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NSW Independent Brewers Action Plan

Targeted actions and activities 2020

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Image courtesy of Byron Bay Brewery.

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GROWING NSW'S INDEPENDENT BREWING INDUSTRY SECTOR

Independent brewing is a high growth, emerging industry sector. Over 165 independent brewers operate in NSW, with 28 opening in 2018 alone. Independent breweries in the state employ around 3,300 people and contribute to high-quality business growth, job creation and in-bound tourism, particularly in regional and rural NSW where two-thirds of independent brewers are located.

The growth of the independent brewing industry in Australia is largely due to the trend of consumers preferring artisanal products; that is, products that are premium, produced on a small scale or by specialised techniques, and with a clearly identified local provenance. Such products create an authentic connection between the consumer and producer by allowing customers to experience the story of the product, and so adding value to the producer and the consumer.

Artisanal products are also consistent with the NSW Government's ambition to support businesses to move up the food and beverage manufacturing value chain.

The Australian independent brewing industry is poised for growth. There are opportunities for the industry to expand domestically and internationally, including positioning itself as an Asia-Pacific centre of excellence for craft beer.

The NSW Independent Brewers Action Plan will support the continued economic development of the independent brewing industry in the state by:

- Connecting the industry to networks and encouraging collaboration between the industry and government, research institutions, and education and training providers
- Producing a research paper that provides a baseline economic impact of the sector in NSW and provides a basis for the NSW Government to target its industry development activities and for the industry to focus its future development efforts
- Identifying and mitigating skills gaps and workforce issues
- Developing and diversifying skills pathways and career opportunities, particularly in regional and rural NSW
- Maximising the opportunities for NSW independent breweries to develop market and export-ready tourism experiences and assist with promotion of their tourism experiences to travel wholesalers
- Supporting the development of technical capabilities and business acumen to ensure the industry's continued growth domestically and internationally.

The Action Plan has been developed as part of the *NSW Food and Beverage Manufacturing Industry Development Strategy* which was released by the NSW Government in January 2019. The Action Plan is also consistent with the *NSW Food and Wine Tourism Strategy and Action Plan* which was developed by Destination NSW and released in November 2018. The following targeted actions and activities align to the themes and initiatives of these strategies.

Economic development agencies from across the NSW Government worked in collaboration with the Independent Brewers Association (IBA), the peak industry body, to identify relevant activities to deliver impactful results for the industry.

TARGETED ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Strategy Theme 1 – Collaborate for commercial advantage

Strategy Initiatives	Action / Activities	Responsible agency	Timeframe
1.1 Capitalise upon existing networks	■ Encourage independent brewers with customer facing venues to list their venues and visitor experiences on Destination NSW consumer websites Sydney.com and visitnsw.com via the Get Connected program. ■ Encourage independent brewers with event spaces suitable for conferences and meetings to list their venue on meetinnsw.com.au. ■ Make available to independent brewers the Destination NSW Social Media Guidelines to assist their marketing efforts. ■ Connect independent brewers in regional NSW with their relevant Destination Network to explore local business opportunities.	Destination NSW	**Short-term -** commencing by Q1 2020
	■ Connect independent brewers with industry stakeholders such as the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW and Food Innovation Australia Limited (FIAL). ■ Connect independent brewers with the NSW Department of Primary Industries to foster collaboration and enhance development of new and locally produced inputs such as barley, hops, malt varieties and yeast strains. ■ Connect independent brewers with regional networks and opportunities such as Regional NSW Investment Concierge Service and its associated network of 47 Business Development Managers spread across Regional NSW. ■ Explore opportunities to make NSW independent beers available at all appropriate NSW Government Parliament House functions.	NSW Treasury – Industry Development	**Ongoing**
	■ Invite the participation of Independent Brewery Association (IBA) representatives in the Liquor Accord Governance Committee Meetings to represent industry in local liquor accords and discuss any industry relevant issues.	Liquor & Gaming NSW	**Ongoing**

Strategy Initiatives	Action / Activities	Responsible agency	Timeframe
	■ Create a standing NSW Independent Brewing Industry Development Working Group with representation from NSW Government agencies including NSW Treasury (Industry Development, Export Services); Destination NSW; Liquor & Gaming NSW; NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment; NSW Department of Primary Industries and the NSW Department of Education to guide the development of the independent brewing sector.	Multiple	**Medium-term** – commencing by mid-2020
1.2 Build collaboration through new information channels	■ Connect independent brewers with industry relevant stakeholders, opportunities, market intelligence, events and existing support through the Flavours of NSW program. ■ Facilitate collaboration between NSW independent brewers and the state's malt producers and hop growers.	NSW Treasury – Industry Development Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Regional NSW	**Ongoing** **Ongoing**
1.3 Map NSW capabilities to support industry growth and market entry	■ Assist the IBA to develop a long-term industry development strategy through undertaking research which quantifies the economic contribution of the independent brewing sector to the NSW economy and its potential for further growth.	NSW Treasury	**Short-term** - commencing by Q1 2020

Strategy Theme 2 – Create a fit-for-purpose workforce

Strategy Initiatives	Action / Activities	Responsible agency	Timeframe
2.1 Implement a work-force develop-ment agenda with industry	■ Work with the IBA to identify relevant strategies to mitigate industry skills gaps and workforce shortages. ■ Facilitate consultations between the IBA and Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers in order to increase the number and breadth of micro-brewing VET offerings across NSW to ensure breweries have access to a skilled workforce, particularly in regional and rural areas. ■ Advise independent brewers of consultation arrangements for national training package qualifications, units of competency and skills sets (for example, the proposed Certificate IV in Artisan Fermented Products qualification). ■ Connect the IBA with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to facilitate the development of training materials with the release of future training products (for example, the proposed Certificate IV in Artisan Fermented Products qualification, the Artisan Brewer Skill Set and Establish an Artisan Food or Beverage Business Skill Set). ■ Support the addition of relevant qualifications to the NSW Skills List to enable access to Smart and Skilled funding.	NSW Department of Education	**Short-term –** commencing by Q1 2020 **Medium-term –** commencing by mid-2020 **Ongoing** **Short-term –** commencing by Q1 2020 **Ongoing**
2.2 Promote food and beverage manufac-ring as a career	■ Partner with beverage manufacturers to promote careers to school students and to identify work placements and School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships under the Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) program.	NSW Department of Education	**Short-term –** commencing by Q1 2020
2.3 Facilitate worker attraction and retention	■ Promote programs to attract skilled and experienced brewery workers such as the Regional Skills Relocation Grant of up to $10,000 for businesses to help relocate skilled workers to regional NSW.	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Regional NSW	**Ongoing**

Image courtesy of Batch Brewing.

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Strategy Theme 3 – Advocate for the industry and support its development

Strategy Initiatives	Action / Activities	Responsible agency	Timeframe
3.1 Create a supportive business environment	■ Promote Destination NSW's Product Showcase events, to encourage brewer participation to share information about the industry and brewery visitor experiences with Destination NSW staff and learn about Destination NSW opportunities. ■ Identify opportunities for, and facilitate the development of, regional and metro 'food, wine and ale trails' and work with independent brewers to build content for these trails as outlined in the NSW Food & Wine Tourism Strategy & Action Plan. ■ Utilise Destination NSW promotional platforms like visitnsw.com to promote 'food, wine and ale trails'.	Destination NSW	**Short-term -** commencing by Q1 2020
	■ Provide information to NSW independent brewers and encourage participation in special licensing trials for micro-breweries and small distilleries in eligible local areas. ■ Provide information to NSW independent brewers and encourage participation in 'pop-up liquor' licensing trials in eligible trial areas. ■ Continue to review liquor regulations through special licensing trials, in consultation with key stakeholders including the IBA, to identify a state-wide licensing approach suited to micro and independent breweries	Liquor & Gaming NSW	**Ongoing**
	■ Promote programs to attract skilled and experienced brewery workers such as the Regional Skills Relocation Grant of up to $10,000 for businesses to help relocate skilled workers to regional NSW. ■ Provide information to NSW independent brewers on the implementation of planning regulations relating to breweries and brewpubs. ■ Provide information to NSW independent brewers and encourage take up of Energy Management training sessions which allow breweries to access 90% co-funded support to develop a business case for energy efficiency upgrades.	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment	**Ongoing**

Strategy Initiatives	Action / Activities	Responsible agency	Timeframe
	■ Provide information to NSW independent brewers and encourage take up of Energy Management benchmarking support which provides up to $30,000 co-funding to implement energy management recommendations.		
3.2 Support NSW Manufacturers to access NSW Government and Commonwealth Government programs and funding initiatives	■ Provide information on funding opportunities for brewers within the NSW Regional Business Event Development Fund which provides grants of up $60,000 for business events held in Regional NSW.	Destination NSW	**Ongoing**
	■ Provide information on funding opportunities for brewers such as the TechVouchers scheme to encourage Research & Development collaboration between SME brewers and research institutions.	NSW Treasury – Industry Development	**Ongoing**
	■ Provide information and encourage take up of Transitional Assistance Program loans following introduction of the 'Return and Earn' NSW Container Deposit Scheme. ■ Provide information and encourage take up of Manufacturing Efficiency Funding which provides 50% co-funded support of up to $120,000 per brewery.	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment	**Ongoing**

Strategy Theme 4 – Accelerate small and medium enterprise (SME) growth in niche and emerging markets

Strategy Initiatives	Action / Activities	Responsible agency	Timeframe
4.1 Promote support measures available to startups and SMEs	■ Support independent brewers starting out, expanding and growing through the Business Connect program which provides specialist business advice to SMEs.	NSW Treasury – Small Business Operations	**Ongoing**
	■ Provide information on NSW Government programs and initiatives to promote small business growth via the NSW Small Business Strategy by, for example, raising the payroll tax threshold from $689,000 to $750,000 and removing indexation.		
	■ Provide information on Destination NSW's *NSW First* program to assist brewers develop, promote and sell their beverage products to domestic and international buyers.	Destination NSW	**Ongoing**
	■ Provide information and encourage brewer participation in workshops to promote and develop manufacturing in Regional NSW.	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Regional NSW	**Short-term –** commencing by Q1 2020

Strategy Theme 5 – Help attract investment and boost access to international markets

Strategy Initiatives	Action / Activities	Responsible agency	Timeframe
5.1 Build the export readiness of NSW businesses	■ Hold Export Capability Building workshops to build the export capabilities of NSW independent brewers.	NSW Treasury – Export Services	**Short-term –** commencing by Q1 2020
	■ Work with the IBA to develop a member survey to assess industry export readiness, and identify business capability gaps.		
	■ Develop an Export Capability Building Pathway (ECBP) program to assist NSW IBA members that are not export ready. The program could include invitations to export capability-building events and referrals to other government assistance programs.		

Strategy Initiatives	Action / Activities	Responsible agency	Timeframe
	■ Through Destination NSW's *NSW First* Program, assist independent brewers to develop export ready tourism experiences that are suitable to various international visitors.	Destination NSW	**Short-term –** commencing by Q1 2020
5.2 Promote NSW capabilities to internatio-nal markets	**Export of Products** ■ Provide export-ready brewers with market selection support, and assist them to develop and implement export market development plans through the NSW Export Adviser network, delivered in partnership with Austrade. ■ Work with NSW international offices and Austrade to develop market research reports to identify the opportunities and market trends in priority markets for export-ready brewers. ■ Support trade and export events (e.g. trade missions) for independent brewers seeking to export and develop an international buyers program with Austrade to introduce NSW brewers at trade and export events. ■ Connect the IBA with Austrade in order to inform Austrade's efforts in developing a national Australian brand for universal use by the nation's exporters.	NSW Treasury – Export Services	**Short-term –** commencing by Q1 2020
	■ Provide information and encourage brewer participation at the Fine Food Australia tradeshow to promote NSW brewery products to international buyers.	NSW Treasury – Industry Development	**Ongoing**
	Export of Services / Tourism ■ Assist independent brewers with export ready tourism experiences to promote their products to the international travel trade.	Destination NSW	**Short-term –** commencing by Q1 2020

CONSULTATION

NSW Government agencies consulted by NSW Treasury in development of the Action Plan, and responsible for implementing its activities, include:

- NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
- NSW Department of Primary Industries
- NSW Department of Education
- Destination NSW
- Liquor & Gaming NSW

Image courtesy of Sauce Brewing Co.

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