

CATHY MCGOWAN TO LAUNCH ACRE & NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Cathy McGowan, Federal member for Indi will on Friday officially launch the Australian Centre for Rural Entrepreneurship (ACRE) in Beechworth.

ACRE exists to build thriving rural communities through igniting entrepreneurship in young people and their communities. ACRE has received significant philanthropic backing to develop a pilot program and provide programs to support local government, business and community groups.

ACRE Co-founder and CEO, Matt Pfahlert said ACRE was formed in response to declining rural communities and opportunities for young people.

“We’re delighted that the Yulgilbar Foundation, the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust and the Lord Mayor’s Charitable Foundation can see real opportunities for our program across Victoria,” Mr Pfahlert said.

“Given we started the *Social Enterprise in Schools* pilot program in 11 schools this year, the time is now right to officially launch ACRE so that the spotlight is put on new opportunities for young people. Our vision is to have entrepreneurial talent valued in the same way we already value talented young artists, scholars and athletes,” he said.

The Social Enterprise in Schools program is based on a similar program that has been running in Scotland for 10 years, through the Social Enterprise Academy (SEA).

“We have a partnership in place with SEA and their Chief Operating Officer, Sam Baumber will also be here for the launch,” he said.

“We have been working in the background with government, business, and community leaders to build an enabling environment for entrepreneurship in rural and regional communities.”

Mr Pfahlert said this holistic approach offers young people and their communities the possibility to move from a job-seeker to job-creator mindset.

ACRE is currently screening [Most Likely to Succeed](#), an inspiring film that will get people talking about the skills and education approaches needed for the new future of work.

“It challenges the status quo by highlighting new project-based learning approaches to education.”

Most Likely to Succeed will screen in Beechworth on Friday evening. For more information and to book your seat at one of the film screenings, visit ACRE at www.acre.org.au
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For interviews and photo opportunities please contact:

Matt Pfahlert, Founder and CEO of [ACRE](#) – 0448 805 517

MEDIA INVITATION:

You are invited to join in the launch activities. The program will get underway at 1.15pm and include addresses from:

- Cathy McGowan, Member for Indi
- Sam Baumber, Chief Operating Officer, Social Enterprise Academy Scotland
- Matt Pfahlert, Co-founder and CEO, ACRE

Launch details:

Date: Friday 20 May

Time: 1-3pm

Venue: George Kerferd Hotel, Albert Road, Beechworth

Story angles:

1. Meet representatives from ACRE's philanthropic backers.
2. Speak to teachers and principals from local schools taking part in the *Social Enterprise in Schools* pilot program.
3. Discuss the experience and outcomes of the Scottish program with Sam Baumber for SEA.

Information for Editors:

ACRE

ACRE is a social enterprise committed to building thriving rural communities through igniting entrepreneurship in young people and their communities. ACRE runs internationally accredited programs in social enterprise learning, development and incubation.

Matt Pfahlert

Matt is a well-known social entrepreneur with a long standing commitment to rural Australia. In 1996 he received the Sir Weary Dunlop Young Australian of the Year Award for his work in establishing the Typo Station Youth Project for disadvantaged young Victorians (now named Evolve).

Matt received Leadership Victoria's Community Leader of the Year award in 2004 and in 2013 was awarded a Churchill fellowship to study youth entrepreneurship programs and social enterprise models in rural communities in the UK, Canada and the US.

Matt is also a board member of Social Traders and the Telstra Foundation.