

## NSW BRANCH WEBINAR

**Dr Kim Houghton, Chief Economist at Regional Australia Institute  
and**

**Katie Basset, Senior Researcher at Regional Australia Institute**

### **Labour and skills are constraining regional economic growth**

Australia's regions rebounded quickly from the 2020 COVID restrictions, and have seen high rates of growth in economic output and jobs. Good growing conditions in most of Australia's rural areas through 2020 and 2021 are leading to high levels of confidence and consequential high levels of demand for workers - increasingly skilled workers. But job vacancy growth is outstripping employment in signs of a very tight regional labour market, with regional employers competing against each other for scarce workers. Labour shortages are emerging as a constraint on regional economic growth, exacerbated by current housing shortages. Skills gaps are also emerging, as the agriculture industry joins many others in seeing its labour force becoming more highly skilled and qualified. The seminar will explore options for lifting the skills base of the regional labour force, and facilitating the movement of skilled workers into Australia's regions.

*Founded in 2011, the RAI is Australia's only independent think tank solely focused on better outcomes for Regional Australia. Our evidence-based research and community engagement enables us to develop strong policy outcomes to transform Australia's future.*

*Kim manages the RAI's policy and research portfolio to ensure the Institute's work has practical application and supports a better policy environment and more vibrant regional economies. Having worked on regional economic development in Australia for almost 20 years, Kim has a passion for engaging, motivating, informing and connecting regional leaders.*

*Katie is a Senior Researcher at the RAI and is passionate about supporting the economic and psychosocial wellbeing of rural and remote communities. She recently joined the Institute from KPMG, and has previously worked in various policy and project roles for local, state and federal governments.*

**Wednesday 25 Aug 2021**

**Zoom Webinar: 12:00pm - 1:00pm**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_O2g8aG9dS\\_uAU5aWP58-hg](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_O2g8aG9dS_uAU5aWP58-hg)

**Please register in advance for this webinar. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.**

**This is a free event and non-members are encouraged to partake.**

If you have any queries, please email [AARES.nsw@gmail.com](mailto:AARES.nsw@gmail.com)