

Media Release

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



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HAMER SCHOLARSHIPS REVIVED TO GIVE REGIONAL KIDS AN EDGE

Victorian tertiary students will again have the chance to undertake six months' of supported immersive study in China through the revival of Victoria's Hamer Scholarship program – but this time, spots will be reserved for regional students.

Speaking in Beijing today to launch Victoria's China Strategy: For a New Golden Era, Premier Jacinta Allan said her regional vision for the long-standing scholarship program came from her own experiences as a country student.

For the program's revival, 20 new Hamer Regional Scholarships will be awarded to select students who are studying, living in or from regional Victoria – providing them \$10,000 to support their six months' study in China.

The revival of the program will be unveiled today alongside the release of Victoria's China Strategy, which specifically elevates regional Victoria as an equal player in the Victoria and China relationship – with the aim to spread the benefits of investment, skills and visitation across the whole state.

The program was named for Victorian Premier Rupert Hamer, who established Victoria's first sister-state relationship in China – with Jiangsu Province – 46 years ago. The Premier will travel to Jiangsu Province as part of her first visit to China as Premier this week.

In previous rounds of the Hamer Scholarships, courses were on offer in China, Indonesia, Japan or Korea. In 2016 – to mark Victoria's newly-minted sister-state status with China's Sichuan Province – courses were extended to Chengdu University. The program was paused after 2019 due to pandemic travel restrictions.

Hamer Scholars study at in-country universities for around six months to develop their Asian language skills, cultural competency, professional networks, and market knowledge – assisting businesses to build the people-to-people contacts and market insights needed for doing business with Asia.

Scholars have ranged from scientists and engineers to start-up founders, technicians and educators, and many have gone on to successful careers as company founders, export managers, consultants and teachers.

Guidelines and timelines for the Hamer Regional Scholarship Program will be released in due course.

Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"My top three priorities in China are clear: education, education, education. I'll bring home more opportunities for teachers and students in the Education State."

"Studying in Asia and immersing myself in a language was an opportunity that didn't feel within reach to us as country kids in the 90s, but it should now."

Quote attributable to Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs, Danny Pearson

"We'll give regional students a chance to experience something that will profoundly shape their lives – and over time, they'll help boost Victoria's standing as a globally-connected economy."

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