



EMPOWERING BUSINESS

To contribute to a sustainable Canberra

The ACT Greens believe that when business, government and the community work together we see more innovation and more efficiency.

Business plays an important role in our community and our economy. The ACT Greens believe that when business, government and the community sector work together we see better outcomes for Canberra, more innovation and more efficiency.

The ACT Greens believe that the government has a role in creating the conditions that empower businesses to achieve positive economic, social and environmental outcomes in the ACT.

The ACT Greens want a city that attracts talent and stems the brain drain that occurs as young innovators move away and take their ideas with them. The ACT Greens will support the establishment of Innovation Districts, building on the connections to Universities and research institutions where start-ups can thrive. This requires a vibrant cultural life, proximity and a walkable cyclable city with good public transport, including light rail.

> **Supporting social enterprises and local business**

If our community and our economy are going to flourish we must support our local businesses and organisations who are investing in, and contributing to, our community.

The ACT Greens support procurement policies that give more weighting to social enterprises and local businesses, provided that overall value is still assured compared with interstate companies. We want the ACT Government to be viewed as a client of choice by local businesses.

That's why the ACT Greens will:

- » Provide \$150,000 in additional funding support for the ACT Microcredit Program to target identified gaps for young people and people with disabilities to help them establish businesses;
- » Enhance ACT procurement frameworks to increase opportunities for small and local business to win ACT Government work through transparent weighting, including support for social enterprises;
- » Commit to streamlined procurement and regulatory environment, working with industry to identify and remove unnecessary delays in procurement processes.
- » Ensure that the ACT is an ethical purchaser that does not require companies to do unreasonable amounts of unpaid work as part of interactive tendering processes, particularly for small and medium sized projects.

> **Advance the Australia Forum**

Canberra is a growing city and part of a thriving regional economy with global connections.

We have the potential to be a regional hub for business, industry, diplomats, government and the community sector to meet for conferences and events.

The business events sector is a major economic driver, for tourism, trade, investment and employment. The ACT Greens understand that investing in the Australian Forum, is investing in Canberra's long term future. We already have a potential site on London Circuit near City Hill and a wonderful reference design by Massimiliano Fuksas. Now we need to get to work in making this vision a reality. This iconic building, on such a significant site, has the power to transform the city and anchor this corner of the parliamentary triangle.

The ACT Greens will:

- » Work with the private sector with particular expertise in the business event industry and property development to peer review previous cost benefit analysis and further refine the detailed business case for the Australia Forum. This should be undertaken within the context of the immediate precinct around the site;
- » Work with the local business community to develop potential funding models and to source funds for the the project;
- » Continue to work with the Federal Government to secure Commonwealth funding support;
- » Formally commit the land for the project on site bounded by Constitution Avenue, Vernon Circle Commonwealth Avenue and London Circuit as a major ACT Government contribution. Also ensure that any investment in off site infrastructure works such as roads, services or construction of adjacent buildings is consistent with, and contributes to this project;
- » Rezone the site of the existing National Convention Centre to allow maximum range of uses and commit the proceeds from sale of the facility.

This would be done in a way that would allow funds to flow to the project while ensuring the current facility can be used until the Australia Forum is constructed and fully operational.

We have a vision for a conference centre for Canberra and will take the next steps towards a workable funding model. The Australian Forum has the power to connect the city centre to Parliament House, the national institutions and to the life of the nation and to become a centre for diplomacy and international dialogue.

> Committee for Canberra

The ACT Greens believe that our city, and our economy, thrive when business, government and the community sector work together. That's why the ACT Greens will work with industry groups to establish a Committee for Canberra, an idea from the Canberra Business Chambers *Roadmap to 2030*, to bring these organisations together to champion Canberra.

The ACT Greens will establish a Committee for Canberra to:

- » Bring business, industry, government and community organisations together to provide independent research and expertise about Canberra's economy and liveability;
- » Provide advice and advocacy on the challenges and opportunities that Canberra faces, and the ways in which the government, business and community sectors can respond; and
- » Champion Canberra both within and beyond our region to encourage regional tourism and investment.

> Promote recreational tourism

Canberra is connected with the broader region, and the country, through our world-class universities, cultural facilities, entertainment, music and arts and health care facilities.

The Greens believe that Canberra's international connections including our embassies and international flight will be vital to our economic and cultural future. Our regional links are also important with the Kings, Monaro, Barton and Federal Highways providing links to the snow, the pristine south coast and regional food and wine.

To achieve this, the ACT Greens will:

- » Establish an eco-tourism coordinator to promote Canberra as tourism destination for niche markets like mountain biking, horse riding and nature based tourism and heritage. Attractions that could be included in packed tours include the Arboretum, Stromlo Forest Park, Kowen Forest, Majura Pines, Tidbinbilla, The Botanic Gardens, Mulligans Flat Sanctuary, Jerrabomberra Wetlands and Ginninderra Falls. Targeted promotion would include promotion through social media, specialist magazines and tourism agencies and advertising such as the airport; and
- » Apply the CBR local brand to promote burgeoning local food and wine producers and tap into niche foodie tourism market, with a reputation for clean green regional food. Attractions could include the farmers markets, our great restaurants, and cycle tours to great food outlets eg Pialago, via Kingston foreshore and the Wetlands.

> Establish a Canberra Tech partnership

The digital age presents Canberra with incredible opportunities and challenges. Just as Canberra is leading the nation with our clean energy targets as the world transitions towards a clean-energy economy; the ACT Greens believe that the digital age offers Canberra the opportunity to become a knowledge city and a national leader in the digital economy along with other growth industries such as renewable energy and hi tech waste technologies.

There are great opportunities to foster links and knowledge sharing between our education sector, including our schools, universities and the CIT, and the private and public sectors.

The ACT Greens will establish a Canberra Tech Advisory Body to ensure Canberra can seize the opportunities of the digital age. This could be based on the UK Tech Partnership model. It would:

- » Provide policy advice to ACT Government;
- » Create pathways between education and working life, matching skills with growth industries;
- » Remove barriers to employment of ICT graduates in the sector; and
- » Promote opportunities for international students in the trade of products, ideas and innovation.

> Promoting Canberra arts and creative content

Canberra is full of talent. The ACT Greens believe that the government has a role in showcasing that talent and helping emerging businesses, industries and enterprises to flourish.

That's why the ACT Greens will:

- » Further develop and implement an ACT Events Strategy that showcases Canberra's local talent and feature major arts and music events of regional and national significance. This would include curating a calendar of Cultural events throughout the year that builds on successful examples like Floriade and the Design Canberra Festival in Spring and the National Folk Festival at Easter;
- » Develop a night time economy with defined entertainment precincts. Venues and local performers could be promoted to a wider audience in a more coordinated way, building on facilities such as the Kingston Cultural Precinct, Ainslie Gorman Art Centre, the School of Music and curated spaces like New Acton with the Art not Apart festivals, and other galleries and live music venues;

- » Set a minimum local content percentages for major events such as Enlighten, Floriade and the annual Multicultural Festival;
- » Ensure payment of local artists for their work;
- » Fight for funding for the national cultural institutions, and encourage them to work together to promote events building on the success of events such as Enlighten and the National Writers Festival; and
- » Support Canberra to become an Australian City of Design under the UNESCO creative cities network.

> Promote development of Innovation Districts and co-working hubs

The ACT Greens will support the development of Innovation Districts to help attract creative people to visit and live in Canberra. We want to ensure there are employment opportunities and pathways for young people.

As our economy shifts, and the type of work that people do changes, there has been an increase in the number of people looking for short, medium and long-term co-working spaces. This is particularly the case for sole operators, smaller organisations and micro businesses.

The ACT Greens will support co-working spaces and knowledge hubs that cluster creative people. This will build on our Universities, ICT start ups, the clean energy sector, in locations that have close access to coffee shops, bars and active cultural precincts with arts and live music and public transport.

The ACT Greens believe that these businesses and organisations make valuable contributions to our community and our economy, and are committed to supporting their operation by:

- Funding a “CBRmicro” Coordinator to help coordinate spaces for co-working hubs across the city for emerging businesses

- and artists, building on the work of the Canberra Innovation Network;
- » Supporting the establishment of contemporary, collaborative work spaces in priority areas. The coordinator could help identify underutilised ACT Government properties and offer building owners of vacant properties in prime locations in the city and town centres or local shops rate reductions for 12-18 months to establish co-working hubs; and
- » Establishing a network of available co-working spaces, and a register of interested organisations and businesses, to facilitate not only finding organisations a suitable co-working space but to match them with organisations and businesses that are likely to complement their work.

