



**Geelong Region
International Network**

Leaders for Geelong Project

2015/2016



Contents

Grin Project Team	3
Acknowledgements.....	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Competition	5
Marketing.....	6
The Project	6
The objectives of GRIN were to:	6
3 discreet deliverables:	6
Toolkit	7
Network	7
Methodology.....	8
Logo.....	8
Literature Review	8
Toolkit	9
Pitch	10
Network	10
Key Findings	11
The Network – GRIN	11
The Inaugural GRINers are:.....	12
Recommendations	13
Exit Strategy	13
References	13
Appendix	14
GRIN Pitch Presentation.....	15
Project Logic & Success Indicators.....	16

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Executive Summary

The Leaders for Geelong (LfG) program incorporates an action learning component in the form of a collaborative project. This is a mandatory program component which must be completed in addition to the LfG program modules and associated activities. The action learning project component enables participants to work in a team and engage directly with a current issue in ways which would not be possible in their usual work or community life. ¹

The Geelong Region International Network (GRIN) project team have identified the need to provide readily available material to enable regional business, government or social sector ambassadors to promote the Geelong region on the national and international stage using a strategic and relevant toolkit.

The GRIN plans to provide the mechanisms to promote Geelong on the national and international stage as a great place to LIVE, WORK, VISIT and DO BUSINESS.

The GRIN acknowledges the work already undertaken and seeks to enhance and utilise existing organisations and their information, including Brand Geelong, Enterprise Geelong and Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine.



*“The most important benefit of population size and growth is the increase it brings to the stock of useful knowledge. Minds matter economically as much as, or more than, hands or mouths.” 2
Julian Simon, Professor of business administration, University of Maryland and Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute*

The Geelong region’s rapid metropolitan integration and high growth expectations, position it to become a significant driver of productivity and anchor for economic growth within the Victorian economy. Many major cities and regions across the globe actively engage with their local community to promote their unique position. All resources and functions available to assist Geelong to flourish as a national and international city should be explored.

Business “ambassador-type” programs are a tool developed and used by innovative cities and regions which recognise that economic prosperity is driven by the whole community. A comprehensive literature review conducted points to successful examples of programs including Alberta (Canada), Phoenix, Arizona, Utah (USA) and Kent (UK), many with over 1,000 participants operating across various models from community engagement to global representation.

Geelong also has a wealth of information, data and some images however they are located in various disparate locations and images are often not available for business or external use or appropriate sizes etc. By centralising and cataloguing resources available and identifying gaps a toolkit would provide regional representatives with the ability and ease to promote the Geelong region.

Geelong also has many successful businesses, government and social enterprises that trade and operate internationally as well as nationally. It is important for the economic prosperity of the Geelong region to encourage other businesses to explore national and international possibilities as well as attract further economic opportunities to the Geelong region. It is therefore proposed that a business case for the development of a ‘Network’ of regional leaders in international and national business be developed to support further development of the toolkit and to promote business opportunities for and in Geelong.

Competition

While there are several websites that promote various components of the Geelong region, there is no ‘one-stop-shop’ for interested parties to readily access and utilise information, images and figures for use in presenting Geelong to international or national audiences. The

GRIN does not appear to have any competitors in this sphere. The position taken is to promote the existing bodies; e.g. Brand Geelong, Enterprise Geelong and Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine and create mechanisms that facilitate the access and use of the information already in existence as well as provide a platform for other Network members to share their material.

Marketing

The establishment of the pilot GRIN network should be a platform for promoting the GRIN to the wider Geelong community. It was planned that having members from diverse industries will assist the formation of the GRIN platform to meet the needs of the Geelong community.

The Project

The objectives of GRIN were to:

1. Explore the need for a **network**, determine how Geelong is currently promoted on the national and international stage. Test the appetite for the pilot members to become part of a network. Explore the methods for exchanging information that would appeal to potential GRINners.
2. Recruit participants to become inaugural members of GRIN; i.e. to become 'GRINners'
3. Explore the need for a **Toolkit**, determine what exists and its accessibility
4. Develop a **Business Case** to secure funding, the funding to be sufficient to employ a person to promote GRIN, create customizable presentations, add links to the GRIN Toolkit as new material becomes available, and facilitate interactions between GRINners.
5. Determine the appropriate "home" for GRIN post the LfG project.

3 discreet deliverables:

1. **Toolkit**, the toolkit will be a webpage that is a launching page enabling users to readily access, pictures, statistics, videos and generic presentations that can be readily tailored for use on the national or international stage.
2. **Pilot Network** of approximately seven members to inform, utilise and evaluate an online toolkit for the Geelong community to access in order to advocate and promote the Geelong region, recruit these network members to be GRINners and promote the network to the wider Geelong community.
3. **Business Plan** for a network of Geelong representatives from a variety of sectors who would share advice, knowledge and advocacy on national and international

business for the Geelong region. This will include a clear and concise role statement for the regional Network pilot participants and defined model for delivery of the model.

Toolkit

The toolkit is to be a platform that enables users to readily access media and statistics. It should also provide template presentations that can easily be modified and tailored to suit various situations.

It is envisioned that the toolkit would be of use to members of the business community who travel and are frequently required to give a presentation. The Toolkit should provide information that can easily be incorporated in a business presentation. The information gained from the Toolkit must be current and relevant. Photos suitable for electronic media must form part of the Toolkit. It is also thought that travelling sporting or school groups would benefit from the use of the toolkit and network knowledge and experience.

There is already a large amount of information in existence, including images, videos, statistics, information of housing, cost of living, as well as tourist information. However, this information is located on a multiple number of different websites. Many of the people interviewed expressed frustration in being able to locate relevant information and utilise readily accessible and downloadable images and figures.

It is vital that the Toolkit provides information that presents Geelong as a vibrant and energetic city to live, work, visit and do business.

To access the pilot Toolkit, go to: <http://grin.site/>

Network

A considerable number of Geelong and regional residents travel for work, study and recreation. The GRIN project team have identified that these people are well placed to act as ambassadors to promote Geelong as a vibrant city ideally placed close to Australia's second largest city (Melbourne) and a major national tourist attraction (The Great Ocean Road).

There are several other such networks already operating in other parts of the world, these include the British Business Network, Defence South Australia and Kent Ambassadors. The network should provide the opportunity for members to easily share information, material and experiences. It may also be a forum where members more experienced in national and international business can act as mentors or advisers to new operators or those wanting to set up business in Geelong.

Methodology

Logo

It was agreed that an acronym would give the network an easy to recognise identity. Several names and acronyms were tested. The name GRIN was agreed on, with network members to be known as GRINners. Paul Kelly Creative was commissioned to design a logo. The logo was required to feature an iconic image of Geelong. Two versions of the logo were supplied.



The GRIN logo, developed by Paul Kelly Creative

Literature Review

A review of available literature and digital material was conducted. The literature search found that there was a proliferation of material available. The material ranged from tourist information, economic data, statistics, demographic information, housing availability, and liveability.

The information was scattered across a number of websites, hard copy publications and the Australia Bureau of Statistics.

Research showed that the information was segmented and not easy to find. The need for a launching place for relevant material was identified.

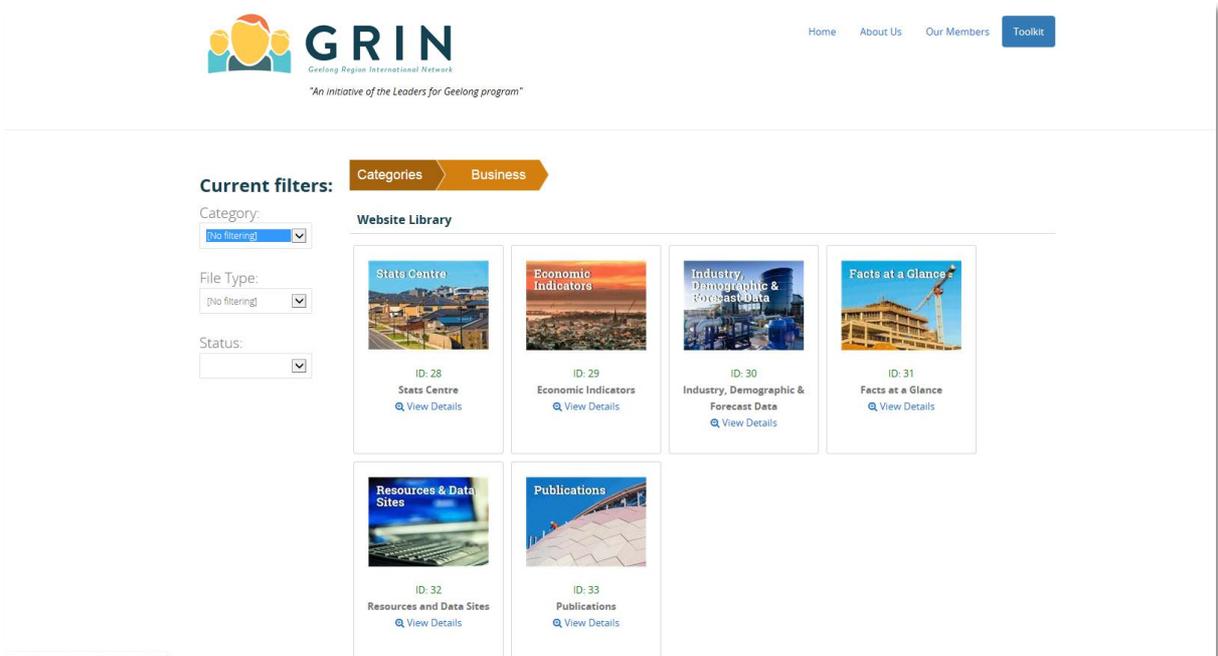
Toolkit

The GRIN project group determined that member Alan Shurey had the necessary technical skills to develop the online platform for the Toolkit (website) while other project members provided links to relevant material.

The GRIN project group also agreed that the Toolkit must contain several ways to search for information. There Toolkit must provide links to relevant statistics and information, there should be a selection of images that reflect not just the scenic views of Geelong but images that promote a vibrant and exciting city.

Website development included:

- Agreement on branding
- Agreement on material provided
- Agreement on search categories
- Source information and collateral for the Toolkit



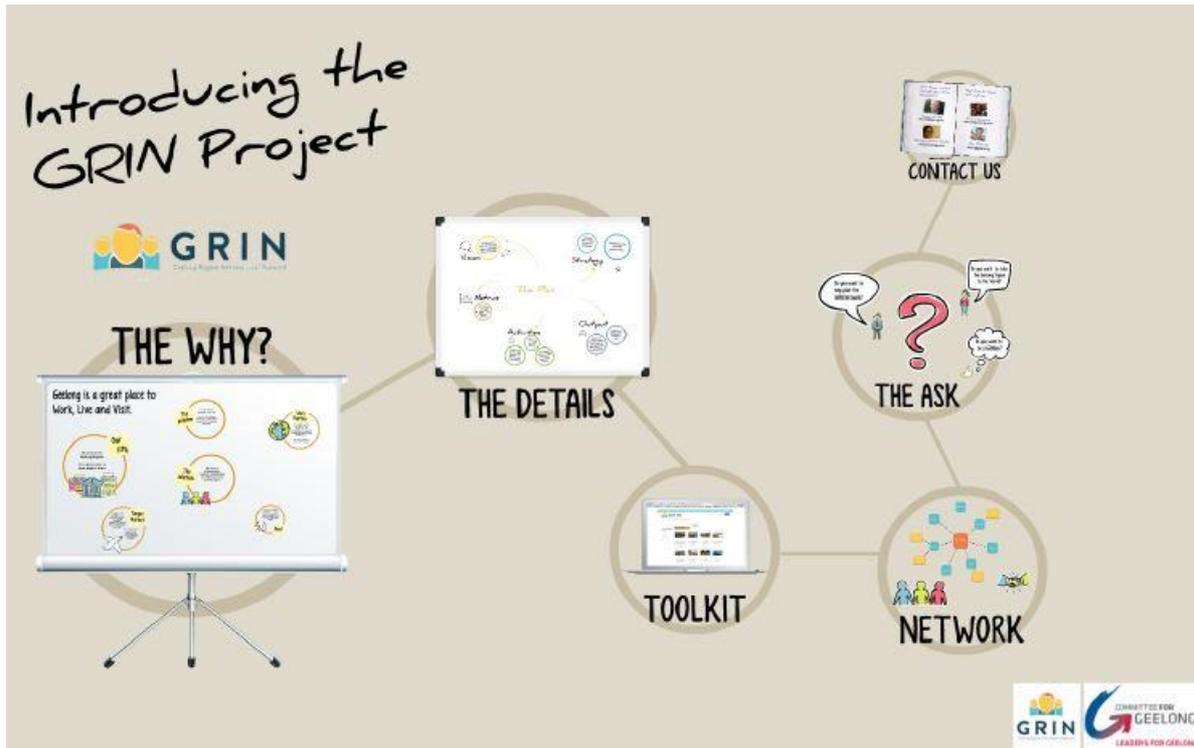
The Toolkit, developed by Alan Shurey

Pitch

The GRIN project group developed a “Pitch” to present to potential pilot members. The program ‘Prezi’ was the most effective way to present the GRIN project to potential network members.

A logic tightening session was carried out to test and improve the presentation and develop metrics to test the effectiveness of the Toolkit.

See Appendix A, “The GRIN Prezi”



The GRIN Prezi

Network

The project will encompass the geographic region of G21 and encompasses the breadth and depth of sectors in the Geelong region. The GRIN project team agreed on a number of Geelong Region influential people that represented diverse industries and communities to approach to be GRIN pilot members.

Prior to presenting the GRIN pitch to potential network members a presentation was made to Clive Pugh, GRIN sponsor.

The project team utilised an advisory team role to refine the project direction and seek advice at different stages of the project. The team also met with Regional Development Victoria representatives for further clarification and advice and to test the interest for project funding. The Business Case was developed and will be submitted to Regional Development Victoria in the anticipation of further funding to develop the GRIN.

Meetings were also held with Brand Geelong, Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine and Enterprise Geelong to explore working together and utilising the existing and extensive experience.

The project team were also cognisant to discuss a handover of the project to a supportive organisation and therefore conducted discussions accordingly.

Key Findings

All potential pilot GRIN members were asked the same questions to gauge interest and viability of GRIN. The responses are mapped below. The data and discussions confirmed the need for a Toolkit and also genuine interest in being part of the GRIN.



The Network – GRIN

The project group determined the characteristics that would define a GRINner. It was decided to target CEOs, business owners, and people with a high public presence in the Geelong region. It was felt that the inaugural members of GRIN needed to have a high public profile to increase the likelihood of attracting other high profile members.

The GRIN project team presented a pitch of GRIN to the following:

- Clive Pugh, Chief Executive Officer, Winchester Australia
- Rebecca Casson, Chief Executive Officer, Committee for Geelong
- Kerrie Erler, Regional Manager, Regional Development Victoria

- Christine Silvestroni, Project Manager, Stakeholder Engagement, Government Relations, Business Events, Enterprise Geelong,
- Rosemary White, Program Development Manager, Committee for Geelong
- Roger Grant, Executive Director, Tourism Greater Geelong

All business representatives interviewed expressed a willingness to promote Geelong on the national or international stage, providing the information was easy to find and use.

The Inaugural GRINers are:



Recommendations

The GRIN project team recommends further development opportunities be pursued, including:

- further high profile and diverse business members and identities to be recruited to raise the profile of GRIN, the recruitment of high profile GRINners puts the network in the strongest position to proceed.
- the development of a blog or email newsletter to facilitate the sharing of information.
- the development of template presentations, with a range of focuses including, liveability, housing, business in Geelong.
- the development of a clear set of metrics to determine the efficacy of the Network and the ease of use of the Toolkit.
- the design and distribution of a “token” of membership, ideally this would be some form of collateral featuring the GRIN logo. The benefits of collateral include:
 - An image that readily identifies GRINners,
 - A conversation starter.

Other potential GRINners were identified but were unable to be interviewed in the timeframe. These include Damien Amour, Epworth Hospital, Justin Giddings, Avalon Airport, Louise Glanville, National Disability Insurance Agency and Arthur Reed Photos.

Exit Strategy

During all interviews with potential GRINners the “home” for GRIN at the end of the LfG project was discussed. This also included a discussion with organisations which linked well with the GRIN, such as Brand Geelong, Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine and Enterprise Geelong.

Although the ultimate home of the GRIN project has not been determined, the project team will work with suitable organisations as well as Regional Development Victoria to develop a handover.

References

1. Action learning projects handbook
2. Simon, Julian. The Ultimate Resource 2. (1996)



Appendix

Introducing the GRIN Project



THE WHY?



THE DETAILS



CONTACT US



THE ASK



TOOLKIT



NETWORK

Project Logic & Success Indicators

	PROJECT SUMMARY	INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
Goal	The whole world is aware that the Geelong Region is a great place to live, work and visit.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of new business opening 2. Positive media/news stories 3. Increase in visitor numbers 4. Housing growth 5. Population growth 6. Jobs growth 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enterprise Geelong? 2. Google News 3. Tourism Greater Geelong & The Bellarine 4. ABS data 5. ABS data 6. ABS data 	Data is collected for these metrics at a time interval appropriate to reporting requirements
Strategy	1. Leverage the whole community to promote the Geelong Region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network members promote Geelong • Positive social media presence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRIN survey • Google Analytics 	Community has an interest in seeing the region grow and develop.
	2. Make positive material available to the community to maximize every opportunity to promote the Geelong Region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in toolkit use • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRIN website statistics 	Community members are aware that the toolkit is available
Output	1. Network of Geelong representatives from a variety of sectors who would share advice, knowledge and advocacy for the Geelong region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRIN member records • GRIN survey • 	Geelong GRINers and community members are passionate about promoting Geelong.
	2. An online toolkit for the Geelong Region community to access in order to advocate and promote the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toolkit launched/online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch date • GRIN website statistics 	Content on the toolkit is relevant and useful to community leaders.
Activities	1. Develop a project plan to describe the pilot project to be managed by the LfG project team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project plan developed • Project plan approved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes 	Project planning will create successful outcomes.

	PROJECT SUMMARY	INDICATORS	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	2. Establish a pilot network of GRINners. Pitch the concept and seek their interest in becoming champions of the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations to potential pilot members • Interest in network membership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of meetings • GRIN survey 	Community leaders will see the benefits for and responsibilities on them to champion the region.
	3. Create an pilot toolkit of tools, contacts and information for Geelong GRINers and the broader community use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot website • Catalogue of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRIN website statistics • GRIN survey 	GRINers and the broader community want online tools, contacts and information.
	4. Develop a Business Case to attract investment and funding for sustainable ongoing management of the GRIN program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business case approved • Submitted to potential investors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes • Grant submission confirmation 	Regional Development Victoria and other investors/volunteers will see the benefits of the program and provide funding/support.