



## Media Release

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### A Tourism Fest in the West – Monday February 29 2016

#### Leap into the West!

Some exciting opportunities emerging for the tourism industry in Melbourne's west will be revealed at a forthcoming half day regional industry forum, the *Tourism Fest in the West*. The local tourism industry will gather at the historic Eynesbury Homestead at Eynesbury and discuss with industry leaders how Melbourne's west can leverage existing trends, strengthen collaboration and grow as a destination for visitors.

The forum will feature a key note address from the CEO of Tourism Victoria, Nick Foa, who will provide an update on the establishment of a new tourism and event entity, Visit Victoria. The forum will gain an understanding of the direction ahead and role Melbourne's west can play in contributing to the development and growth of the state's fast growing tourism economy.

Western Melbourne Tourism's new Chair, Jan Jacklin says "there is much about Melbourne's west that is rapidly changing and many Melburnians and visitors from further afield are appreciating what the west has to offer: new food, new cultural communities, new arts venues and events – there is a lot to love about Melbourne's west. There is a new awakening and the region needs to prepare and market itself to gain a fair share of the economic benefit of the growth in the tourism economy."

"Melbourne's west is in transition and there is growing recognition of the quality tourism offering beyond the centre of the city. The industrial grittiness of the region is juxtaposed against creativity and vibrant energy. The food scene, the arts and music, festivals and entertainment meld together to create one of the most exciting regions in Victoria" she said.

Others speakers include:

- CEO of Grampians Tourism, Will Flamsted, who will outline the successful model of cooperation in tourism in the Grampians region, with its partnerships between state and local government, Parks Victoria and local tourism industry operators and stakeholders; and

- Paige Rowett from the Tourism eSchool and Bronwyn White from MyTravelResearch who will lead separate workshops to explain some of the latest trends in online marketing and social media. These workshops will inform local operators about how they can better collaborate as a region and share content and stories to help give greater profile to events, activities and attractions in Melbourne's west.

A trio from the Melbourne International Jazz Festival will perform at the evening drinks to showcase the promotion of *Jazz out West* in June 2016, an expanding element within the Melbourne's International Jazz Festival Program.

In the morning attendees have the option of participating in a 3 hour local familiarisation tour of visitor attractions around Melton. The City of Melton has recently launched a new brand for visitor promotion: *Melton City, Much More*.

The *Tourism Fest in the West* is being convened by Western Melbourne Tourism Inc a regional tourism cooperative funded with support from five western metropolitan Councils (Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Melton, Moonee Valley and Wyndham)

*Information about the event program and other booking details can be found by visiting the conference website [www.tourismfestinthewest.com.au](http://www.tourismfestinthewest.com.au)*

*Other supporting partners for the Tourism Fest in the West include LeadWest, Galli Estate and Whichmount wineries and The Melbourne International Jazz Festival.*

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