

Outcomes from the "other" ideas summit
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Steven Pedigo, Sarah Fife and Lou Musante at the Noosa Creative Alliance Meeting at Australis Noosa Resort.
Photo: Geoff Potter/n20212

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's 2020 Summit in Canberra wasn't the only "ideas fest" held in the past few days. Stage III of Noosa's Creative Communities project was held at Noosaville last week, with 30 of the region's best and brightest taking part in a two-day Creative Communities Leadership Program workshop designed to identify some key initiatives to generate greater economic prosperity.

The 30 "catalysts" were chosen from a nomination list of 100 volunteers from sectors including government, academia, the environment, entrepreneurs, home-based business owners and web and design.

At the end of the two days, their ideas had been short-listed into the following initiatives:

*Noosa A-Live – Feel the Vibe: Designed to connect and support artists, performers and creatives via a series of events, night markets, etc.

*Green Sunshine: The aim is to build a regional framework to deliver green initiatives including a sustainable streetscapes program.

*Ignition: Showcase diversity through new media powered by youth, resulting in a new media festival in May 2009.

*Enterprise Excellence: Showcase the Sunshine Coast as a centre of entrepreneurial excellence by building off existing networks and business programs.

The CCLP's methods and goals were developed around the creative class theory pioneered by Richard Florida, one of the world's leading public intellectuals on economic competitiveness and author of the best selling books *The Rise of the Creative Class* and *The Flight of the Creative Class*.

The Creative Class Group's Lou Musante, one of the facilitators of the workshop, said he had "pretty high expectations" for the group.

"The Noosa group certainly exceeded those. The interesting thing is they were all thinking regionally," he said. although apart from the Enterprise Excellence initiative, all the pilots will be carried out in Noosa in the first instance before (being) rolled out across the Sunshine Coast," he said.

Mr Musante, who lives in Pennsylvania but works on Richard Florida's Creative Class programs around the world, said he was extremely impressed by the outcome of the workshop.

“Regions no longer compete with neighbouring cities, rather mega regions now compete globally. And what we have found is that we need a regional effort to be competitive,” he said.

“We’re thrilled with the initiatives that came out of the leadership project and we look forward to helping this community move forward.”

Regional catalyst Al Sylvester described the two-day workshop as “an eye-opening experience”.

“We were given the most current regional economic and demographic data as well as cutting edge community-building practices to help us work out where our regional strengths and weaknesses lie,” he said.

“Being empowered with that research and those tools gives us the power to make informed decisions on how to move our community forward.”

Mr Musante said progress on the initiatives that came out of the workshop would be followed up at regular intervals throughout the coming 12 months.

Noosa’s is the first Creative Communities Leadership Project to be held in Australia and was initiated by the Noosa Creative Alliance – a partnership between Stockwell’s Noosa Civic Business Park and the Sunshine Coast Regional Council, with support from the Department of Regional Development and Industry.
