

Reimagining Workforce **POST-EVENT SUMMARY**

POWERED BY THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT'S

Good people
Good jobs

Queensland Workforce
Strategy 2022–2032



Queensland
Government

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Doing what we've always done isn't going to cut it anymore. Let's remove the barriers. We have an opportunity to make lasting change to our workforce and be permanently better at what we do.

— The Hon. Di Farmer MP
Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice

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The opportunity before us is immense but we need to be open to it. We need to connect employers with the right workers, to fit the right jobs and build the right skills. We need to think differently, change our strategy.

— The Hon. Cameron Dick MP
Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment

Introduction

The current tight labour market presents a challenge for employers across Queensland, but also an opportunity to reimagine how we do things to support a skilled and high performing workforce which is giving every Queenslander the opportunity to participate in work.

To address current workforce shortages, we need to fully harness the skills and capabilities of every possible Queenslander. This includes those not currently participating or those who are currently employed but are seeking more hours or to utilise their skills more fully.

We are in a ‘new normal’ where the ways that employees wish to engage with work and the drivers of attraction and retention are changing. This gives employers an opportunity to revisit how they respond to workforce trends by building diverse workplaces, rethinking recruitment processes, and implementing innovative ways to attract and retain staff.

About the event

Reimagining Workforce 2023 was held on 17 May 2023 in Brisbane. More than 500 people registered to attend face-to-face and via livestream.

The Hon. Cameron Dick MP, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment provided introductory remarks which focused on the importance of Queensland’s workforce in capitalising on future opportunities.

The Hon. Di Farmer MP, Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice delivered the opening address and challenged the audience to use the day as a catalyst for change.

The 2022 Australian of the Year and disability advocate, Dylan Alcott AO highlighted the opportunity available to employers and challenged the audience to raise their underlying expectations around people with disability, including the skills, capabilities, capacity and experience they possess.

Reimagining Workforce 2023 was an initiative of the *Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022–2032*. It follows on from the Queensland Government’s highly successful 2022 Queensland Workforce Summit, where over 300 business and community leaders gathered to identify ways forward to address workforce challenges.



Panel session

| *Key messages*

The event featured a panel session with leading workforce innovators, providing practical examples of how they have successfully reimaged their workplaces to address their workforce challenges.



Dylan Alcott AO
2022 Australian of the Year



Belinda Watton
Executive General Manager
Yurika



David Pich
Director
Better Workplaces Consulting
and Advisory



Geoffrey Smith
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Spatial Analytics

Key insights from the panel discussion included:

- Lift expectations of what people from diverse backgrounds are capable of achieving in the workplace and the significant benefits that workforce diversity delivers.
- Listen to the lived experience of the workforce that you are trying to attract, retain and support.
- The provision of opportunities to start and progress in a workplace is a prerequisite for workforce diversity.
- Partner with organisations that are like-minded and can support you in order to increase the likelihood of success.
- Maximise opportunities for learning on the job as a way to build a more diverse talent pipeline to reflect that suitable candidates from diverse cohorts can come from outside traditional formal pathways and entry points.
- Ensure that change to the workforce is scalable to increase the impact over time, even if it starts small.
- Embed inclusion and diversity as a 'business as usual' activity across the business, ensuring that there is strong buy-in from leaders and those making recruitment decisions.
- Question your own biases as you may not even realise that you have them.
- Reimagining the workforce also requires reimagining the workplace. Flexible working arrangements, such as through a 4-day working week, can have a profound impact on workforce attraction and retention, mental health and stress.
- Talk openly with staff to understand what motivates them, how they would like to work and how they can be supported to be most productive.
- Increasing the diversity of workplaces should be seen as a business imperative, not as an act of charity, because it fundamentally makes good business sense.



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It's about all of us making change together. What can you do? The way to be more accessible and inclusive is to listen to lived experience. Challenge your unconscious bias, and lift your expectation about what people can do. Provide opportunity. It's about accessibility and inclusion. You can have as many ramps as you like, but if you keep that door closed, it won't do any good.

— Dylan Alcott AO 2022 Australian of the Year

Masterclasses

Three concurrent masterclasses moved the discussion to a deep dive into the real actions businesses and organisations can take to reimagine their workforces. Each masterclass was led by subject matter experts and a professional facilitator who shared their insights and led discussion and input from participants on the practical steps that can be taken.



MASTERCLASS A

Mastering the art of attraction

This masterclass delved into the ways that employers from a range of industries can think differently as to how they attract staff to broaden their talent pools and retain the workforce they already have.

Masterclass Leader: Heidi Cooper, CEO, Business Chamber Queensland

Moderator: Emma Andrews, Diversity Australia

The top three ideas, as workshopped by participants, were:

1. Connect with other businesses to better understand how to keep skilled workers in a sector – e.g. by enabling job portability between employers.
2. Tap into available government programs and support to assist in making the changes needed – e.g. engage with Gateway to Industry Schools, access connector organisations to attract a more diverse workforce.
3. Identify strengths within your business (e.g. sustainability, flexibility, values and culture) and use these to attract and retain staff.

Other insights from this masterclass included:

- Consider your people as untapped potential – engage with them to understand them and their wellbeing, address any weaknesses. Your employees can then be advocates to attract others.
- Before you advertise, think about what you really need. Maximise focus on transferrable skills rather than qualifications or content knowledge. What can be learnt on the job?
- Create partnerships with schools – how can you influence local student choices? And how can you give them the right exposure to keep them engaged as they transition into work? Consider work experience and internships.
- Think creatively about retention bonuses appropriate to your business or industry along with what non-wage benefits might be important to your staff/potential employees.
- Use networks to help find jobs for partners where the whole family is relocated.



MASTERCLASS B

Embracing workforce differently

This masterclass highlighted how businesses are embracing changed and flexible work practices and attracting diverse talent to strengthen their workforces, exploring potential barriers and identifying how these barriers can be overcome.

Masterclass Leader: Rebecca Andrews, State Manager, Ai Group

Moderator: Patrick Albina, Diversity Australia

The top three ideas, as workshopped by participants, were:

1. Embrace lived experience – seek advice directly from the groups you are trying to access on how to attract, retain, support them.
2. Access advice, support and connections through peak bodies, community groups and other support agencies.
3. Understand your starting point so you can track progress over time.

Other insights from this masterclass included:

- Strive for both diversity and inclusion. Diversity relates to the individuals within the workforce whereas inclusion relates to the workplace being accepting and supportive of this diversity.
- Ask the question – does your organisation reflect the customers and communities you serve?
- Consider aspects of current recruitment and human resources processes that are resulting in only the same type of candidate applying. Make them more accessible and flexible as 'traditional' application, interview and induction processes may be inhibiting access to diverse workers.
- Consider whether applicants must have already completed specific qualifications before applying for a role and if a broader talent pool could be accessed by employing based on general capabilities and training on the job.
- Ensure leadership endorsement of diversity goals so that this can flow through the entire organisation and bring the conversation about diversity to the forefront.



MASTERCLASS C

Ideas into action – supporting your business

This masterclass looked at changing employee expectations and the ways employers can adapt to this new environment to make their workplace an appealing place for potential and current employees.

Masterclass Leader: Donna Bonney, Chair, Jobs Queensland

Moderator: Robert Davey, Diversity Australia

Contributor: Dr Wayne Graham, University of the Sunshine Coast

The top three ideas, as workshopped by participants, were:

1. Be employee focused – listen to current employees, their lived experience and be responsive to their needs.
2. Reimagine the entire recruitment process from advertising through to onboarding of new staff
3. Be clear about your business objectives and values, and with whom you can partner.

Other insights from this masterclass included:

- Engage with employees individually to understand what motivates them and how they can best be supported within the workplace.
- Partner with local community groups and organisations to identify potential talent pools, access advice and support or implement innovative ideas.
- Simplify recruitment processes and reassess the stated requirements so as to remove barriers that may be inhibiting potential applicants from applying such as a specific number of years of prior experience.
- Clearly communicate the vision and purpose of the organisation when recruiting and align decisions about your workforce to this vision and purpose.
- Consider how rostering and work schedules can be adjusted to enable different types of workers to engage in the workforce (e.g. parents with school-aged children).
- Maximise workforce attraction and retention by offering flexible working arrangements in their many and varied forms.
- Ensure that the physical infrastructure within the workplace enables greater workforce diversity and the type of workers you are trying to attract.

What's next

Reimagining Workforce 2023 highlighted a range of initiatives within *Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022–2032* which are supporting employers and industries across Queensland to strengthen their workforce.

For more information on the available Queensland Government support and how to access it, visit the 'About' section on our website under '[Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022–2032](#)'.

For small and medium sized employers, working with an Industry Workforce Advisor can help you plan your workforce, find solutions to employment challenges, and connect with programs, incentives and funding opportunities.

The Workforce Collaboration Hub on LinkedIn showcases examples of how Queenslanders are implementing workforce solutions. Do you have a great story to tell about how you have found, trained and kept the right workers?

Share your stories, ideas and tips to benefit others by completing the story submission form.

You can also stay up to date by subscribing to the Business Queensland Connect newsletter.

Resources for businesses

A selection of resources to help support businesses of all sizes. If using this document digitally, hyperlinks are provided. If you are looking at a printed version of this document and want more information visit our website qld.gov.au/workforcestrategy.



A strong, skilled and diverse workforce

The *Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022–2032* is the Queensland Government's 10-year plan for a strong, skilled and diverse workforce ready to seize today's jobs and adapt to future opportunities.

[Read and download the strategy >](#)



Connect with an Industry Workforce Advisor

Industry Workforce Advisors have been established to help employers identify solutions to workforce challenges and connect with relevant Queensland programs and funding, industry-based initiatives and funding, and Australian Government wage subsidies and employer initiatives.

[Connect with an Industry Workforce Advisor >](#)



Free Workforce Planning resources

Developed by Jobs Queensland, in partnership with Business Chamber Queensland, the Workforce Planning Connect resources equip employers with the tools for building workforce planning capabilities in business. These resources can support businesses to address a specific workforce need or complete a full workforce plan.

[Explore the resources today >](#)



Queensland's jobs of the future research

Jobs Queensland's Anticipating Future Skills series provides advice to Queenslanders about future skills needs. The detailed employment projections for regions, industries, occupations and qualifications can support workforce planning, identification of regional jobs growth, or assist individuals to make decisions about future careers.

[Explore our future skills needs >](#)



Take the next step with a mentor

Mentoring for Growth gives you free access to a network of business specialists from across Queensland. Get help in responding to the opportunities and challenges facing your business, including business strategy, marketing, technology, intellectual property, export and market expansion, or investment readiness.

[Connect with a mentor >](#)



Human Resources Support Grants for small business

If you're a small business with an immediate need for new and innovative human resources solutions to support your business you may be able to access up to \$5,000. Funding is provided through the Queensland Government's Workforce Connect Fund.

[Learn more and apply >](#)



Business Launchpad

Save time and effort when starting and running your business by using the Business Launchpad, a digital tool that makes it easier to discover licences, permits and regulatory information tailored to your business needs.

[Launch your business >](#)



Queensland Small Business Commissioner

The Queensland Small Business Commissioner (QSBC) is a passionate supporter of Queensland small business.

The Office of the QSBC works to enhance the operating environment for small businesses, and provides a range of assistance and advocacy services to support small business.

[Visit the QSBC website for more information >](#)



Workforce Planning Course – Jobs Queensland and

Based on Jobs Queensland's Workforce Planning Connect tools and resources, UniSC has designed a free 7-week Workforce Planning Course to help business owners and managers fully understand their workforce and to respond to changes in the business environment.

[Learn more >](#)



Region and Industry Workforce Planning Guides

Jobs Queensland's Region and Industry workforce planning guides have been developed to build capability in effective workforce planning at a region or industry level to support 'grow your own' workforces and cross-sector skills development.

[Read the guides >](#)



Small Business Financial Counselling and Wellness

Business Wellness Coaches and Small Business Financial Counselors, operating across Queensland, provide help to small business owners with unique and personal business challenges, needs and opportunities in a free one-on-one, supportive environment.

[Access support for your mental health and wellbeing >](#)

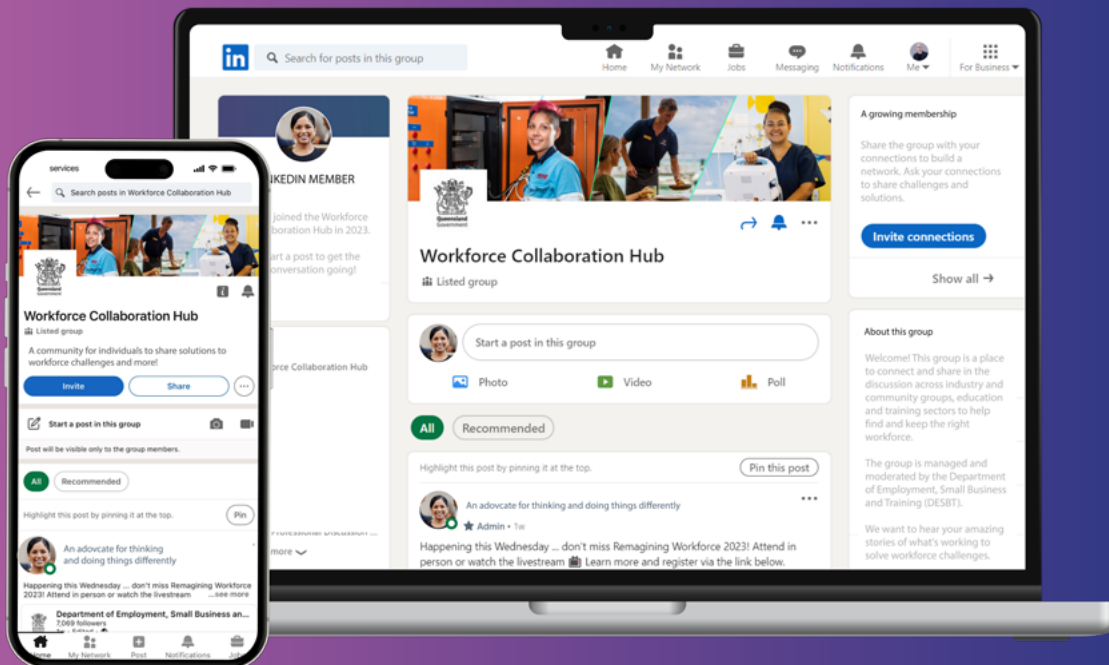


Training funding and incentives for employers

The Queensland Government provides targeted investment through a number of different vocational education and training (VET) investment programs to assist industry and employers train and upskill their current and future workforce. A range of funding and incentives are available to employers.

[Explore what's available >](#)

LET'S STAY CONNECTED



Join the Workforce Collaboration Hub on LinkedIn today and contribute to the discussion.



WORKFORCE COLLABORATION HUB

qld.gov.au/workforcestrategy

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