

Hunter Region Hydrogen Technology Cluster Consortium media release

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Hunter Region chosen as a Hydrogen Technology Cluster

The Hunter region has been chosen as the geographic base for NSW's Hydrogen Technology Cluster in an announcement made today from National Energy Resources Australia (NERA).

This is part of a drive by NERA to establish a nationwide hydrogen cluster to foster a multi-billion dollar, globally competitive hydrogen industry for Australia.

The national cluster aims to support the development of the hydrogen supply chain, reduce overlaps and identify gaps in the development, deployment and commercialisation of new hydrogen focused technologies.

Today's announcement follows the conclusion of a seed funding selection program started by NERA in 2020, and is part of a \$1.75m investment across 13 clusters in all states and territories.

The Hunter Cluster will receive \$200,000 seed funding from NERA and industry to establish a hydrogen technology cluster around key hydrogen projects and technology supply chains across Australia to enhance local cohesion, technology and capability in the hydrogen value chain.

The Hunter Hydrogen Technology Cluster, as the only Regional Cluster for NSW, is supported by several local businesses, industry associations, TAFE NSW and The University of Newcastle, and brings together hydrogen expertise from the Hunter, Central Coast and Orana regions of the state.

The Hunter Region hosts a highly skilled workforce, including advanced manufacturing, and technology and engineering expertise in the energy and resources sectors, making it critical to the development of a clean, innovative, competitive, technology-neutral and safe Australian hydrogen industry.

Commenting on the establishment of the hydrogen technology cluster in the Hunter Region, NERA CEO Miranda Taylor said; "the Hunter Valley is a strong energy and manufacturing region and I'm delighted to see the leadership shown by key local organisations to maximise the region's opportunities from the development of a local hydrogen technology cluster."

Newly appointed Interim Chair for the Hunter Cluster, Boris Novak, General Manager of HunterNet, said the industry-led Consortium is an opportunity to tap into existing networks to drive industry collaboration and strengthen hydrogen technology capabilities and supply chains across the breadth of NSW.

"The strong manufacturing base, existing infrastructure, research strengths and skilled energy and resources workforce of the Hunter means the region has the capacity to be a global leader in hydrogen. The support from NERA through this successful bid is a fantastic opportunity to leverage these assets to create a new hydrogen and energy economy that benefits the nation and assists the transition to a clean energy future," said Mr Novak.

A growing list of local organisations and associations make up the Hunter Hydrogen Technology Cluster, including:

- **HunterNet**
- **Hunter Business Chamber**
- **Ai Group**
- **The University of Newcastle**
- **The Newcastle Institute for Energy & Resources (NIER)**
- **NSW Energy & Resources Knowledge Hub**
- **Hunter Hydrogen Taskforce**
- **Committee for the Hunter**
- **Department of Regional NSW**
- **Engineers Australia Newcastle Branch**
- **Newcastle Branch of the Australian Institute of Energy**
- **Regional Development Orana**
- **Central Coast Industry Connect**
- **TAFE NSW**
- **Plus other contributors**

A regional manager for the Hunter cluster will be appointed in the near future. The regional hydrogen clusters will connect to form the National Hydrogen Cluster which aims to establish a global identity and a recognised brand for Australian hydrogen technology and expertise.

The development of a national cluster was identified by the 2019 National Hydrogen Strategy as an important component to scale up Australia's domestic industry to become a global hydrogen competitor.

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