



FOUNDERS FIRST



## MEDIA RELEASE

Embargoed: Thursday 16 July, 2020 at 7am

# NEW \$3 MILLION MASTERPLAN UNVEILED FOR KANGAROO ISLAND DISTILLERY

Founders First Ltd (FFL) has unveiled a \$3 million masterplan development for Kangaroo Island Distillery (KID) which will see it become a world-class distillery and a must-see tourism destination for Kangaroo Island from Spring 2021.

Home to the global award-winning Kangaroo Island Spirits (KIS), and located in Cygnet River, the new development will give people a unique and immersive experience that will attract increased tourism visitation to the island and drive growth in the domestic and international visitor economy. The project will create 20 jobs during construction and around 25 ongoing jobs for the region once completed.

The development will be completed in two stages, starting with the construction of a world-class distillery. A third still will be added to increase the production capacity for the domestic and export market of the award-winning gin, vodka, and the soon to be released single malt whisky, the first to be made on Kangaroo Island.

The new distillery will include a spirit tasting room and education space, which will overlook production and allow for captivating brand experiences like masterclasses, group tastings, and events. The existing cellar door will also be upgraded to focus on serving visitors KIS spirits and cocktails in the native botanical garden that is home to over 75 native species used in the making of the botanical driven gins including Native Juniper, Coastal Daisy Bush, Anise Myrtle, and Lemon Myrtle.

Founded by Jon and Sarah Lark, KIS is proudly one of Australia's most awarded gin brands and the first dedicated gin distillery in the country. In March this year, they were acquired by Founders First, industry leaders in supporting and growing independent craft brewery and distillery businesses.

Founders First CEO Mark Haysman said Kangaroo Island is internationally famous for its wilderness, wildlife, and world-class food and beverage industry. The development of KID will give visitors an immersive experience that will be truly something special and ensure we continue to meet strong local and global demand we are seeing for premium gin and spirit products.

"We are thrilled that Jon and Sarah will both continue as Chief Distillers and Brand Ambassadors, as they continue to innovate with new products - we are especially excited about the release of the island's first whisky made using local malt and aged in port barrels, it will be available on very limited release later in the year.

"We also have recently shipped over 120 cases of KIS Wild Gin and O'Gin to the emerging markets of Japan and Singapore and are looking to Europe where KIS O'Gin recently won the Contemporary Style Gin Trophy at the International Wine and Spirits Competition in London – the only Australian brand to do so in its 50-year history."

Jon Lark is looking forward to the new development, "It will add to the brand offering we have built over the past 15 years and will improve our ability to make our beautiful products, it will also enable us to welcome more visitors to experience our island hospitality."



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Sarah Lark continued, “This will enable us to offer more educational and interactive experiences, people will be able to have the opportunity to learn the art of gin making and creating cocktails from our KIS range in the new space.”

Kangaroo Island Tourism Food Wine and Beverage Association Chairman Pierre Gregor said this is great news for KI.

“It is a great initiative that value adds to the visitor experience, enhances the exposure of local produce and provides a multi-purpose facility which will be available for visitors and residents alike. It is reassuring to see this commitment to and investment in Kangaroo Island which will also lead to greater production, increased export capability, and employment outcomes.”

The second stage of the masterplan will introduce a commercial kitchen and potential plan for accomodation to cater for the overnight market.

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*(Renders are available [click here](#))*

### **ABOUT KIS**

Kangaroo Island Distillery was founded by Jon and Sarah Lark in 2004. KIS, one of Australia’s first gin distilleries was established in their humble shed on Kangaroo Island. Since then, they have built a reputation as one of Australia’s best gin distillers winning numerous awards including Best Contemporary Gin at the International Wine and Spirits Competition in London. In March 2020 Founders First acquired KID with Jon and Sarah Lark remaining at the helm of the business.

### **ABOUT FOUNDERS FIRST**

Founders First (FFL) is an ASX listed company that leads the industry in supporting and growing independent craft brewery and distillery businesses, backing talented makers with a big vision. Their focus is on allowing founders to play to their strengths while the FF team of industry experts supports by covering any gaps constraining growth and profitability.

Ultimately, Founders First backs founders to succeed... loves being part of the journey and collaborates to create a stronger craft community.