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World's best Thinkers come to Adelaide under new Social Capital Residency

The Don Dunstan Foundation has partnered with the university, business and community sectors to deliver a new Adelaide Thinkers in Residence program.

The foundation today launched the first in a series of residencies focusing on social capital – the fastest growing section of the South Australian economy.

Chair of the Social Capital Residencies and former Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu managing partner Rob DiMonte says the residencies focus on supporting job creation, attracting investments and driving knowledge based exports.

“We’re taking a new approach to the ‘Thinkers Program’ which will have our partners engaged from the beginning, ensuring they are invested in driving real outcomes,” Mr DiMonte says.

The program will attract experts from around the world, whose knowledge, skills and creative ideas will provide thought leadership on how companies and organisations can invest in better social outcomes.

“Enterprises with a social goal are more successful and grow faster than other SMEs. In South Australia, ABS statistics show employment in this area grew by more than 13 per cent between 2012 and 2015.”

“There is a huge amount of capital out there globally – just looking for a home.”

“South Australia has a great opportunity to tap into what is a growth sector throughout the world, while at the same time addressing South Australia’s most contemporary needs – job creation and investment,’ Mr DiMonte says.

With an 18-month focus, the program is set to build on the strong success of the original Thinkers in Residence Program.

South Australian Premier Jay Weatherill has commended the new business-led approach to the ‘Thinkers’ program, saying it will encourage strategic alliances that can drive positive outcomes for the State.

“It’s a knowledge exchange that can help grow our understanding of the social economy and the opportunities it presents, both socially and economically. South Australia has a real opportunity to be a leader in this space,” Premier Weatherill says.

Adelaide will welcome internationally renowned social innovator Allyson Hewitt, as the first Primary Thinker for the Social Capital Residencies, who is a senior fellow at the highly successful MaRS Discovery District in Toronto, Canada.

Ms Hewitt, who is a leading influencer in public policy and is behind an initiative to develop a pro bono marketplace for Canada, will be supported by a range of other ‘supporting thinkers’ throughout the residencies.

Allyson will be supported by Suzi Sosa co-founder and CEO of Verb, a global social enterprise based out of Adelaide’s sister city in Austin Texas.

Allyson will first visit in May this year and Suzi will be out in July.

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