

Examiner

Funding to boost regional growth

[Holly Monery](#) [@holly_monery](#)

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BIG PLANS: Minister for Building and Construction Guy Barnett, Valley Workshop director Penelope Haley and Valley Workshop architect Warren French. Picture: Holly Monery.

Architect Warren French and his daughter Penelope Haley work hand in hand at Valley Workshop, a company that specialises in quality, bespoke, prefabricated flat packed houses.

It's one of eight regional Tasmanian businesses to receive a slice of \$5 million worth of funding from the state government's latest round of the Regional Revival Fund.

Valley Workshop will receive \$200,000 to help create an \$628,000 expansion of its existing manufacturing facility.

"We do both the design and construction, and most of the work we design in-house and most of what we design we build ourselves," Mr French said.

“What we are trying to do is have absolutely cutting edge technology and transfer that into very, very livable, modern housing.”

The business creates large components in a very small workshop and the cash injection from the state government will allow them to streamline their processes.

“Our buildings are clever but our way of achieving them isn’t and that's what the grant is meant to do, we need more space and we need state-of-the-art-equipment,” Mr French said.

Ms Haley, who is the company director, said the business creates a market for problematic logs from plantations.

“Currently we’re capable of building three to four houses per year out of our current workshop,” she said.

“With the grant we expect that to incrementally increase perhaps to eight in the first year, then 14 in the second year and then up to 20 plus in the third year.”

The project is expected to create eight jobs during construction, and nine ongoing positions.

Minister for Building and Construction Guy Barnett said between the eight projects funded, about 95 direct jobs will be created during the investment phase, as well as an estimated 170 ongoing positions.

“The eight new projects will deliver a total of \$16.8 million in direct investment through our partnership model which requires joint funding from project proponents or other partners,” he said.

“A condition is that development must commence within 12 months of finalising the necessary contractual arrangements.”

- Hellyers Road Distillery at Burnie will receive \$250,000 towards a \$1.01 million upgraded of bottling line and related infrastructure to service increased sales growth and demand for single malt products.
- Meander Valley Berries at Hillwood will receive \$600,000 towards a \$2.205 million expansion of existing berry farm (strawberries 10ha to 15 ha, raspberries 5ha to 7.5ha) through the purchase and installation of poly tunnels, growing tables, substrate and irrigation systems.
- Udderly Tasmanian at Ouse will receive \$200,000 towards a \$1.45 million project involving new visitor experience integrated within an expanded dairy farm.
- Ettrick Rocks at King Island will receive \$200 000 towards a \$1.4 million project involving the development of new luxury accommodation on King Island.
- St Helens Point Holiday Park will receive \$250,000 towards a \$5.1 million project involving construction of new holiday park facility, comprising 16 self-contained luxury cabins, 20 powered sites and 8 unpowered sites, with opportunities for further expansion.
- Redlands Distillery at Kempton will receive \$200,000 towards a \$1.2 million development of new whisky and spirits distillery, cellar door and visitor centre.
- Murrakei Berry Fruits at Red Hills will receive \$300,00 towards a \$3.8 million poly tunnel project to increase the strawberry production system at existing farm, including 2.4 ha of raspberries and blackberries and new cool store facility.