MEDIA RELEASE

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$2.4 MILLION FOR 'SMART SPACES' IN REGIONS

The NSW Government is investing $2.4 million in a partnership with two Sydney Universities launching today, aimed at supporting regional councils to reap the benefits of smart cities technology.

Minister for Local Government Wendy Tuckerman said 91 regional councils in NSW could benefit from the *Smart Regional Spaces: Ready, Set, Go!* partnership with the University of Sydney and UNSW Sydney under the Smart Places Strategy.

"This innovative partnership with regional councils, University of Sydney and UNSW will see them connect with industry experts, empower investment in new technology and data-driven solutions to help address the substantial divide in digital inclusion between Australians living in rural and urban areas," Mrs Tuckerman said.

"Examples of smart place initiatives include smart street lighting, real-time bus schedules available on digital screens or through apps, using smart sensors to gather waste management data or smart sensors installed on parking spaces."

Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government Victor Dominello said digital uplift and inclusion is a key pillar of the Smart Places Strategy, especially making sure regional communities can take advantage of emerging smart technology.

"In partnership with local councils, the Smart Places Acceleration Program continues to deliver smart technological capabilities to fix problems that people are facing every day," Mr Dominello said.

Dean of the Sydney School of Architecture, Design and Planning at the University of Sydney Professor Robyn Dowling said smart technology was ready to be expanded into the state's regional communities.

"Smart technology solutions in transport, communications and energy efficiency are already a reality in metropolitan cites and there is an incredible opportunity to bring more of these initiatives into our rural and regional areas." Professor Dowling said.

Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture at UNSW Professor Claire Annesley said the project is an example of the University's commitment to transforming the lives of people in regional communities, with the smart places movement offering social, economic, and environmentally sustainable advantages.

"Many of the ideas generated by this movement to date relate to the challenges of dense urban living that do not necessarily translate to regional spatial scales, assets and geographically dispersed communities, and why a tailored regional focus is so important." Professor Annesley said.

The *Smart Regional Spaces: Ready, Set, Go!*, is funded through the Digital Restart Fund under the Smart Places Acceleration Program and expertise and contributions from UNSW and the University of Sydney. More information can be found here.

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