

The Cradle Coast Regional Futures Plan 2019 – 2022

Summary Version



26 November 2018

The Cradle Coast Authority – Councils Working Regionally

West and north-west Tasmania (the Cradle Coast) comprises places and communities linked by strong geographical, social, cultural and economic relationships and mutual interdependence. These places and communities are supported by the region's 9 collaborative councils.

The Cradle Coast Authority (CCA) is owned by these councils and it exists to make it easier for them to effect positive change at the regional level. This Futures Plan, developed by CCA on behalf of our member councils and other key regional stakeholders, is one such response.

While the Futures Plan is a plan for the region, as opposed to a plan for CCA, we have a vital role to play in its implementation. Like all CCA's work, this role is undertaken on behalf of our councils.

Our councils recognise the importance of working together to tackle complex problems that cannot be dealt with individually. We value and respect their contribution to the development of the Futures Plan and their ongoing role in shaping its implementation.

The new Regional Governance Framework, developed as part of this project, complements and builds on the effective individual and collective engagement between our councils and CCA. The councils' involvement in this ambitious project has contributed to the development of a shared agenda that provides the opportunity to extend these positive relationships and sets a positive tone for the future.

The identified regional challenges that the Futures Plan will address, impacts our regional and heartland economies in different ways. While planning regionally is important for developing economies of scope and scale, related action needs to be co-designed and implemented locally. Our Councils have a key strategic and operational role in supporting local action that will contribute to collective success.

The Futures Plan and proposed governance arrangements provide a crucial platform for working collaboratively across sectors, organisations and boundaries on the complex challenges that are not effectively being dealt with separately. While the responses to these challenges often need to be industry led, CCA and our councils have an important role in championing these new ways of working better together.

The project brought together the knowledge and experience of the region's industry, government and community leaders to develop the Futures Plan. We value and appreciate their contribution and look forward to working with them again in the implementation phase.

I would like to pay tribute to the members of the project's reference group – Mike Brindley, Rodney Greene, Lara Hendriks, Sarah Jones, Danielle Kidd, James McCormack, EJ Shu, Brett Smith (CEO) and Kent Wyllie. Their expertise and enthusiastic contribution to the process is greatly appreciated. I also wish to thank all our staff for their involvement, especially Peter Murden and Daryl Connelly who led this ambitious and complex project.

The project was co-funded by the Australian Government, through their Building Better Region's funding program. We thank them for their support.



The Hon. Sid Sidebottom
Chairperson

The Cradle Coast Regional Futures Plan

Introduction

Tasmania's Cradle Coast comprises places, communities and industries linked by strong geographical, social, cultural and economic relationships and mutual interdependence.



Figure 1 - The Cradle Coast Region and its 9 local government areas

For the region to be ready and able to make the most of the rapidly changing global economy, it is dependent on our key export growth industries and related local service provision.

We are going through a period of economic growth and the related fundamentals for the region are strong. The economy is diversifying, with successfully transitioning foundation industries, such as manufacturing and food processing, agriculture and forestry and emerging opportunities in aquaculture, niche food production, renewable energy, tourism and health care and social assistance.

Current projections suggest a potential net increase in jobs through to 2022, over and above current trends

The region's economic prosperity is dependent on the specialisations and competitiveness within and across these key sectors and needs to be underpinned by a resilient workforce to support such growth.

There are several embedded challenges that need to be overcome to ensure the workforce is well-placed to provide the skills and capabilities to take on the jobs that are coming, especially in full-time higher skilled occupations. These challenges include:

- High unemployment rates
- Low educational attainment levels
- Shrinking working-age population
- Retaining population
- Regionally dispersed population
- Significant labour demands

The challenges are complex and proving difficult to address. They span many sectors, organisations and responsibilities and so require a more collaborative effort.

Organisations that exist to serve and support our region's enterprises and communities, that are often in competition with each other, need a new and better way of working together on the challenges that are not effectively being dealt with separately

The Cradle Coast Regional Futures Plan (Futures Plan) has been created in response to these challenges. It establishes a shared narrative to guide collective regional and local action, aimed at improving living standards in the region by boosting regional growth and fostering a more resilient economy - with a sharp focus on creating more jobs and better jobs.

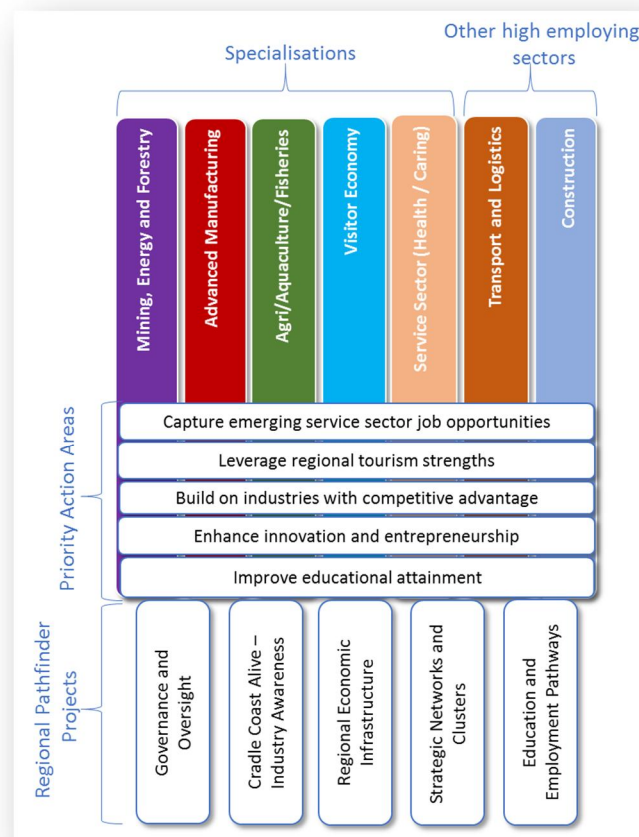


Figure 2 – Futures Plan's key place based, cross-cutting priority focus areas to support more jobs and better jobs

Analysis of economic data¹ demonstrates the importance of a diverse range of sectors underpinning the region's economy, including – mining, construction and retail services etc. However, a priority for the Futures Plan is to focus, at least, initially on the high value growth sectors that also have the greatest existing or emerging jobs growth opportunities, including:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Agribusiness, including aquaculture
- Forestry
- Renewable energy
- Health care and social assistance
- Tourism

Several priority areas have been identified and a suite of co-designed actions that span these key economic and jobs growth sectors, have been developed.²

The identified challenges impact our local communities in different ways, which reinforces that while planning regionally is important for developing economies of scope and scale to address such issues, related action needs to be co-designed and implemented locally. Understanding the drivers of and the interrelationships between each of the region's economic zones – i.e. assets / strengths; industry composition, size and proximity etc, will help shape responses to the identified regional challenges.

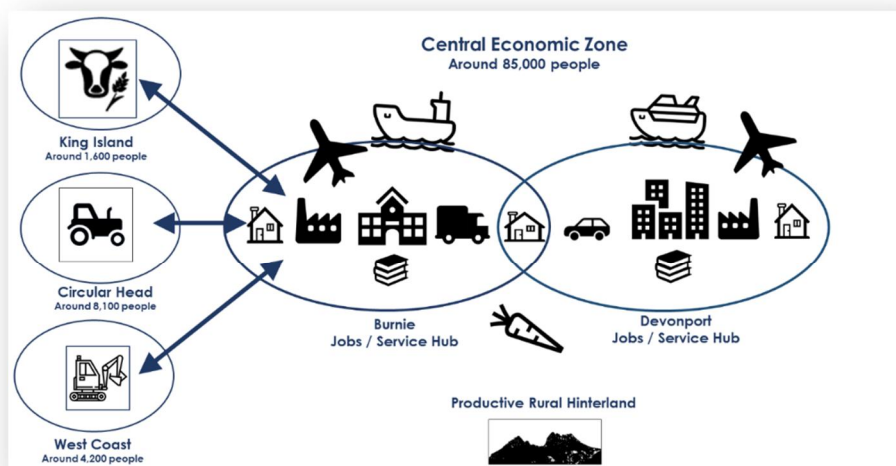


Figure 3 – Foundations of the Cradle Coast economy

Rather than being a region of dispersed local communities, it is better described as a diverse, strong, regional hub and spoke economy – with the twin cities supporting three smaller, interconnected, strategic, geographically distributed economies

A new, innovative regional system of governance has been developed to support the implementation of the Futures Plan that is about regional stewardship, connection, coordination and cooperation and provides an effective platform for working together.

¹ For more detailed analysis refer to the Cradle Coast Regional Futures Plan – Technical Report

² See Figures 2 and 7 for more detail.

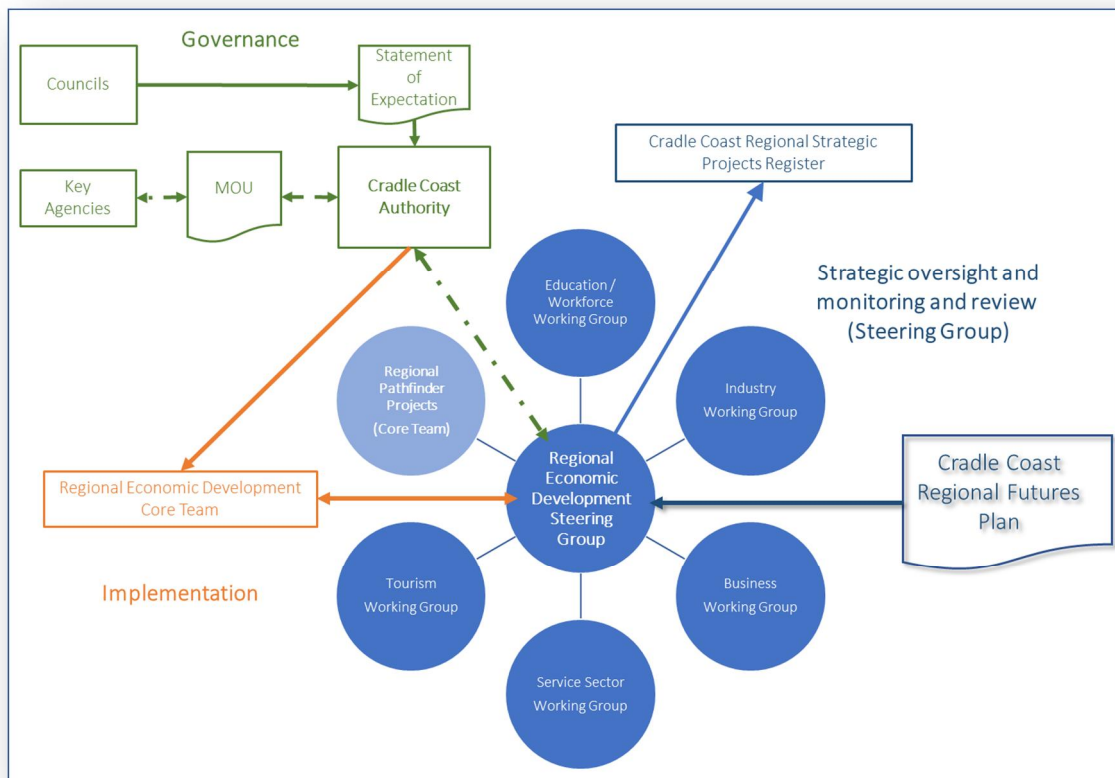


Figure 4 – Regional Futures Plan Governance Arrangements

Key features of the new arrangements include:

- The Cradle Coast Authority (CCA) acting as the legal entity to provide the oversight for the implementation of the Futures Plan and provide the executive / administrative support for the new governance arrangements
- Development of a Memorandum of Understanding between the key agencies involved to demonstrate commitment and agree on resourcing, processes, roles and timeframes, etc.
- A Regional Economic Development Steering Group – will be established to provide the overall systems leadership and guide the implementation and review of the Futures Plan
- Regional Economic Development Core Team will be established to support The Steering Group and provide overall systems management and administration support
- Working Groups will be established for each of the Futures Plan priority areas to align efforts, identify opportunities for collaboration and reducing duplication, establish, oversee and support specific project teams and advise the Steering Group on matters relating to each priority area
- A strategic regional investment framework will be developed to provide a more consistent and systemic approach to identifying and prioritising strategic regional investment opportunities (including infrastructure projects)

Clusters, or the hotspots of innovation and other economic related activity within the region's strategically significant, overlapping business, community and government networks are the engine room of the region's economy. Supporting the region's high growth / high impact clusters is a targeted and clearly focused way of investing limited resources into growth opportunities that will help improve the region's competitiveness and productivity. Where a

cluster framework may not be the most effective approach to development, other strategies / actions have been identified that support the shared needs of enterprises such as supporting new product development, training and skills development.

The Futures Plan will identify, support and harness the power of the region's strategically significant networks to align effort to better deal with complex challenges or respond to new opportunities

Rather than an expansive, detailed plan with little chance of being implemented, the focus of the Futures Plan is more about planning and doing. It involves decision making, collaboration and activating resources across organisations and networks, with an emphasis on starting first with what matters most – developing and implementing initial *pathfinder*³ projects will help embed new systems and processes, and develop relationships, trust and confidence from some early wins.

The Futures Plan is based on the principles of *action learning*, meaning that the implementation and monitoring, evaluation and reporting are integrated and occur at the same time. This will provide targeted and rapid feedback about what is and is not working and support the process of continuous improvement.

Negotiating and putting in place the new governance arrangements will take some time and yet there is a demonstrated need for action that will be crucial to gaining momentum. An interim implementation plan has been developed to support moving into the next phase, including establishing the governance arrangements while supporting progress of initial projects.

Barriers to economic growth and more jobs / better jobs

Current projections suggest a potential net increase in jobs through to 2022, over and above current trends.

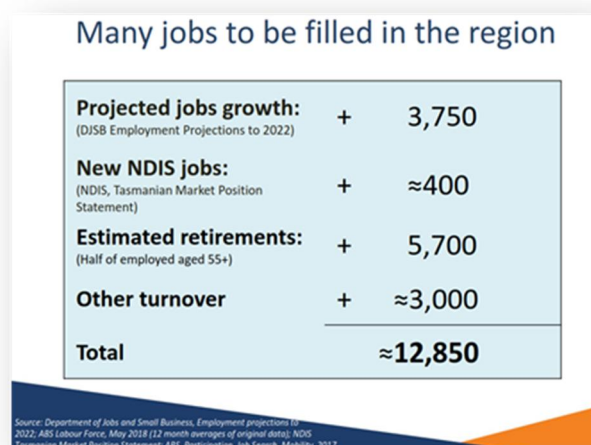


Figure 5 – Projected jobs growth to 2022⁴

³ Where to start first - Initial key, high-level actions that span all priority areas and require a cross-cutting collective regional response, or key high-level actions within a specific priority action area. See Figure 7.

⁴ Source: Ivan Neville (Labour Market Research and Analysis Department of Jobs and Small Business)

There are some deeply embedded systemic, structural challenges that need to be overcome to ensure the workforce is well-placed to provide the skills and capabilities to take on the jobs that are coming, especially in full-time higher skilled occupations, including⁵:

- High unemployment rates - Including youth unemployment and longer term unemployed (higher in most of our Council areas than the Tasmania average)
- Low educational attainment levels - There is a need to improve education outcomes including life skills. Many employers have trouble recruiting suitable workers. Most new jobs require post school qualifications
- Shrinking working-age population - Due to a combination of older and aging workforce, static population growth and out-migration
- Retaining population - The region has an ageing population and retaining youth in the region, particularly for the workforce is a challenge
- Regionally dispersed population - Isolation of some communities such as King Island, far North West and the West Coast presents challenges for economic and services development. The hotspot for population growth is at the eastern end of the region
- Significant labour demands - A significant number of new, skilled jobs will be added to the economy - that coincides with an aging / shrinking workforce – filling these jobs / skills gaps will be a challenge

It is not possible for the Futures Plan to address every aspect of economic and jobs growth, but it can make a positive contribution to turning around the interrelated downward trends impacting the region's labour markets by focusing its collective efforts on:

- Stimulating more full-time employment across the Cradle Coast with more skilled work and workers earning higher incomes
- Increasing educational attainment to assist in building the relevant skills base in the local population to secure these better jobs and the resultant increased incomes
- Addressing the liveability issues likely to influence decisions to stay, live and work in the region
- Strengthening the capacity for business to attract skilled workers from other locations as required

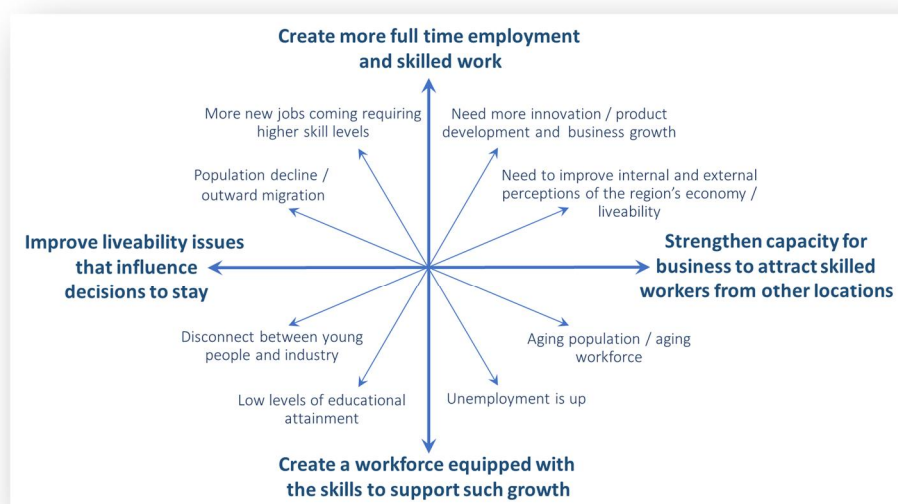


Figure 6 – Sphere of influence of the Futures Plan in helping to overcoming the challenges to economic and jobs growth

⁵ Other community and regional economic data is available via the Cradle Coast Regional Profile - <https://economy.id.com.au/cradle-coast>.

Context for the Futures Plan

The Futures Plan is more than a planning document. It is as much about a new, agile and responsive way of working better together. Emphasis is mainly on locally owned, practical strategies and actions that require no or limited external support. It is expected that where external support is required, local and regional leaders will be included in the design and delivery of such support.

An improved understanding of the foundations of the region's economy⁶ reinforces the importance of working more inclusively and collaboratively to create economies of scale and reduce duplication on settlement / place making and place shaping challenges and opportunities that can support economic growth. It also reinforces the strategic linkages / interrelationships and assets that can be activated at different functional scales to achieve improved local outcomes.

Working collaboratively is difficult. It involves decision making, collaboration and activating resources across organisations and networks and while it is based on a longer-term strategic agenda, it must provide an agile and adaptive, relatively short-term approach to implementation and review.

Our approach is about collective leadership, connection, coordination and cooperation and not about aggregating, duplicating or hindering existing effective approaches. It is about collective leadership (including governments), shared responsibility and commitment of identified key agencies and highly skilled and well-resourced support services that are in sync with a rapidly changing regional economy.

Such an approach focuses on starting first with what matters most – developing and implementing initial *pathfinder projects* to help embed new systems and processes, and develop relationships, trust and confidence from some early wins.

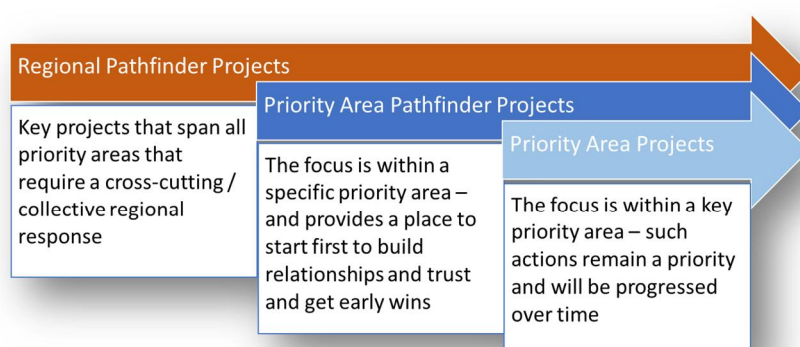


Figure 7 - The Futures Plan provides the agreed areas of focus and a program of priority actions

The Futures Plan and governance arrangements provide a crucial platform for working collaboratively across sectors, organisations and boundaries on the complex challenges that are not effectively being dealt with separately

⁶ See Figure 3.

The Futures Plan at a glance:

Purpose				
Boosting regional growth and fostering a more resilient economy to lift the living standards of all residents in the region				
This will be achieved through a shared agenda and collective leadership to identify actionable investment priorities with the highest potential return to the community – with a focus on more jobs and better jobs.				
Strategic Intent		Building on our regional strengths		
Improving educational attainment		Economic fundamentals	Connectivity	
Enhancing innovation and entrepreneurship		Traditional Industries	Natural / built assets	
Building on industries with a competitive advantage for economic growth		Agricultural output	Services sector	
Leverage regional strengths to develop the tourism industry		New growth sectors	Educational assets	
Capture employment opportunities from emerging services sector		Innovation		
Developing the related leadership / oversight				
Regional Pathfinder Projects				
Regional Education and Employment Pathways Plan		Support strategically significant networks and clusters	Cradle Coast Alive - Industry and Employment Awareness Program	
Regional Economic Infrastructure Group		Governance – Regional economic development		
Priority Area Pathfinder Projects				
Education/ Workforce	Industry	Business	Services Sector	Tourism
Promote Schools-based Apprenticeships	Manufacturing centre of excellence	Network of business associations	Health professional recruitment and retention	Cradle to Coast Tasting Trail
Improve school industry connections	Battery of the nation taskforce	Network of innovation hubs	Caring services cluster	New tourism experiences
				Develop regional food tourism cluster
				Regional destination management plan
Other Priority Area Actions				
Education/ Workforce	Industry	Business	Services Sector	Tourism
UTas’ Children’s University	Support Tas Hort Export Group	Youth entrepreneurship activities	Retain aged workers in caring services sector	Tourism operator training experiences
Leverage UTAS’ West Park development	Support regional fermentation			New product development / start-ups
Extend the Burnie Works project	Harmonise regulations / permits			Develop eco-adventure tourism cluster
Retain aged workers in key sectors				
Short courses for management training				
Ensure VET grades count towards ATAR				
Key Outcomes – Increased:				
Economic leadership / advocacy	Economic driven population growth	Vocational and tertiary education attainment	Business start-ups / scale-ups	
Businesses employing workers	Workforce participation / Size of workforce	Full time (equivalent) jobs	Skilled jobs	
Worker productivity	Regional GDP	Regional Value Add	Weekly household incomes	

Figure 7 – The Cradle Coast Regional Futures Plan overview

Assets and strengths on which the region can build

Heritage of traditional industries - Including manufacturing and agriculture. Significant change in each of these industries has been a challenge and the businesses that have adapted are strong - focus will be on continuing to help improve the resilience and competitiveness of these industries

Established reputation for agricultural output - Rich agricultural surroundings and the climate provide conditions for high quality and a diverse range of food production – focus will be on helping local firms leverage on their distinctive products and value adding through innovative processing

Emerging industry growth sectors - Including renewable energy, precision forestry and aquaculture – focus will be on helping develop scale, resilience and competitiveness

Emerging services sector - Particularly in health care and social assistance, which is projected to grow significantly faster than other industries – focus will be on helping to develop the associated skilled workforce to support such growth

Tourism - A significant driver for local and regional economies with food / beverage and outdoor activities providing competitive advantages - focus will be on developing new high value product, so the region becomes more than a drive through destination

Fundamentals of the region's economy are quite sound - More than half the industries in the region are expected to see net jobs growth – particularly in health care and social assistance, manufacturing, construction, agriculture, accommodation, food and retail – focus will be on making sure there is a workforce that is well-placed in terms of skills and capabilities to take on jobs that are coming, especially in full-time / higher skill occupations

A connected region - The region comprises a series of interconnected, geographically distributed heartland economies, supported by the twin city central economic zone with Burnie and Devonport as the two major service / jobs centres. Over 75% of the region's population are concentrated in the towns and cities along the coast between Latrobe and Wynyard that make up the central economic zone – focus will be on improving coordination of effort between the councils and leveraging the economies of scope and scale for the benefit all residents across the region

Assets and infrastructure - The region is well supported by roads, rail and air and sea port infrastructure – focus will be advocating for continued improvements to strategic infrastructure and improved cost-effective connections within and into / out of the region

Educational assets - The region is well serviced with educational assets and services – focus will be on improving coordination and integration across education and employment pathways in the region

Innovation - High levels of business entries and successful transitioning in traditional industries suggests high levels of innovation and entrepreneurship – focus will be on helping new businesses form and existing businesses survive / scale up to deepen the economic base

Futures Plan intent and priority action areas

Improving educational attainment (education)

- Improved young peoples' perception of Cradle Coast region's advantages / education choices and employment opportunities
- Improved engagement, coordination and cooperation between business, schools and other educators
- Improved connection between young people and employers

- Improved collaboration, alignment and integration between post-school education providers
- Education and training providers are developing employment ready workers

Enhancing innovation and entrepreneurship (business)

- Demonstrated support for start-up and scale-up enterprises
- Improved opportunities for young entrepreneurs
- Development of supportive connections, relationships and networks

Building on industries with a competitive advantage for economic growth (industry)

- Improved internal and external perception of Cradle Coast region's advantages / education choices and employment opportunities
- Demonstrated industry support for schools' engagement / career pathways initiatives
- Changed perception of the value of and take up of VET and trades as employment pathways
- Improved middle management training and development opportunities
- Demonstrated support for identified regional specialisations / growth sectors
- Demonstrated support for emerging specialisations such as precision forestry, renewable energy and aquaculture

Leverage regional strengths to develop tourism industry (tourism)

- Continued development of collateral to showcase the region as a world class visitor experience
- Improved sector cooperation / collaboration
- Improved value adding product and business development that contributes to the region's attractiveness as a visitor destination

Capture employment opportunities from emerging caring and social assistance service sector

- Improved perception of the sector as a career pathway
- Improved connection between young people, schools, other educators and sector employers
- Improved collaboration, alignment and integration between post-school education providers and sector employers
- Retention of aged workers

The Futures Plan - Regional Pathfinder Actions

Initial key high-level actions that span all priority areas and require a cross-cutting collective regional response

Project	Tasks
Develop and implement the Cradle Coast Alive Industry and Employment Awareness Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the Cradle Coast Alive Working Group to develop and implement the program to raise awareness of regional employment opportunities and improve connections between young people, schools, other educators and sector employers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Map existing links / activities in schools by industry, employers, other educators, not-for-profits and other providers ◦ Work with Council Mayors and local education / youth engaged committees to expand industry / employer promotion in schools ◦ Support / expand industry and employer engagement to inform educational pathways

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solicit regional industries to allocate funds to support youth engagement activities in schools ○ Promote to families and schools the value of VET and trades as a career pathway ○ Actively message and promote the service sector in schools to change the perception of the services sector as a career pathway • Develop online promotional resources and events to showcase the region as a place to live, its growth industries and employment possibilities
Develop a Regional Economic Infrastructure Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work with the Tasmanian and Australian Governments to continue to improve strategic road, air and sea assets and infrastructure to improve connections within and into / out of the region • Advocate for improved ICT infrastructure (e.g. mobile and high-speed broadband)
Support strategically significant networks and clusters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Cluster Manager Network for existing and emerging cluster managers to support knowledge and resource sharing, professional development and collective advocacy • Support development of existing clusters and emerging specialisations such as precision forestry, renewable energy and aquaculture
Develop and implement an action-learning based Regional Education and Employment Pathways Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Cradle Coast Regional Workforce Plan Working Group to support the establishment and implementation of the Plan, includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Map the jobs / skills gaps, particularly across the identified and emerging high priority growth sectors ○ Provide a more coordinated / systemic approach by economic and jobs growth services providers to identified high growth sectors • Investigate the Local Learning and Employment Networks model (Victoria) to improve alignment, coordination of service delivery in the region's education and training sector - http://www.llen.org.au/ • Investigate the merit of introducing an 'online Talent Communities (Jobs Pipeline) Platform' – such as https://www.geelongcareers.org.au/
Governance - Leadership / oversight of the Futures Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure CCA has a mandate / resources to fulfil its regional development role and provide oversight for the implementation of the Futures Plan • Develop a cross sector steering committee to guide the implementation of the Futures Plan and advise the CCA Board on related economic development matters • Develop an effective system for identifying, prioritising and seeking investment for strategic regional projects

Priority Area Pathfinder Actions

Where to start first to build relationships and trust and get early wins within each priority action area

Education	Industry	Business	Services sector	Tourism
Promote schools-based apprenticeships Advocate for growing school-based apprenticeships and traineeships program and develop and pilot a model for schools-based apprenticeships in local councils	Establish an advanced manufacturing centre of excellence Advocate for and support the TMEC Centre becoming a world-class centre of excellence for specialised manufacturing	Facilitate the development of a network of business associations For mentoring, sharing of ideas and collaboration	Improve health professional recruitment and retention Establish an industry led steering group to develop and implement a regional health professional recruitment and retention strategy	Scale up the Cradle to Coast Tasting Trail Work with the Tasting Trail Committee to increase the depth and breadth of product and associated governance arrangements
Improve relationships between schools and specific industry sectors Develop local pilot projects to promote / connect job seekers and employers for entry level job opportunities	Establish a Battery of the Nation Taskforce Advocate for and establish the region as a centre of excellence for renewable energy	Advocate for and support the development of a network of business innovation hubs Ensure business building services are available to support innovation and 'scale-ups' across the region	Consider establishing a 'Caring Services Cluster' A network of employers, educators and schools	Map new high growth / high impact tourism experience ecosystems to identify new value adding product Develop resources and workshops to support new product development in such eco-systems (e.g. cuisine, cruise ships, eco-adventure, technical, on farm etc.)
				Develop a regional food tourism cluster That focuses on food production / value add (Tasting Trail); new product development and developing a cuisine culture
				Review the 2014 Regional Destination management Plan Develop a regional destination management approach to tourism industry and product development

Other Priority Area Actions

Other identified priority actions that will be progressed over time

Other Actions				
Increase promotion of and engagement with UTas' Children's University	Support the scale up the Tasmanian Horticulture Export Group Work with the Group to develop and pilot a regional model for hosting / incubating / accelerating growth of emerging clusters	Identify / pilot opportunities to introduce youth entrepreneurship development activities in schools	Work with employers to retain aged workers in the caring services sector	Training and development - Develop a customised tourism operator focused approach to training
Explore opportunities to leverage the West Park / UTas development	Establish and support a regional fermentation network and help scale up the Fermentation Cluster (FermenTas)			Develop a 'hack' type tourism event to explore and pursue new product development and start-ups
Consider extending the Burnie Works Collective Impact approach across the region	Work with Councils to harmonise relevant regulations / permits across the region			Identify the potential development of an eco-adventure tourism cluster to leverage the region's natural assets
Work with COTA and employers to retain aged workers, particularly in key jobs growth sectors				
Improve UTas' engagement with industry to provide local short course / responsive options for management training and development				
Lobby the Tasmanian Government to ensure there is an effective means for VET grades counting towards ATAR				