

# Media Release

**Mr Tim Pallas MP**

Treasurer

Minister for Economic Development

Minister for Industrial Relations



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## DRIVING INVESTMENT IN TECH STARTUPS TO GROW JOBS

The Andrews Labor Government is backing local startups to grow, with a new fund manager announced to help roll out a landmark scheme which will create thousands of jobs across the state.

Leading international fund manager Lighter Capital has been appointed as one of the two managers to deliver the *Venture Growth Fund* (VGF).

Announced as part of the *Victorian Budget 2020/21*, the \$25 million VGF will see the Labor Government co-investing with institutional investors to give high-growth, revenue-generating startups access to the capital they need to expand their businesses.

The Government will allocate \$10 million of capital to the *Lighter Capital Fund*, which will also include \$20 million from private investors as senior capital and \$1.6 million from Lighter Capital as equity capital.

The news of Lighter Capital's involvement in the VGF follows the appointment of OneVentures as a fund manager for the VGF in November.

The VGF is part of the Government's suite of initiatives to support growth opportunities for startups, including the \$2 billion *Breakthrough Victoria Fund*, the *Victorian Business Growth Fund*, the *Alice Anderson Fund* and the *Victorian Startup Capital Fund*.

The *Breakthrough Victoria Fund* recently announced support for a \$95 million biotech startup incubator in Parkville, providing access to industry expertise, academic and clinical facilities and capital to help great ideas become commercial success stories.

Victoria has a strong track record in transforming startups into high-growth firms and is home to 18 unicorns including Afterpay, Airwallex, Carsales.com, Culture Amp, Judo Bank, MYOB, REA Group, Redbubble and SEEK.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Economic Development Tim Pallas

*"We've seen how startups can rapidly grow from one or two people to employing hundreds of people – so supporting the growth of companies like these will help create jobs for Victorians."*

*"The Venture Growth Fund addresses a gap in the market where technology-focused startups are often considered too risky to finance."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford

*"Victoria's startup sector is on the rise – growing by \$3 billion to \$10.5 billion in the past year alone. This fund will support more startups to scale, accelerate the growth of the sector and create more exciting jobs for Victorians."*

### Quote attributable to Lighter Capital CEO Melissa Widner

*"Our mission is to help founders grow their companies on their terms and we look forward to helping startups succeed through this new fund."*