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Media release

Australia's most Innovative recognised

- **Armidale health service provider awarded Innovate with nbn 2023 Champion**

For regional and rural Australians, accessing health care services outside metropolitan and major regional centres can be challenging. It can lead to delayed treatment, higher hospitalisation rates, and long trips to access care.

Armidale health care service Observa Care is bridging this gap and has a mission to harness the power of digital health technologies to benefit those who live in our most remote communities.

Last night, for the development of their innovative Remote Patient Monitoring service model, Observa Care was the winner of the Health Category in the 2023 Innovate with **nbn** Grants Program awards, and overall champion.

Founders Rod and Deborah Martin found a desperate need for their service model during COVID-19 and developed wearable sensors to measure patients' vital signs and overall health status, and wireless technology to transmit that information to clinicians via cloud servers.

The wearable technologies they use measure heart rate, oxygen saturations, blood pressure, temperature, and cardiac output. All the data from these wearables is uploaded to a cloud-based dashboard, meaning clinicians can assess individuals' health status in real time.

Observa Care was among six winners announced last night in Sydney which included:

Education – Living Connected (Lake Conjola, NSW)

- Is a non-profit, community organisation providing free digital mentoring services to seniors using smart phones, tablets, laptops and more recently smart watches and TVs. They focus on what individuals want and need to do, not on technology.

Agriculture – Cured Compliance (Carters Ridge, QLD)

- Is developing an automatic Bluetooth data logger to monitor the cooking and cooling temperatures of all cooked/dried products by butchers. Their customers will be able to use this device to further automate and enhance their reporting for state regulators to ensure their products are cooked to the required Australian standards.

Arts – Mass Motion (Ballarat, VIC)

- Poco Film Fest is Regional Victoria's newest short film festival, created by Ballarat creative studio; Mass Motion. The inaugural event took place in Ballarat in July 2022, to a sold-out theatre audience. The vision of Poco Film Fest is to foster new and emerging talent and build a community for filmmakers and movie-goers to share, collaborate and inspire.

Tourism – Definium Technologies (Invermay, TAS)

- Is in the early stages of the design, development, and on-site testing of the Mountain Bike Emergency Call Device (MoBECaD) for the St Helens Mountain Bike Trails located on the East Coast of Tasmania. The

MoBECaD will provide a mechanism for riders to raise an alarm should they (or a fellow rider) be injured or require medical assistance while riding the trails.

Women In Regional Business – Motherland (Dunorlan, TAS)

- Motherland advocates for the emotional wellbeing of rural mothers in Australia and delivers services that help build resilience and improve mental health outcomes. They are ready to launch ‘Motherland Connect’, Australia’s first digital resource hub for rural mums, a one stop shop connecting rural women to the services they need to support their mental and physical health, along with services that can assist them in dealing with the additional complexities and pressures of life on the land.

Indigenous Business – Bawamarra (Lisarow, NSW)

- Bawamarra Consulting is a proud Indigenous-owned regional business which was launched July 2022. They are committed to mentoring vulnerable children and youth, fostering cultural education, and promoting digital awareness and safety within Indigenous communities. They want to develop a digital awareness and safety workshop which is targeted at vulnerable Indigenous children and youth. The workshop will also include teaching Indigenous culture, and life skills.

Run in partnership with the Regional Australia Institute (RAI), the Innovate with **nbn** Grants Program is part of **nbn**’s commitment to lift the digital capability of Australia. The RAI is a founding partner of the Innovate with **nbn** Grants Program.

Gavin Williams, nbn Chief Development Officer Regional and Remote, said:

“Each year the calibre of the ideas that are presented to us, some already developed, others needing added support, continues to improve. We’ve seen plenty of innovative ideas bursting out of the regions again this year.

“Our purpose is to lift the digital capability of Australia. All of the finalists and grant winners couldn’t do what they are doing without connectivity.

*“All of the 2023 Innovate with **nbn** Grants Program recipients are making real differences to the lives of those who live in their communities. It’s through their work we continue to see regional and remote Australia not only bridge the gap but thrive.”*

Liz Ritchie, Regional Australia Institute CEO, said:

“The finalists and winners of this year’s awards showcase and reward the diverse, creative and groundbreaking work that is happening right across regional Australia.

“These awards demonstrate with the right support and tools, regional entrepreneurs can compete on a national and even global stage.

“NBN Co and RAI have an enduring partnership based advancing our shared objective to empower regions to thrive. The Innovate program does exactly that, by celebrating what can be achieved when harnessing the power of connectivity and digital technology. “

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Notes to editors

- Grant winners are available for interview(s). Please contact James Kelly (details below) for contact details.
- On Thursday 23 November 2023 there was \$125,000 in grants awarded to innovative businesses in regional and remote Australia to help them bring their bright ideas to life.

- The winner of each category received a \$15,000 grant. Each of the category winners were automatically entered into a pool to become the overall winner (and Champion) and receive an additional \$20,000 grant.
- Grant winners were those decided to be harnessing the benefits of the **nbn** network to develop products or solutions that improve digital participation, productivity, or social outcomes for regional and remote Australians.
- Grant recipients submitted entries into seven categories that included: Health, Agriculture, Tourism, Arts, Education, Indigenous Business, and Women in Business.

Media inquiries

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