

Media Release

THE VOICE OF INBOUND TOURISM



13 June, 2012

TOURISM BUSINESSES TO BENEFIT FROM ATEC CHINA PROGRAM

Australian tourism businesses will now have access to the most comprehensive, up-to-date and insightful information on the Chinese market with the announcement of the Strategic Tourism Investment Grant (STIG) funding for a consortium, including ATEC, to deliver a **National China Ready** program.

The program will be led by two strong commercial partners, learning and development specialist AVANA, **and China Ready & Accredited**, along with TAFE NSW-Western Sydney Institute.

AVANA has over a decade of experience delivering training to the tourism sector **and China Ready & Accredited will provide the all-important link with China** while ATEC will lend its strong connection to Australia's inbound tourism businesses.

This Australia **National China Ready** certification program **will link in with the Global China Ready & Accredited Program**, ensuring that Australian businesses are at the forefront globally in welcoming Chinese visitors to Australia.

"China is our leading opportunity for the future growth of Australia's tourism industry and our businesses need to gear up to take full advantage of what is estimated to be 900,000 Chinese visitors a year by 2020," ATEC's Managing Director, Felicia Mariani said.

"This program will deliver genuine enhancements to the capacity of Australian tourism businesses, giving them the cultural understanding, insights and on-the-ground knowledge they need to be truly 'China ready'.

"ATEC is pleased to be partnering with organisations that have a strong and proven record in delivering accredited and highly regarded training programs that help businesses to better understand their customer needs, particularly in the China market."

Ms Mariani said one aim of the program was to build a workforce of the future through training that will enable the industry's labour force to meet the service and experience expectations of the Chinese visitor.

"As a provider of consumer training and workforce planning, this is the first time I have seen such a worthwhile joint initiative between governments, industry groups such as ATEC, **experts such as China Ready & Accredited** and the private sector," AVANA CEO, Mark Hutchinson said.

"Our strong connections to China commenced in 2008, running several tourism cultural exchange programs with the Australia China Council (ACC) and our current **China Ready** program that is being delivered to the ecotourism sector.

"With this experience and our history as a tourism operator, we will deliver a relevant and practical training program accessible to the whole Australian market."

Drawing on the strengths of the partner organisations, the **National China Ready** program will offer tourism businesses cutting edge insights into the trends, demands and needs of the Chinese market. **Partner organisation China Ready & Accredited will provide educators with a better understanding of the levels of quality and services expected by Chinese visitors.**

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“Unfortunately there are many programs professing to deliver China readiness to tourism businesses here in Australia, but they offer information which is either outdated or simply incorrect,” Global Executive Chairman of *China Ready & Accredited*, Garry Crockett said.

“The new China is a very different marketplace to the old China and it is critical that tourism businesses are getting up to the minute and well sourced information.

“*China Ready & Accredited* provides access to a range of experts and industry leaders who are working on the ground in both China and Australia, and can provide that contemporary insight.

“Their knowledge and understanding of the Chinese traveller is second to none – it’s their business and they are the best equipped people to open the door on the China market for Australia’s tourism businesses.”

The consortium has been awarded \$600,000 by the Federal Government, which will be matched by the commercial partners, to deliver the program over the next 3 years. The planned roll out of the program will begin early in the new financial year.

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