

# Media Release

**The Hon Ros Spence MP**  
Minister for Agriculture  
Minister for Community Sport  
Minister for Carers and Volunteers



Friday, 25 October 2024

## CALLING ON STARTUPS TO SOLVE FARM SAFETY CHALLENGES

The Allan Labor Government is calling on startups to help solve farm safety and productivity challenges as part of a new program that aims to harness innovation and the technological knowledge of Victoria's startup sector.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence today announced the CivVic Labs Farm Safety challenge – a bootcamp experience connecting aspiring and early stage startup founders with government to solve public sector challenges.

This challenge is part of Victoria's AgTech Regional Innovation Network (AgRIN) and will run over six weeks.

Participating start ups will learn new startup skills, grow their connections and develop their business idea with government, supported by \$15,000 equity-free funding. At the end of the experience, they'll pitch for a chance at a further \$35,000 to bring their startup ideas to life.

Farms make up 14 per cent of workplace fatalities in Victoria, despite employing only 2 percent of working Victorians. On average, 2 people are hospitalised by an incident on a Victorian farm every day.

Since 2018, CivVic Labs has been a launch pad for more than 50 local startups, as it provides a unique opportunity for founders to build their idea with a potential customer in the room. Alumni startups have raised nearly \$20 million in investment capital since the program's inception.

For more information about the CivVic Labs Farm Safety challenge and how to apply, visit [launchvic.org](https://launchvic.org)

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence**

*"Victorian startups play a crucial role in driving innovation, and through the CivVic Labs challenge, we're calling on their expertise to address farm safety and productivity challenges."*

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Economic Growth Tim Pallas**

*"This partnership between government and entrepreneurs will not only encourage more investment in the AgTech sector, but also lead to safer, smarter, and more productive farms."*

### **Quotes attributable to LaunchVic CEO Dr Kate Cornick**

*"CivVic Labs is a proven program for generating commercial ready startups."*

*"If you are an aspiring entrepreneur or an early-stage startup focused on farm safety, this is a unique opportunity to build and test your solution and join more than 3,500 startup ventures in the state pioneering new technology."*