

Welcome

Workforce Connect Fund Round 2 information session

Acknowledgement of Country

- We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.
- We extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here with us today.

Agenda

- Overview and update – Queensland Workforce Strategy
- Workforce Connect Fund – Round two overview
- Workforce Connect Fund – Round one project updates

Good people
Good jobs

Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022–2032



A COMPREHENSIVE WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

Vision: A strong and diverse workforce ready to seize today's jobs and adapt to future opportunities



33 actions

delivered in partnership with industries, regions and communities, reflecting that workforce approaches work best when they are:



Industry-led



Community-centred



Government-enabled

FOCUS AREAS



Workforce participation

- Enable all Queenslanders to participate in the workforce
- Support employers to rethink employment practices and diversify workforces



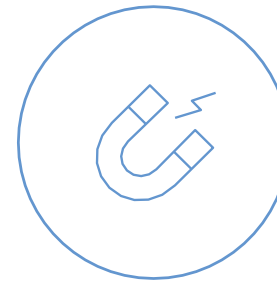
Local solutions

- Locally focused and led workforce planning and initiatives
- Coordinate efforts across industry, community and government to focus on local and regional priorities



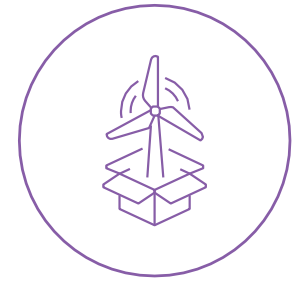
School-to-work transitions

- Strong and effective school-industry partnerships across Queensland
- Improve access to high-quality career information for school students



Workforce attraction and retention

- Partner with industries and communities to attract and retain workers
- Support industry-led initiatives to work differently to increase workforce capability and capacity
- Leverage migration to address critical workforce gaps



Skilling Queenslanders now and into the future

- Develop an innovative, modern and flexible training system that delivers for traditional and emerging industries
- Increase collaboration between government, industry and the education system at all levels

REIMAGINING WORKFORCE 2023

The current tight labour market presents a challenge, but also an opportunity – to reimagine how we do things to support a high performing workforce that provides opportunity for every Queenslanders.

Reimagining Workforce 2023 brought together employers, industry and community organisations to consider practical, innovative, flexible and inclusive ways to meet workforce demand and draw on a larger talent pool.

“Challenge your unconscious bias, and lift your expectation about what people can do. Provide opportunity. It’s about accessibility and inclusion.”

- Dylan Alcott AO 2022 Australian of the Year



Download the post-event summary here



GET INVOLVED

Explore the Strategy

The Queensland Government is helping employers address workforce challenges and support Queenslanders who want to work into good jobs.

Find out about the support available and how to access it at www.qld.gov.au/workforcestrategy



Collaborate with others

The Workforce Collaboration Hub on LinkedIn is providing a platform for sharing ideas and tips on tackling workforce challenges.

Share your success

If you have a great example of workforce innovation in action or know of one, we would love to hear and help showcase it.

Department of
Employment, Small Business and Training

Workforce Connect Fund

● Overview

- Launched in August 2022
- Flagship program of the *Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-32*.
- \$25 million initiative made up of two components:
 - \$23 million to fund large-scale projects
 - \$2 million to deliver the HR Support for Small Business Grants
- For large-scale projects - 16 projects worth \$12.5 million funded so far to improve workforce outcomes for 4,359 employers, 13,838 existing employees, and 6,386 new jobseekers;
- Second funding round now open seeking expressions of interest from eligible organisations.
- For the HR Support Grants - over 300 small businesses have so far been approved to access these grants.



Large-scale projects

● What's the problem we're trying to solve?

- Workforce shortages - attraction, retention and participation challenges currently being experienced right across the state
- Disconnect between industry, community and employers in addressing these challenges collectively.

● How are we solving it?

- By investing in industry and community-led projects that aim to drive systemic, industry-wide change to enhance working outcomes for employers, employees and jobseekers.
- Industry and community peak organisations are eligible to apply for up to \$1 million to deliver a project that seeks to develop and implement new strategies, services or mechanisms that address their specific workforce challenges both now and into the future.
- Industry and community peak organisations must connect and partner with each other, other organisations, employers, and key stakeholders to deliver one of these projects to ensure they are maximising outcomes for all Queenslanders.

● Why industry and community peaks?

- Workforce planning at the sector level is critical and must be underpinned by industry leadership, as it is industry who is responsible for job creation, employing people and shaping the future state of the workforce.
- Similarly, communities play a vital role in this landscape by supporting employers to tap into workers they have not traditionally accessed, as well as support Queenslanders to work in jobs they never thought available to them.
- For the purposes of the Workforce Connect Fund, industry peaks that represent entire sectors, and community peaks that represent and advocate for particular disadvantaged groups at the state or national level are considered eligible to apply.

● Partnerships in practice



● What systemic change looks like


- Collaboration and partnership with a diverse range of stakeholders at both the local and industry level with all parties providing input into the necessary adjustments or transformations required to embed lasting change.
- **Systemic change** could be seen as:
 - implementing transformational changes to workplaces to shift mindsets or stigmas within an industry
 - implementing structural changes to workforce infrastructure or systems to change the way an industry operates
 - Attracting, skilling up, or training non-traditional cohorts to work within a specific industry.

● What we funded under the first funding round

- Projects that address stigmas and shifts in mindsets
- Industry specific online platforms
- One-on-one support and training for employers
- Mentoring services for apprentices in specific industries
- Implementation of early career screening
- Research-based workforce advice and data initiatives to support practical interventions to increase retention, diversity and inclusion.



Questions



Round Two – 2023-24 Funding Round

● **WCF 2023-24 Funding Round**

New projects

- Two-stage online process
- Expression of Interest (EOI) now open until 26 March 2024
- EOIs that pass first stage will be invited to submit a full application

Existing projects

- Existing providers can work with the Department to request a variation to their existing contracts.
- A separate briefing will be held for existing projects to talk through these requirements.

● Expected outcomes

Standard KPIs apply across all projects:

- A measurable increase in retention and/or participation rates.
- At least 95% of all targets achieved.
- A minimum of 10% of employers supported are non-member employers
- A minimum of 55% of jobseekers assisted are to be employed at completion of the project.

● Self-nominated targets

Applicants may also self-nominate targets. These targets should be:

- Meaningful – stakeholders assisted should get real value from interacting with the project.
- Achievable - the assessment process will consider if projects have set unrealistic targets.
- Inclusive - projects should be able to demonstrate target numbers of jobseekers, employees and employers assisted in both regional and South East Queensland and
- Relevant to the level of funding requested – there is an expectation that organisations that apply for the full \$1 million in funding will have significantly higher targets than an organisation that applies for less funding.

● Industry Workforce Advisors

- Industry Workforce Advisors provide tailored assistance to small to medium employers by developing workforce plans to address gaps in their workforces.
- Industry Workforce Advisors are a key connection for funded organisations under the Workforce Connect Fund and smaller, non-member employers.
- In addition to connecting with other relevant organisations to deliver projects, funded organisations must connect with Industry Workforce Advisors when rolling out project deliverables to ensure the reach is beyond its member bases.

● Application process

- An Expression of Interest period opened on 13 February and closes on 26 March 2024.
- Applications are accepted online and applicant organisations are to submit their large-scale project proposal, including their response to the capacity to manage criterion and evidence of eligibility.
- Expression of Interest applications assessed and prioritised by an Assessment Panel.
- The Assessment Panel may invite successful Expression of Interest applicants to complete a full application whereby the full assessment criteria and evidence requirements must be satisfied.
- Approvals process and applicants notified of outcomes.
- Proposed project delivery of a maximum of 24 months to commence in 2024.

Key dates



Thank you for your time

www.desbt.qld.gov.au/employment/workforce-connect-fund

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Queensland
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