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Please share this newsletter with other local businesses, become a member of the Hawkesbury Business Hub (it's free!) and please tell us what you think by contacting business@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au.

Mayoral Column



Welcome to the February edition of the business newsletter

Sam Mac and the team from Sunrise delivered the weather from the beautiful Hawkesbury last month and showcased the best of the Hawkesbury, including an apple pie eating competition with some locals.

We are moving towards the peak of apple pie season, have you grabbed your locally grown apples to make your famous apple pie? There is lots of things happening around the Hawkesbury in the month of March, including Markets, Fruit Picking, horse racing, Autumn fair and lots more. For things to do this month, visit the [Discover the Hawkesbury](#) website.

April is also going to be another busy month, with the annual Hawkesbury Show from the 19 – 21 April 2024. For more information visit the [Hawkesbury Show website](#).

Sincerely,
Mayor Sarah McMahon

In the Hawkesbury



Free Business Health Checks

Undertaking a Business Health Check can provide useful insights to help you prioritise the next steps in growing your local business. The Business Health Check is designed to identify opportunities and potential pitfalls customers need to be aware of to help their business thrive.

In the session you may undergo an assessment of the business' financial performance, risks, and structures. They are designed to identify opportunities and potential challenges to be aware of to help your business thrive. Plus, we deep dive into current sales, marketing, and operation plans.

The Business Health Checks are delivered in partnership with the Hawkesbury City Council, Western Sydney Business Centre, NSW Business Connect.

These are one-on-one sessions and places are limited.

Note, each health check is approximately 60 minutes in duration (free of charge, as part of the 8 hours advisory sessions allocated each financial year from Business Connect).

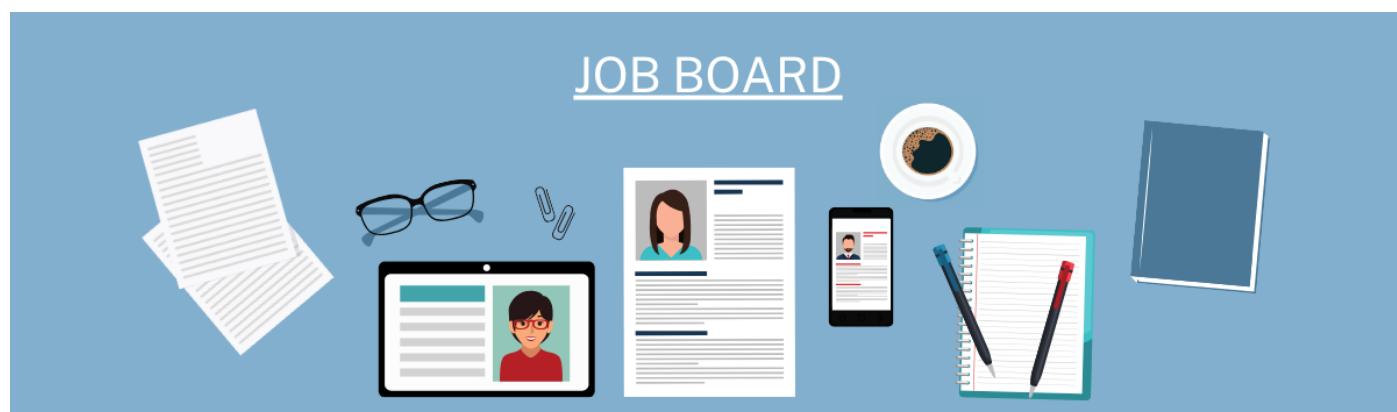
Please ensure to include your suburb and the words Health Check in your request for a meeting with [Graham Fitzpatrick](#). Graham will be in contact within 24-48 business hours after request.

Date: Monday 22nd April 2024

Time: 1 hour will be allocated to you

Location: Hawkesbury Central Library – 300 George St, Windsor NSW 2756

Click here to request a booking - <https://wsbusiness.com.au/event/business-health-check-hawkesbury-lga-22april24/>



Hawkesbury Local Jobs Board

If you have a local job available for a local person, please advertise to the local business community via our Local Jobs Board!

Advertising is FREE and applications can be found via the link below.

[Jobs Board Form](#)

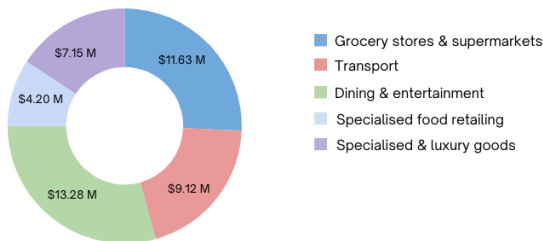
For further information or if you require assistance in creating your job advertisement, please contact Council's Economic Development Team on 02 4560 4444 or email business@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

Spendmapp Monthly Data

[Spendmapp](#), developed by Geografia, is an economic modelling tool. It uses bank data to measure consumer spending of both locals and visitors in the geographic area over certain time periods. It can help to determine patterns of spending, by who and where, to get a better picture of the local economy.

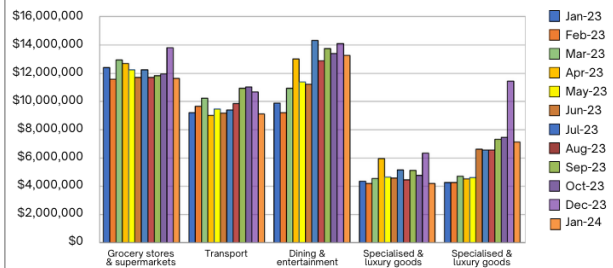
Using the data can help inform, manage, and help also to respond to long term economic trends and shocks and also gain insights into the visitor economy, online expenditure and escape expenditure. Spendmapp is used by a number of local government areas.

Visitor Spend in January 2024



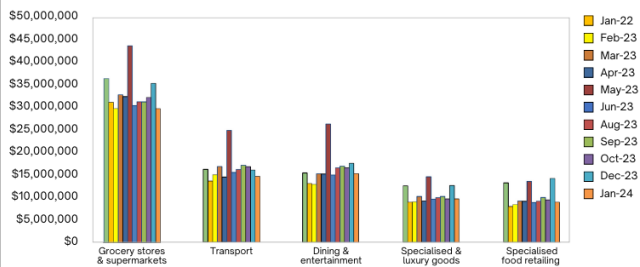
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Top 5 Categories Visitor Local Spend



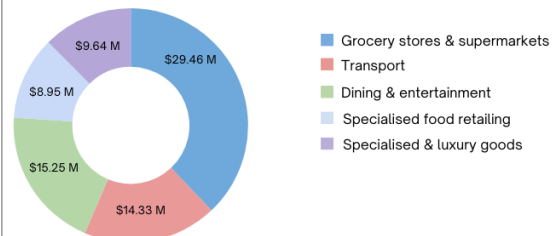
Data source:
'Spendmapp by Geografia'

Top 5 Categories Resident Local Spend



Data source:
'Spendmapp by Geografia'

Resident Spend in January 2024



Data source:
'Spendmapp by Geografia'

January 2024 has seen a decrease from the previous month in resident spending across the five categories. Visitor spending also decreased in all of the categories, except for the Professional Services category which saw a small increase.

Business News & Updates



Changes to food safety Standard 3.2.2A

In December last year the new Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A came into force, affecting most Hawkesbury food businesses, who are expected to comply with the requirements by **8 December 2024**.

For more information visit the NSW Food Authority's [dedicated webpage](#), where you can search for relevant information by business or service.

You can also download the [Standard 3.2.2A – Guideline for businesses](#) (PDF, 346, KB)



Big Changes for the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse

The [Australian Tourism Data Warehouse](#) (ATDW) will be introducing some exciting new updates to their platform to elevate the customer experience. Some of the updates include a name change to better reflect what they do and why it matters for Australian tourism operators, as well as the unveiling of a newly designed platform that will not only bring operators the benefits they've come to expect but also improve experience and expand opportunities.

Feel free to connect with them directly on 1300 137 2255 or support@atdw.com.au.



Service NSW Business Bureau

Supporting and growing the local business economy is a priority for Council, which is why we have partnered with Service NSW to deliver the Service NSW for Business Bureau program.

The **Service NSW for Business** program:

- Aims to make opening or expanding a small business easier by tackling the time, complexity, and duplication issues that business owners currently face.
- Provides business owners with free access to an online business portal, as well as the Service NSW Business Concierge team, where you will receive step-by-step guidance and support across local, state, and federal government requirements, to open and grow your business.
- Simplifies the process for applying and tracking government licensing and the approvals needed to operate a business.
- Provide assistance with grant applications.

With one form and one phone number to remove complexity when opening a new business, owners can spend less time on paperwork and more time on your business.

Please note: Only some industry sectors are currently available. More options to come shortly.

Visit [Service NSW](#) or call **13 77 88** to access the Service NSW for Business Bureau program.

Business Grants & Funding



Bin Trim Equipment Rebates Program

As of November 2023, new rebates have become available as part of the Bin Trim Equipment Rebates Program.

The program, which provides rebates of \$50,000 to cover up to 50% of the cost of small-scale, on-site recycling equipment or technology, is available to businesses, councils, and government organisations.

\$6 million is available for rebates until 30 June 2027, or until all funding is exhausted.

[Guidelines \(PDF 562KB\)](#) and details on how to apply online can be found at <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/bintrim-rebates>.

A bin trim visual waste assessment is required before application. Self-assessments can be done using the [Bin Trim app](#).



Energy Efficiency Grants

Applications for Round 2 of the Energy Efficiency Grants for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises have recently opened, supporting eligible businesses to upgrade or replace inefficient equipment to improve energy efficiency.

The grant program aims to help businesses reduce their energy usage, manage long term energy costs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and contribute to Australia's target of a 43% reduction on 2005 emission levels by 2030

Download the [grant opportunity guidelines](#) or visit the [website](#) for more information.



Helping Regional Communities Prepare for Drought Initiative Small Network Grants



Small Network Grants Program

The Foundation for Rural Regional Renewal (FRRR) are now offering Small Network Grants to community organisations in regional and rural Australia to develop and deliver one-off events or initiatives that strengthen community networks and build drought preparedness.

The Small Network Grants, with the support of the Australian Government, will fund networks, community events, training initiatives, community infrastructure, development and learning initiatives that assist local people and communities to strengthen social capital and capability to prepare for future droughts.

Two streams of grants are available via two rounds:

- Up to a maximum of \$20,000; or
- Up to a maximum of \$50,000 (dependent on location).

The first round has now closed, but applications for round 2 will open **13 February 2024**. For more information on the program visit the [FRRR website](#).



Grants and Program Finder

Use the Australian Government's [Grants and Program Finder](#) tool to explore what grants, funding and support programs are available to you. Search by location, industry, support type, business structure and more.



More grants, rebates and support for small business

Explore some of the financial supports available to NSW businesses right now.

Electric vehicles rebate

The NSW Government is offering \$3,000 rebates for the first 25,000 new battery electric and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles with a dutiable value of less than \$68,750. This incentive, along with the abolition of stamp duty, will save eligible EV purchasers up to \$5,540. [More information](#).

Small Business Export Loan

The Small Business Export Loan provides small to medium export businesses with loans to cover up to 80% of the costs to secure an export contract or purchase order with an overseas buyer. [More information](#).

Energy Savings Scheme

The Energy Savings Scheme (ESS) provides NSW businesses with financial incentives to invest in projects which will reduce their energy consumption. Incentives are available to install new equipment or modify a current system. [More information](#).

Find more grants using the NSW Government's [grant finder](#).



Small Business Skills & Training Boost

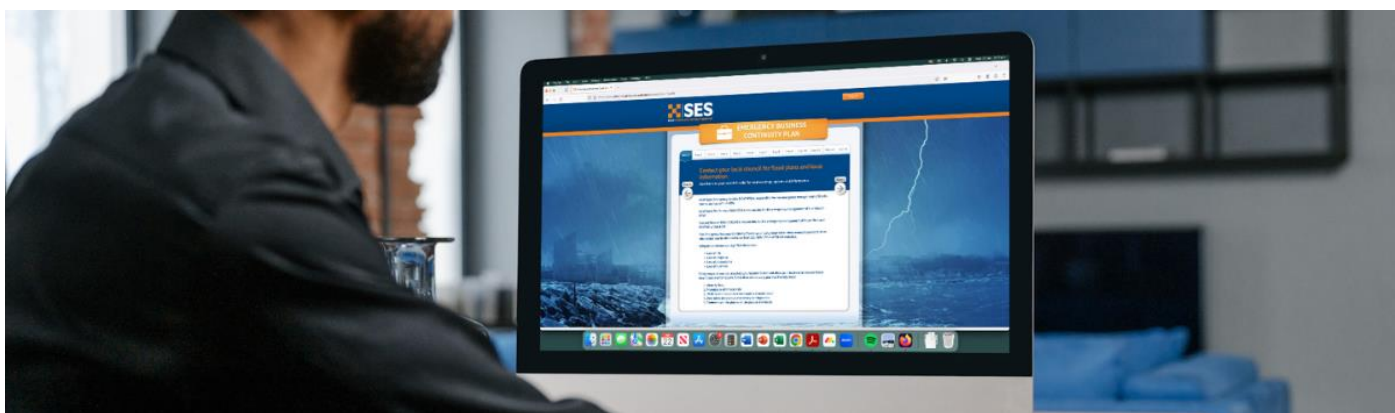
Check to see whether you're eligible to claim a 20% deduction on certain training expenditure for your employees.

Through the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), small businesses with an aggregated annual turnover of less than \$50 million will be allowed an additional 20% tax deduction for external training courses delivered to employees by registered training providers.

The boost applies to eligible expenditure incurred from 7:30 pm AEDT on 29 March 2022 until 30 June 2024.

[Learn more](#)

Is Your Business Bushfire Ready



Emergency Business Continuity Plan

Knowing the risks that can affect your business during extreme weather events and natural disasters helps you to better plan and prepare for them, as well as increase the safety of employees, reduce damage and associated costs, and get your business back on its feet faster.

One way you can prepare is by taking the time to make your [Emergency Business Continuity Plan](#) using the NSW SES online tool, which will only take about 10 minutes to complete.



Live Bushfire Ready – My Fire Plan

Having a plan gives you and your business a better chance when bushfires hit. Take the time now to prepare, so you know what to do when the time comes.

It takes as little as five minutes to make your bush fire plan. Get started on the [MyFirePlan](#) website today.



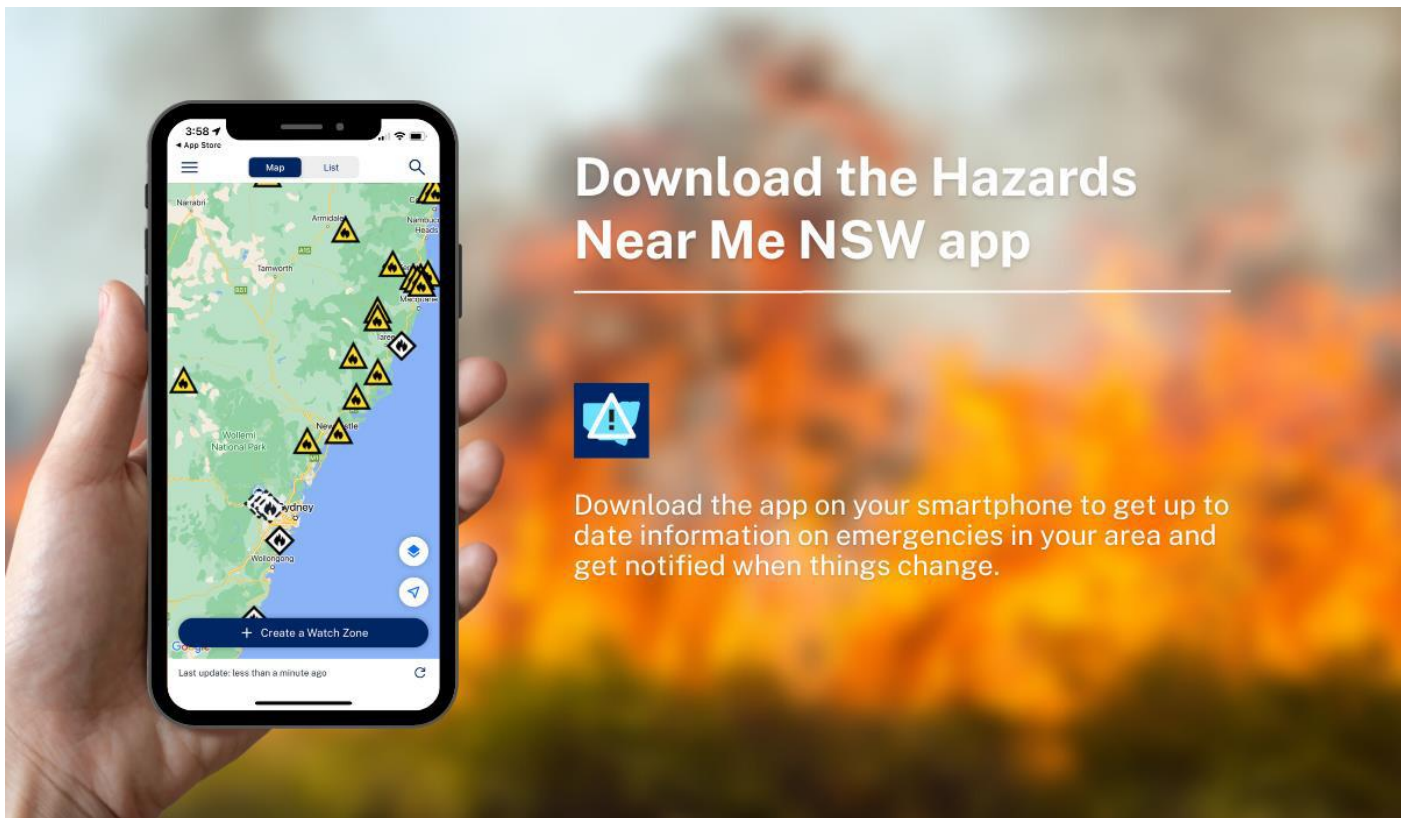
Be prepared, informed and ready this bushfire season

As we come into what is set to be the most significant bushfire season since the 2019/20 black summer fires, businesses are being urged to prepare. There are many ways a bushfire can impact your business, such as road closures and blackouts, so even if you're not in a fire zone, you could still be at risk.

Preparing your business to withstand a bushfire or other natural disaster is vital for every business owner.

The NSW Small Business Commissioner's four Get Ready for Disasters guides and Get Ready for Disasters Kit can help you prepare so you can minimise impacts and get back to business sooner.

[Get the guides](#)



Download the Hazards Near Me NSW app



Download the app on your smartphone to get up to date information on emergencies in your area and get notified when things change.

Download the Hazards Near Me app

Download the Hazards Near Me NSW app to get the most up to date information about local emergencies, including flood, bushfire and tsunamis, and advice on what to do to stay safe. The app also provides other warnings and activities for your area, such as current fire danger ratings, fire bans and hazard reductions.

Search the app store or use the links below to download the app on your smartphone or tablet:

IOS (apple)

Android

View hazards on your desktop

To view current bushfire alerts and warnings on your computer, visit the [NSW Rural Fire Service website](#).



Fire farm safety

If you live or own a farm or property, it is important that you know what to do in the event of a bushfire and prepare early. To help you get bushfire ready this season, the NSW RFS have worked with farmers to create the **Farm Fire Plan** and the steps below to help manage fire risks on your land.

Four steps to help get you ready

[PREPARE](#): prepare your property and take action

[DISCUSS](#): what will you do in the event of a fire

[KNOW](#): know the conditions

[KEEP](#): keep the bushfire information numbers, websites and smartphone app

More information

You can find more information on how to get yourself and your property ready for bushfires on the [NSW Rural Fire Service website](#).



BushfireHub

The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) [BushfireHub](#) is a great tool for anyone looking to find support after a bushfire emergency. Through the BushfireHub, primary producers, farmers and landholders can access information about recovery, financial assistance, mental health programs and more.

Visit the BushfireHub



Bushfire Resilience Rating Home Self-Assessment

The Bushfire Resilience Rating Home Self-Assessment app, developed by the [Resilient Building Council](#) and funded by the Australian government, brings decades of research and expertise on bushfire resilience into the hands of Australian households through an easy-to-use tool.

Through the free app, households can measure the bushfire resilience of their home and receive a customised action plan.

Get Started



NSW DroughtHub - managing drought, fire and flood

The [NSW DroughtHub](#) is a one-stop online destination providing information and support to primary producers to prepare for and manage drought. There, you can find information on available grants and funding, tools and resources, events and more.

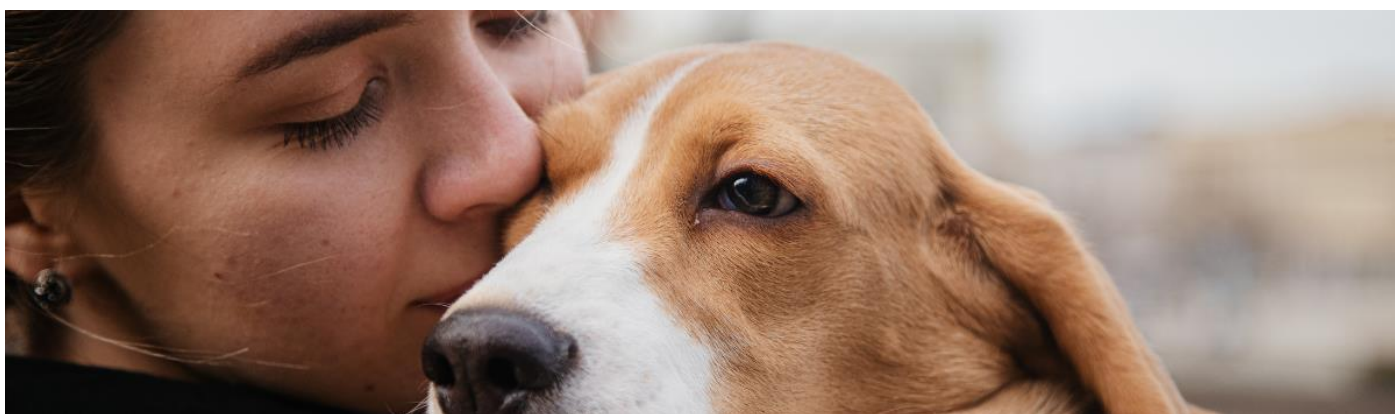
Managing drought, fire and flood guide

The guide, produced by the NSW DroughtHub, is an excellent resource for NSW primary producers as it reflects on the unique pressures placed on producers before, during and after drought, fire and flood.

It includes strategies and actions farmers can consider before making informed decisions for their business, and for the wellbeing of themselves and the people around them.

It also includes information on relevant resources from the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Local Land Services, practical information on feeding livestock, farm management and sustainable practices around soils, pastures, cropping and natural resources.

Download the guide



Keep your animals safe in an emergency

Do you know how to keep your animals safe during an emergency? The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) has developed a series of short videos (1-5 minutes) on getting your animals ready for bushfires, floods and other emergencies.

More information is available on the [DPI website](#) or watch the videos [HERE](#).

Upcoming Workshops & Webinars

Ready to start...

RETHINKING WASTE (FOR GOOD)?



That's where we come in.

Our FREE interactive workshop will give you the skills to design out waste, for a cleaner, more connected community

Rethinking 'Waste' (For Good) in the Hawkesbury

Have you ever felt there's a better way to manage consumption in the Hawkesbury Local Government Area (LGA)? Have you heard about the circular economy and wonder what exactly that involves? Have you wondered what it might take to start a project that uses resources differently?

Join us for a free, interactive online workshop with Jo Taranto, co-founder of Good for the Hood. Get empowered to change the way we live, work, share and connect!

This workshop will cover:

- The state of waste and litter in the Hawkesbury
- The circular economy: what is it and how it works
- 10 exciting ways you can incorporate the circular economy into your community this year.

Date: Wednesday 6 March 2024

Time: 6pm – 7pm

Where: online

Register



Australian Tax Office Webinars

The Australian Tax Office (ATO) is offering free webinars to help you improve your knowledge about starting and running a small business. Each webinar is a live, interactive online seminar presented by experienced taxation officers.

Some of the most popular upcoming webinars we recommend include:

- [Claiming small business tax deductions](#)
- [Employer: Expense payment fringe benefits](#)
- [Introduction to business records](#)

Browse the [ATO website](#) for other webinars offered.



NSW Farm Safety Advisory Program Workshops

The Farm Safety Advisory Program, though funding from the NSW Government, offers free workshops and programs for small to medium farming businesses in NSW.

Topics include WHS, harvesting, worker induction, mental health, emergency planning and more. Search for upcoming events that interest you on the website.

Upcoming Workshops in March:

- Easy To Do WHS (For Farmers) – Monday 11 March, 6:30pm – 8:30pm (online). [Register here](#)
 - Effective Worker Induction – Wednesday 13 March, 6:30pm – 8:30pm (online). [Register here](#)
 - Emergency Planning Workshop – Monday 18 March, 6:30pm – 8:30pm (online). [Register here](#)
-



Being business savvy on social media
Tuesday 5 March, 10:30am-12pm (online)

Register



Resilience: adapting to market and customer expectations
Wednesday 6 March, 12pm-1:30pm (online)

Register



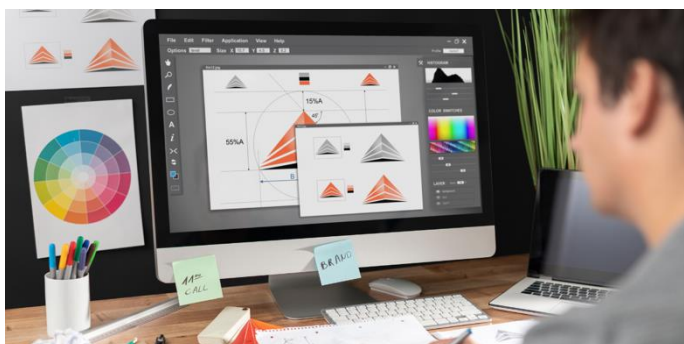
Launch & optimise profitable social media campaigns
Thursday 7 March, 10am-12pm (online)

Register



DIY low cost marketing
Tuesday 12 March, 10am-12pm (online)

Register



Business branding and graphic design solutions
Thursday 14 March, 1pm-2pm (online)

Register



Writing a business plan
Thursday 14 March, 10am-11:30am (online)

Register



How to build your business with branding

Tuesday 19 March, 10am-12pm (online)

Register

Marketing fundamentals for small business

Tuesday 19 March, 1pm-2pm (online)

Register



How to create a customer-centric culture

Wednesday 27 March, 1pm-2pm (online)

Register