

Think Tank Barossa: Moving from “or” to “and”



Summary

The findings and conversations from the Barossa: ‘The Business’ Think Tank (Think Tank) have been captured and considered using two frameworks for measuring sustainable development: The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which provide ways to think about how we can create a more inclusive, equitable, prosperous, and sustainable future. and the Regional Institute of Australia 10 themes of competitiveness (RAI Themes). Using these frameworks together provide a rigorous analysis of community priorities and values in the context of competitive and sustainable development into the future. Using the combined framework also provides a lens for understanding impact of the different initiatives in a balanced and responsive development approach for the Barossa, defining the region's ambition to 2030.

1. Background

Day 1	Toward an Innovative Barossa Facilitator: Prof Laura Lee 26 September 2:30 – 6:30 pm
Day 2	Barossa the Business: How do we get there? Facilitator: Claire Parkinson 27 September 8:30 – 12:30 pm
Location	The Cellar, The Chateau Building, Beckwith Park, Tanunda Road, Nuriootpa.

Attendees approx. 160 attendees on each day comprising a mix of wine, tourism, food, arts, education, health and local community as well as local and state Government and Universities.

There were sections of the community with only small representation for example: young people, CALD/ migrant communities, older adults, disadvantaged and indigenous communities.

The Think Tank, co-hosted by Barossa Grape Wine Association, Tourism Barossa, Barossa Food, ArtMusicDesign Barossa, Light Regional Council and the Barossa Council and designed and co-ordinated by RDA, was held over two half-days and the sessions were quite self-contained.

Day one discussion focussed on future aspirations, the nature of industry and community ecosystems, the importance of connectedness and design thinking. The facilitated table discussions captured collective vision and priorities and directed attention on the individual and their part to play, specific challenges the regions is currently facing and will face, as well as visionary thinking for a future Barossa. This challenged thinking set the scene for day two; 'how can we deliver on this ambition?'

Outcomes of the Think Tank included:

- A renewed sense of common purpose in the region, a belief we are all in this together, some input into specific comments in the Barossa Ecosystem Priorities.
- At the end participants have contributed to future planning, have a clearer idea of what they want the future to look like for industry and community, and a commitment to the effort to get there;
- A better common understanding of the value in delivering the regional promise in all things and readiness to embrace a common goal and means to get there.
- A chance to contribute to how it is to happen and for people in the room to commit to joint action on the priorities.

2. Regional Institute of Australia 10 themes of competitiveness

The RAI themes use 71 indicators in 10 themes to provide a snapshot of the competitive position of regions. This helps reveal strengths and weaknesses so that each region can reach its full potential.



Economic Fundamentals include measures of the size and relative activity level in the economy. Solid economic fundamentals support local businesses and workers and indicate a region is successfully translating economic potential into activity and growth. **Barossa/Light Ranking 5**



Labour Market Efficiency measures how well a region engages its people within the economy. Efficiency suggests a strong matching of workforce size and skills to the needs of local firms. Maintaining efficiency over time suggests adaptability of workforce size and skills to changing needs. **Barossa/Light Ranking 4.**



Business Sophistication focusses on business mix and strength. A region with a more diverse business community, profitable small businesses and good local access to financial expertise and facilitators of exports, imports and wholesale trade is best positioned to compete in Australia's economy. **Barossa/Light ranking 5.5**



Human Capital reflects the definition of human capital as the skills and capacities that reside in people and put to productive use. **Barossa/Light Ranking 3**



Infrastructure and Essential Services facilitate economic activity. A region that is well connected to external markets and has good access to essential services best enables businesses to compete in the wider economy and the facilitation of new investment. **Barossa/Light ranking 4**



Institutional Foundations looks at a regions ability to mobilise local resources. Regions that can achieve this are more likely to be successful than those who submit to the influence of external forces. Formal institutions (such as local government or a major organisation such as a university) and informal institutions (such as local industry or community networks) are important for development as both can work to mobilise resources within and beyond a region. This ranking may be reflect absence of government offices, which is arguably not indicative of institutional weakness. It does serve to remind us that links with formal institutions and strong local informal institutions are important and should be nurtured. **Barossa/Light Ranking 7.5**



Innovation highlights the growth of vibrant and dynamic entrepreneurial communities in regional Australia and areas where conditions are ripe for innovation. The Innovation index contrasts traditional measures of innovation that focus on Research and Development (R&D) and Science, with Business Dynamo which measures the commercial innovation environment in each region. This ranking has improved in recent years and is a strong positive sign for resilience and economic growth. **Barossa/Light Ranking 2.5**



Technological Readiness is an important facilitator of internal regional growth. The physical location of a person or a product for access to technology is increasingly less important in the Australian and international business environment than it used to be. To compete, we must be connected. **Barossa/Light Ranking 4.**



Demography describes the size, change, composition and distribution and a region's population. While demography mix requires long term strategies to change, wider demographic trends (such as an ageing population) and national trends shape a region's competitive position. Demography underpins competitiveness is something that everyone must work with to achieve balance. We look for strategies to attract a balanced, innovative and capable demography. **Barossa/Light Ranking 5.5.**



Natural Resources considers the nature of a region's physical endowments, regarding both the access to natural resources and the physical attributes of the region, are hugely influential in many regions' current economies and future opportunities. In this indicator, largely but not solely a factor of geography, there is a gap between Barossa and Light. Ranking is **Barossa 5. Light 7.**

3. Sustainable Development Goals



4. Think Tank

The facilitated table discussions were divided into three parts:

- **Rock-** Impact, Co-Design, Collaborators and We + Global Change
- **Roll** – Who will I be, What will I do? and Where will I do it?
- **Rise-** Voice, Virtues, Values and Vision

The following provides a summary of the facilitated table discussions using the SDG's and RAI frameworks to capture the key themes.

4.1 Vision and ambition

A clear vision for the overall development of Barossa was found through exploring the themes presented by participants who were asked to explore their individual aspirations for themselves, their broader community and Barossa in a global context.

Barossa will be led by strong, vibrant, radical and diverse leaders in business and community who are focussed on sustainable production, growth and development – across all facets of life in Barossa. We will strive to support a strong local and globally competitive economy which values security and sustainable access to natural resources and is aware of the pressures climate change bring to our industry sectors particularly in wine and agriculture.

The vision for Barossa is that of a world class destination for food, wine and cultural experiences, delivering iconic product to the world and ranking in the Top 3 destinations of choice for global travellers.

As a community, the vision is to become a thriving, inclusive and caring community – where none are left behind – with a clear focus on sustainability. The connection between people and place is paramount to the Barossa identity, belonging and place attachment, which are foundations to drive community philanthropy, resilience to change and collaboration.

4.2 Natural resource use



Natural resource use, protection and preservation were consistently raised throughout all rounds of discussion at the Think Tank. Participants presented views on enhancing character preservation and highlighted concerns with current resource consumption.

Participants identified the need to continue to identify and implement improvements in agricultural and viticultural practices across the Barossa to ensure sustainability of these industries, the landscape and resources required. . Many participants reflected that a changing climate poses a significant risk to agriculture and viticulture in Barossa.

Water was highlighted as a key concern, in terms of equitable access, affordability, quality and security of supply. Looking beyond local expertise for advice and support was a key theme for addressing water.

Partnerships with research and development, government at all levels and combined, community effort by producers and users of resources were identified as pathways to help build sustainability across the region .

There was also a desire to tackle the balance of the growth of towns and the tension it presents with agricultural needs.

Several participants were concerned about food security in the future, linking the changing climate and food scarcity. Access to affordable and reliable energy was also raised as a concern.

4.3 Business Competitiveness



Business competitiveness was raised as an issue, reflecting on the current sophistication of businesses locally and the competitive domestic and global market, particularly with regard to enhanced visitor experiences and a strong and vibrant tourist offering.

Tourism and the strength of Barossa as a tourism destination which offers a broad range of experiences to a wide audience was a key point of feedback for participants. It is imperative to continue to innovate and develop unique tourism products and experiences driving visitation to the region as a key economic driver.

Looking to the future, participants highlighted that better business development support and initiatives would help to ensure local businesses keep step with global trends. There was a consistent theme that the Barossa can not solely rely on wine and tourism and there is a need for complimentary industry diversification. Innovative practices and the opportunity to engage with world leading technology narratives was highlighted as an opportunity to support business growth into the future.

Skills and education were raised as key drivers to secure business sophistication ongoing – Barossa needs to retain and attract the best and brightest to ensure business thrives. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The theme of looking

outward for advice, seeking expert opinion and advice on futureproofing business locally to be competitive globally was strong.

4.4 Economic Fundamentals



It was recognised by participants that stronger collaboration and partnerships with financial institutions, a stronger presence of economic players in the region such as investors and better access to finance would increase growth locally. Participants acknowledged that in order to grow in a sustainable way, investment and clear financial planning was necessary at all levels, as well as access to guidance to do this. There was a strong desire to see growth, with a caveat from most that it must be achieved in a sustainable manner and not at the exclusion of the virtues and values of community.

4.5 Labour Market Efficiency & Human Capital



The desire to see people attracted to work or retained for meaningful and good jobs locally was reflected strongly across Think Tank responses. Participants flagged lack of access to university and higher education, a lack of diversity and innovation in business which was preventing this. While there is a strong presence of schooling options for primary and secondary, higher education was not seen as a strength in region. Addressing this would assist in ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

4.6 Demography



Participants recognised the importance of creating a diverse community and encouraging youth to play a role in the future planning of the region. It was also noted that youth, broadly, were underrepresented at the Think Tank. However, the youth voice should be considered. The challenge is perhaps in bringing that voice to the table.

Participants noted a desire to encourage greater diversity in the region and reflected on opportunities to acknowledge first nations in our cultural stories but also in creating an environment for active participation by first nations people. Immigration was raised as an opportunity to broaden the diversity of local residents and encourage a greater mix of skills, experiences and values to be present in region. Cross-generational representation and collaboration on formal and informal committees which drive future planning was highlighted as an opportunity.

4.7 Human Capital



Closely linked to demography, human capital was raised as a concern and opportunity by many participants. Ensuring strong workforce for the future was a primary concern for many, which led into a broader exploration of access to education and opportunities locally.

For a strong and vibrant community there is a need to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. There is concern in the region of the growing divide between the 'haves and the have nots' and the concerns of the number of community members suffering mental illness in silence and isolation. Issues were also raised of homelessness and addiction.

Attracting a diverse workforce and providing opportunities for youth locally were both flagged as key drivers of future industry in Barossa. Ensuring succession plans are in place for an ageing workforce, which includes skilling for the future were highlighted in feedback from many participants. Lack of higher education facilities in region was of particular concern for several.

Opportunities for development included linking people to services and training opportunities, build capability of others, bridge generational gap and skills knowledge transfer, teach, motivate & lead others to help others and offer avenues for this, fund mentor & encourage the next generation, train team members and encourage/develop, prosperous locals, recognise & link diversity & opportunities, engage young Barossa to do viticulture, develop food production training programs, seek & interpret knowledge from external sources and experts.

4.8 Infrastructure and Essential Services



Access to infrastructure and essential services was highlighted by participants with many sharing the concerns with lack of public transport both within and beyond the region as a key issue affecting business – supply chain logistics – and health and wellbeing of residents. Several flagged that they had a role to play within the region to support & deliver infrastructure, deliver appropriate responses regarding reuse of water, support and encourage waste reduction. Transport infrastructure improvement was seen as necessary to better support tourism and grow the tourism offering.

4.9 Institutional Foundations



Many Think Tank participants highlighted opportunity to work more collaboratively across formal and informal institutions, including the peak bodies (BGWA, Tourism Barossa) and more informal organisations such as service groups. A distinct theme of siloed activity was reflected in the commentary, with many highlighting the need for a more cohesive approach – one brand, one direction, one future, one Barossa.

The social elements of strengthening community cohesiveness were also explored with many wanting to see genuine social connection to create a happier healthier community & people, increased community cohesiveness/engagement, build grateful communities with a sense of community pride.

A Barossa combined approach to lead future activities and the opportunity to hold more regular community forums was explored by many and flagged as an opportunity to engage more fully as a community in forming a cohesive future direction.

The broad range of stakeholders identified as key collaborators included;

- Government – council (town planners), state & federal
- Organisations – RDA, BGWA, NRM, SATC, Tourism Australia
- Financial – investors, major banks, philanthropists
- Education – schools, TAFE, universities, education department
- Industry & Business – business leaders/mentors, food industry, employers, wineries, tourism, workplaces, health care & wellbeing providers, energy providers, housing industry
- Community – farmers, local community, individuals, community groups, clubs & associations, regional town leaders, irrigators, local ag groups, social enterprise
- Researchers, academics, engineers, scientists, international leaders, brand ambassadors, architects

4.10 Innovation & Technological Readiness



Think Tank participants reflected on the opportunities innovation brings to the region both for business and for the community. Lack of university and strong higher education presence in region was highlighted as a barrier to R&D mechanisms and engaging in innovation. Some participants flagged the opportunity of benchmark planning, innovation and participation, with other wine regions for performance tracking. Innovation and development were also linked to our response as a region to climate change, and the need to address water scarcity across the region – with R&D providing an opportunity to address this concern. Innovation and technological readiness are seen to be key drivers for future development and growth regionally and engaging with external experts in this theme was reflected in feedback.

5. How do we get there?

Pathway to Success

- Barossa as a symphonic community
- Singular, identifiable, unifying Barossa boundary
- One brand / voice / formation
- Integrated system of checks & balances across all sectors
- A single road to bring everyone together and commit to one Barossa
- Happy index – liveability
- Global benchmark for collaborative success
- Common success goals/strategies
- Build empowered formation
- Give back more than take
- Clarity on intentions
- Collaboration / engagement
- Leadership
- Values
- Protect, enhance & grow Brand Barossa
- Research
- Big thinking on a global stage
- Licence of Barossa Brand

The 'vehicle' to take us there

- Restructure / start-again
- One diverse & balanced 'formation' that acts & thinks like a business
- Independent Chair
- Power to act
- One levy
- Resilient Barossa Alliance / Inc.
- Formation considers all pillars of our region
- Driven equally by social good and commercial outcomes
- Energetic & quick implementation
- Informed / educated to remain relevant
- Investors in next generation
- Hub / island of excellence
- Barossa narrative strengthened
- Skills based not a representative formation
- Non-partisan coalition
- Single group that's globally connected

Skill mix of new 'formation'

- Leadership
- Inspirational
- Planning
- Visionary
- Disrupter
- Courageous / decisive
- Humanity / social conscience
- Agile
- Diverse / multi-generational
- Narrator
- Open / independent
- Change leader
- Communicator
- Customer centricity
- Engaging
- Strategic
- Innovative
- Global experience
- Professional
- Governance
- Negotiator / conflict resolution
- Educators / mentors
- Analyst
- Creative
- Lobbyist / political savvy
- Financial / economic growth
- Environmentally aware
- Political savvy

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