your business and gain a deeper insight into the opportunities available to you and your community.

As part of the pilot group, we are looking forward to working with you to develop *plans to facilitate regional and industry development all around the country*. With this in mind we will be seeking your professional feedback and participation throughout the process of continuous improvement and adaptation.

This letter details the process used for assessing your application; what is involved in taking part in the programme, and the next steps from here.

### Assessment process

A total of 37 Expressions of Interest were received. The standard of applicants was extremely high. All were evaluated by the project team using the following criteria:

1. Experience in running a professional service business
2. Level of interest in the Coordinating Business Services project
3. The nature and extent of horticulture in the applicant’s region (to align with the needs of our major sponsor Horticulture Australia Ltd)
4. Diversity and strength of business management skills

All applicants were scored and ranked. The top 15 places went to women with at least 5 years experience in running a professional service business; a high level of interest in the project; who were based in a region with a strong horticultural industry; and possessed strong business management skills.

Two other groupings were evident – those newer to running a professional service business; and those located in regions with a strong livestock base. The project team decided to offer places in the pilot workshop to the women in the top 15. Other funding will be sought to allow the offering of one or two additional workshops targeting prospective and new consultants and those living and working in livestock production regions.

### What’s involved?

While this programme has been sponsored by Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL), this sponsorship requires a significant matching in cash, and in-kind, from participants. From HAL’s perspective, the desired outcome from the pilot is that participants each have:

*“a plan of how they will facilitate the development of programmes to assist their region / industry to address the business, people, financial and marketing, leadership and succession planning issues facing their horticultural enterprise.”*

To help us meet this objective, we are asking that participants commit to the following:

1. A workshop fee of \$100 (for a training programme valued at \$2200 per person)
2. Payment for own flights, accommodation and breakfasts
3. Payment for workshop catering and workbook (all workshop morning teas, lunches, afternoon teas, dinners and the workshop workbook) estimated to be ~\$300, subject to final pricing)
4. Attending a pre-workshop phone link with other participants (~1.5hrs, for the cost of a call to your nearest capital city)
5. Completion of a pre-workshop survey (~1.5hrs)
6. Preparation and delivery of a 5 minute presentation on yourself, your business, your networks and business products and services which you are familiar with
7. Participation in the workshop from 5pm March 10 to 2pm March 13, including dinners on the evenings of March 10, 11 and 12 (~4 days). The workshop programme, with up to 15 other outstanding women, will address networking, brokering, business products and services relevant to the horticultural industries, financial analysis, business development, and project planning.
8. Development of a project plan for brokering business services to the horticultural sector in your region (as part of the workshop activities)
9. Implementing your project plan over a six month period (~ 12 days)
10. Attending monthly phone links to discuss progress on your project plan (~6hrs, for the cost of a call to your nearest capital city)
11. Reporting on the outcomes of your project plan at a one-day Sydney workshop on September 2 (~1.5 days, including travel time)
12. Payment for your flights, accommodation and training fees for the September 2 workshop (price to be advised, subject to sponsorship).
13. Optional: Development of a Business Success Plan involving entry of your last two years financial data into a financial analysis spreadsheet (with the support of one of the project team, leading to the development of a Business Plan) (~1.5hrs, \$250 per business)

## Next steps

If you would like to formally accept this offer of a place in the pilot workshop, please send a reply email to [info@ruraldevelopmentservices.com](mailto:info@ruraldevelopmentservices.com) before January 31 2008. Your Expression of Interest will be accepted as your registration form, and an invoice for \$100 (inclusive of GST) will be sent to you, plus information on the venue details and the workshop program. Please also advise whether you are eligible for FarmBis funding (training subsidies for farm business owners/managers).

If you would like more information, please contact myself on 0000 000 000. Once again, thank you for your interest in this project and we look forward to creating a strong and effective network of women servicing businesses throughout regional Australia.

Yours sincerely

Amabel Fulton

On behalf of the project team: Cathy McGowan and Jeanette Long

## Appendix 3: Pre workshop survey

### *Coordinating business services in regional Australia*

#### *Participant survey*

This survey has two aims

- It will help us design a program which is tailored to meet your needs, ensuring the workshop is effective, informative, invigorating and fun.
- We will use the results to benchmark where you are now so you can re-visit this after you have completed the training program as part of the evaluation.

The survey takes an hour or so to complete, so set aside some time to allow yourself to give considered answers.

Please email your completed survey form to xyz at RDS ([info@ruraldevelopmentservices.com](mailto:info@ruraldevelopmentservices.com)) **by close of business February 29th 2008**

#### **About You**

*This information will be included with your photo, along with those of the other participants, in the training booklet.*

*Please keep this to 1 A4 page in length*

Name	
Address	
Phone	
Mobile	
Email	
Current role	
Qualifications	
Brief overview of your professional background	

<b>Overview of your business</b>	
Vision for your business	
Business products and services provided	
Business structure	
Key Networks	
Two Key business strengths	
I am passionate about?	
<b>Expectations from participating in this programme</b>	

## Workshop outcomes

All information hereon is confidential and anonymous within the project team. Aggregate results will be presented. Each participant will receive a copy of the survey for you to benchmark your results after the training is completed to measure the skills and knowledge gained.

This series of questions explores your knowledge and skills in relation to the goals of the workshop. While some statements may seem similar to one another – they are all different in one aspect of the question.

For each statement, nominate the extent to which (where 0 is to no extent, and 5 is to a full extent) you feel you:

To no extent      To a full extent

		0	1	2	3	4	5
1.1	Are equipped with the <b>knowledge</b> to engage with <b>community groups</b> in productive projects						
1.2	Are equipped with the <b>skills</b> to confidently engage with <b>community groups</b> in productive projects						
1.3	Are equipped with the <b>knowledge</b> to engage with <b>industry groups</b> in productive projects						
1.4	Are equipped with the <b>skills</b> to confidently engage with <b>industry groups</b> in productive projects;						
1.5	Understand how the networks function within the community/ industry						
1.6	Are well networked within local community and/or industry						
2.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> of the business service needs in the local region or industry						
2.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to research the business service needs in the local region or industry						
2.3	Understand what motivates industry in a region						
2.4	Understand the family farming business and the needs of the various members						
3.1	Have an understanding of the business service systems in Australia						
3.2	Are able to take a strategic view and understand how to get the best results for the region with regard to meeting business service needs						
3.3	Understand the service brokerage process of identifying needs and matching these to opportunities						
4.1	Are able to work effectively with industry groups						

To no extent      To a full extent

		0	1	2	3	4	5
4.2	Are able to work effectively with community groups						
4.3	Be able to identify key industry contacts and networks						
4.4	Be able to identify how to use industry contacts for maximum benefit						
4.5	Are able to act as brokers of productive industry information and support						
4.6	Are able to act as providers of information and support						
4.7	Are able to build the capacity of communities/groups to undertake productive training projects						
5.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to design a training program to meet the needs of an industry or a specific group						
5.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to design a training program to meet the needs of an industry or a specific group						
5.3	Have the skills to meet the training needs of the various members of the farming business						
5.4	Have an understanding of the National Training Framework						
6.1	Have knowledge of the horticultural industry training products and services available to family farm businesses						
6.2	Are able to access horticultural industry training products						
7.1	Have the <b>skills</b> to run a business from home						
7.2	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to run a small business from home						
7.3	Understand own strengths and weaknesses						
7.4	Have the <b>knowledge</b> to develop a business plan						
7.5	Have the <b>skills</b> to develop a business plan						
7.6	Have the <b>skills</b> to implement a business plan						
7.7	Have access to support to be effective in brokering the delivery of business services in a local region						
7.8	Have the skills to market own services to industry/community						
7.9	Are able to manage work/life balance						



To no extent      To a full extent

		0	1	2	3	4	5
8.1	Have the <b>knowledge</b> about accessing funding for training within an industry						
8.2	Have the <b>skills</b> to access funding for training within an industry						
8.3	Have the knowledge of training providers/deliverers available						
8.4	Are skilled at project design						
8.5	Have the skills to write funding proposals						
9.1	Are skilled at project initiation						
9.2	Are skilled at project implementation						
9.3	Have the skills to track project progress against milestones						
10.1	Have the skills to design an evaluation for an event or project						
10.2	Have the skills to prepare project reports						
10.3	Have the skills to analyse evaluation material						
11.1	Are skilled at facilitation						
11.2	Are able to work as part of a team over distance						
11.3	Are skilled at giving presentations						

Any comments or other expected outcomes?

## Workshop Skills

This series of questions explores your knowledge and skills in relation to the goals of the workshop in developing your community and industry engagement skills. While some statements may seem similar to one another – they are all different in one aspect of the question.

For each statement, nominate the extent to which (where 0 is to no extent, and 5 is to a full extent) you feel you:

To no extent      To a full extent

		0	1	2	3	4	5
12.1	Are skilled at qualitative research techniques in assessing training needs						
12.2	Are skilled at quantitative research techniques in assessing training needs						
13.1	Are skilled at recognising and building on business opportunities						
14.1	Are skilled at building networks						
15.1	Understand your Myers Briggs personality type						
15.2	Are able to use the understanding of your personality type in the workplace						
15.3	Are skilled at recognising and working with other personality types						
16.1	Are skilled at program and business planning						
17.1	Are skilled at staying focussed and on track with program/business plans						

### ***Expectations and support needs from the training activities***

15. What do **you** hope to get out of participating in **each part** of the program? (Please be specific. If a topic is not of interest please indicate.)

The aim of this section is to find out if you have any specific needs or any specific contributions you would like to make.

<b>15.1</b>	<b>Myers Briggs Indicator – Understanding your ways of communicating and operating</b>
16.1	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15. 2</b>	<b>Personal Skills Audit</b>
16.2	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.3</b>	<b>Conducting a Needs Analysis</b>
16.3	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?

<b>15.4</b>	<b>Networking</b>
16.4	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.5</b>	<b>Service brokerage</b>
16.5	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.6</b>	<b>Financial analysis</b>
16.6	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.7</b>	<b>Business Risks</b>
16.7	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?

<b>15.8</b>	<b>Marketing our services</b>
16.8	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.9</b>	<b>Strategic and Action planning</b>
16.9	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?
<b>15.10</b>	<b>Working together post workshop</b>
16.10	What do you need from this section to make your business a success?

**What skills do you bring that you would be willing to share with others?**

**What concerns do you have about participating in this program?**

**How long did this survey take you to do?**

**In regard to the survey what worked well for you and what could be better?**

**Are there any other comments or information you would like to add?**

**Is there anything else that you think is important for us to know that has not been covered in these questions?**

### ***Last job***

Please send this completed form back to Rural Development Services, xyz

info@ruraldevelopmentservices.com

(or phone 03 6231 9033 if you have any queries or concerns)

Once you have done this, please also send you're a photo of yourself by email, saved with your name as the filename, to xyz at the above address.

*Thankyou for taking the time to complete the survey.*

*We look forward to meeting you in Sydney in March.*

*Amabel, Cathy and Jeanette*