

A BETTER TRAINED WORKFORCE

BUDGET INVESTMENT IN SKILLS AND TRAINING

MAY 2023

EXTRACT

A modern, responsive vocational training sector.

The government is negotiating with the states and territories on a new 5-year National Skills Agreement to commence from 1 January 2024.

The government will also fund a further 300,000 TAFE and vocational education training places to become fee-free.

The new Agreement presents an opportunity to jointly set strategic priorities for our VET system, boost productivity, support gender equality and close the gap for First Nations Australians.

Sourced from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations website.

Jobs Australia has collated information from multiple sources on the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations website and chapters within the budget on investment in the training sector as a quick reference guide. It is not a complete guide, but rather a brief summary of some key points that will have an impact on Jobs Australia Members in the education and training sector.

SPEAKING IN PLAIN LANGUAGE - EDUCATION & TRAINING INVESTMENT IN FIGURES

- 300,000 new fee-free VET places from 1 July 2024
- \$72.4M for skilling early childhood workers
- 20,000 extra university places in 2023 and 2024
- National Skills Agreement - \$3.7B over 5 years from 1 July 2024
- \$72.4M for skilling early childhood workers
- Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) – improved delivery model from 1 January 2025 with existing funding
- \$8.6M over 4 years from 1 July 2024 to ensure one in 10 workers on major Australian Government-funded projects is an apprentice, trainee or paid cadet and will include sub-targets for women
- Targeted support for apprenticeships – \$54M over 5 years from 2022/23
- Organisations with appropriate expertise in supporting women in the workplace can apply for grant funding of \$5M over 3 years from 2024/25 to further support women in male dominated trade apprenticeships
- SEE and Foundation Skills for Your Future eligibility expanded to include those not registered as a jobseeker
- \$17.7M over 4 years from 2023/24 (and \$4.7M per year ongoing) in additional funding for the Higher Education Disability Support Program
- \$1.0M in 2023/24 to maintain the national microcredentials marketplace, which enables users to find and compare registered microcredentials courses offered by tertiary education Providers
- \$54.3M over 5 years from 2022/23 to introduce a new non-financial support model for Australian apprenticeships from 1 July 2024

FUTHER DETAIL

Skills for the clean energy economy

Jobs and Skills Australia will undertake a Clean Energy Capacity Study to evaluate workforce needs and enable Australia to strategically plan for the skills needed for the transformation to a clean energy economy.

A modern, responsive vocational training sector with TAFE at the heart

300,000 TAFE and vocational education training places to become fee-free.

A new 5-year National Skills Agreement commencing 1 January 2024. An opportunity to jointly set strategic priorities for our VET system, boost productivity, support gender equality and close the gap for First Nations Australians.

Targeted support for apprentices

A redesign of Australian Apprenticeship Support Services to improve apprenticeship career pathways and provide more support for completions. The model will assess the needs of every apprentice to support their success, help remove barriers for women in male-dominated trades and strengthen support for First Nations apprentices, apprentices with disability and those in remote areas.

Reinvigorating foundation skills programs

Expanding access to foundation skills training and supporting community-based and culturally safe pathways to training. More Australians will be able to develop the language, literacy, numeracy, and digital skills they need to participate successfully in work, education, and the community.

Tackling gender inequality in the apprenticeship system

The Guarantee will set national targets for apprentices plus specific targets for women apprentices and trainees on major government-funded construction and ICT projects. These targets will aim to double women in apprenticeship and traineeship roles in construction projects, and triple trade apprenticeships roles by 2030.

Delivering outcomes for First Nations students

- \$40.4M to improve school attendance, engagement and learning outcomes for students in Central Australian schools
- \$38.4M to pilot community-led and culturally appropriate distance learning models in remote locations
- \$21.6M will extend the Indigenous Boarding Providers grants program for one year

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE TRAINING SECTOR

Within the budget measures, there are nuggets for RTO's to develop to advantage.

- Providing additional training places for Pacific Australia Labour Mobility scheme workers in priority sectors for the Pacific and Timor-Leste and where there are job shortages in Australia
- Investment of \$9.3M, on top of \$328M previously announced for the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan. Designed to attract, train, and retain people in the teaching profession

Building a sustainable aged care system - A better future for older Australians and aged care workers

- \$166.8M to provide an additional 9,500 home care packages
- \$487M to extend, and make ongoing, the Disability Support for Older Australian Program.

Wages rise in the sector (an interim 15 per cent to Modern Award minimum wages) and increased home care packages will attract more workers and offer opportunity for further training places.

SOURCES

1. *Budget 2023-2024*
2. *Department of Employment and Workforce Relations Website - <https://www.dewr.gov.au/>*
3. *The Workforce Australia Virtual Forum 11/05/23 hosted by Nathan Smythe Deputy Secretary Employment and National Workforce.*

APPENDIX

FOR YOUR INTEREST

SUMMARY OF THE WORKFORCE AUSTRALIA VIRTUAL FORUM AND IMPLICATIONS

The Workforce Australia Virtual Forum held on 11 May 2023, served as a platform for industry leaders, policymakers, and experts to discuss and address pressing issues related to the country's workforce.

1. **Future of Work:** The anticipated impact of automation, artificial intelligence, and robotics on job markets across various sectors. Ensuring workforce readiness by upskilling and reskilling employees to match the evolving demands of the digital era.
2. **Skills Development and Training:** The forum emphasised the importance of investing in comprehensive skill development programs to bridge the existing skills gap. Speakers stressed the need for collaboration between educational institutions, industry stakeholders, and the government to design curricula that align with industry requirements.
3. **Job Transition and Retraining:** The forum addressed the challenges faced by workers transitioning between industries or job roles due to technological disruptions. Discussions revolved around facilitating smooth career transitions through targeted retraining initiatives, career counselling, and adequate support structures.
4. **Future Skills Demand:** A significant portion of the discussions focused on identifying the skills that will be in high demand in the future. Experts emphasised the importance of digital literacy, critical thinking, creativity, and adaptability, along with specialised technical skills in emerging fields such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and data science.
5. **Collaboration and Partnerships:** The forum emphasised the need for collaboration between government, industry, and educational institutions. Stakeholders discussed the potential for public-private partnerships to drive workforce development initiatives and shared best practices for successful collaboration.