



Good people
Good jobs

Queensland Workforce
Strategy 2022–2032

PROGRESS UPDATE DECEMBER 2023



Queensland
Government



MESSAGE FROM **THE MINISTER**



Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022–2032 is evidence of the Miles Government delivering for Queenslanders—a plan being quickly implemented and producing real outcomes. With a growing economy, a strong labour market, and the biggest decade of infrastructure delivery in our state’s history through the Big Build, now is the time to unlock the full potential of our workforce.

Together, we’re working across the state to build more hospitals, upgraded schools, more housing, better transport, and more renewable energy. More than half of this work happening in regional areas means more local jobs and a bigger, better Queensland – now and for the future.

As the Miles Government’s whole-of-government workforce strategy, it is guiding workforce-related activities across our Big Build and a broad range of sectors, including clean energy, health, advanced manufacturing, infrastructure, and other traditional and emerging industries.

It also informs key government workforce and cost of living support, such as our \$1.2 billion investment in vocational education and training and key initiatives like Free TAFE and Skilling Queenslanders for Work.

To date, over 12,000 employers and more than 38,000 job seekers and workers are set to receive direct support across the first action plan—numbers that will only continue to grow.

The strategy is a testament to the power of collaboration. I thank and acknowledge the more than 100 industry and community organisations partnering with us to deliver the strategy.

As we continue to deliver the strategy, we will support the workforce needs of employers, industries, and communities and remain focused on helping all Queenslanders get into good, secure work.

Together, we’re addressing immediate workforce needs and positioning diversity, inclusivity, and adaptability at the core of our employment landscape.

Together, we’re responding to the state’s workforce opportunity so business and industry can thrive. A stronger workforce means more families can share the economic and social benefits of good, secure jobs.

Together, we’re listening and delivering for Queenslanders.

The Hon. Lance McCallum



Minister for Employment and Small Business
Minister for Training and Skills Development

SUPPORTING GOOD JOBS IN A STRONG ECONOMY

Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022–2032 is a whole of government strategy guiding the development and growth of Queensland’s workforce, released in August 2022.

Working in partnership with industry, employers and the community, the strategy is helping to ensure Queensland’s workforce is supporting growth, strengthening our communities, and keeping the state at the forefront of new economic opportunities.

The Queensland Government is implementing 33 actions through the strategy’s first Action Plan (2022–2025) across five focus areas. This includes more than \$70 million for new and expanded initiatives that build upon the extensive suite of existing government support for the state’s workforce to accelerate job creation and workforce development and help Queenslanders participate in the workforce.

 **33 actions**
Complete or underway 

 **12,000+**
employers set to benefit from actions

 **38,000+**
jobseekers and workers to receive support through actions

As at 31 Dec 2023

Queensland labour market snapshot

Queensland is an employment powerhouse. The strength of our economy has contributed to one of the tightest labour markets in recent history. The Queensland Workforce Strategy is working to address workforce and skills shortages and support all Queenslanders into good, secure jobs.

 **A strong and growing economy**
The state’s domestic economy is now **12.2%** larger than before the pandemic, as at September 2023.

 **More Queenslanders participating in the workforce**
66.8% of Queensland’s working age population was participating in the labour market in December 2023, up from 65.7% in March 2020 (pre-COVID).

 **A leader in job creation**
312,900 additional Queenslanders were employed in December 2023 compared to March 2020 – a 12.2% increase since before COVID-19.

Workforce participation for women (63.5%) and people from non-English speaking backgrounds (67.7%) remain near record highs, and youth unemployment (9.1%) remains well below pre-pandemic levels.

Collaboration and partnerships

The Queensland Workforce Strategy is being delivered in partnership with industry and the community and is underpinned by a commitment to shared responsibility. The strategy is also informing the Queensland Government's engagement and advocacy with all levels of government to address current and future workforce challenges.

Building on the strong foundations established at the Queensland Workforce Summit in March 2022, the strategy is demonstrating that collaboration, innovation and partnerships are key to delivering real and meaningful workforce outcomes.

9

Queensland Government agencies leading delivery of actions

100+

delivery partners across industry and community

7

meetings of the Queensland Workforce Strategy Roundtable to inform and guide the strategy

CASE STUDY

First Nations careers program supports industry and kick-starts digital careers

There is an increased demand for digital skills across both government and business. The digital industry is experiencing huge growth globally—it is one of the fastest growing job markets in the world.

The First Nations Digital Careers Program is kickstarting digital careers and helping the industry to meet its workforce needs. The program is committed to supporting up to 100 job placements per year over three years. Participants are placed with the Queensland Government, Microsoft, or one of their partner employers while completing study in one of the nominated digital courses.

"If you're looking for something in digital, this is a good place to start."

For 21-year-old Ann-Aaliyah, signing up for the First Nations Digital Careers Program was a chance to broaden her horizons.

"I saw the opportunity, and I thought, because digital is such a broad field, it might have a lot of opportunities," she said.

Over the course of a 12-week digital skills program, Ann-Aaliyah worked together with her classmates to refine her skills in design thinking, cyber security, and the Microsoft Office suite.

"I did learn a lot more than what I thought I might have, and it was really good to refresh a lot of things that I thought I forgot. The other students were very helpful the entire time," Ann-Aaliyah said.

She is also grateful for the organisations that have guided her on the way.

After careful consideration, Ann-Aaliyah successfully applied for a role with CITEC, the primary technology service provider for the Queensland Government and was successful in obtaining a work placement with CITEC.

Ann-Aaliyah is confident that the new role will build her confidence in the digital field.

"I'll have a better understanding of what I want to do, but just getting more knowledge in the Information Technology field will be great for now."

The program is supporting the delivery of *Paving the Way – First Nations Training Strategy*, which is supporting the development of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and improving job outcomes through training and skills development.

Find out more about the First Nations Training Strategy at desbt.qld.gov.au/first-nations-training



Investing in Queensland's workforce

The Queensland Government invests significantly in programs to accelerate job creation and workforce development and help Queenslanders participate in the workforce.

This investment is responding to the key workforce pressures identified through the Queensland Workforce Strategy:



Growing need for degree-qualified and experienced health, social and education workforce



Strong demand for entry-level and VET-qualified workforce in health and social care



Increased demand for VET and degree-qualified engineering, technical and digital workforce



Ongoing demand for entry level workers in our consumer facing service sectors



Demand for VET-qualified workforce in skilled trades, traditional industry and utilities

The Queensland Government currently invests over \$1.2 billion in the training system annually.

Free TAFE

- In 2023, more than **68,000 Queenslanders** commenced Free TAFE training (including Free Apprenticeships for Under 25s delivered by TAFE Queensland and CQUniversity).

Maximising opportunities for Queenslanders

- Nearly **7,000** Queenslanders employed as a result of Skilling Queenslanders for Work in 2023. Since 2015, over **50,000** Queenslanders have secured employment through this program.

Free apprenticeships

- From September 2018 to 31 December 2023, over **72,000 apprentices** have been supported through their training under free apprentice initiatives, including over 14,000 supported in the year to 31 December 2023.

Investing in state-of-the-art training facilities

- **\$100 million** over three years for **19** projects in **15** TAFE campuses across Queensland to support training in growing and emerging industries.



PROGRESS TO DATE

Key implementation highlights are summarised below. A full breakdown of implementation to date is available at qld.gov.au/workforcestrategy.



Workforce participation

- Industry Workforce Advisors in place to provide workforce planning support to 1,800 small and medium sized enterprises over three years. As at 31 December 2023, over 700 employers have been supported, with half outside of South-East Queensland.
- Diverse Queensland Workforce program expanded to support 2,500 migrants, refugees and international students into work up to 30 June 2025. As at 31 December 2023, more than 1000 migrants have exited the program and gained employment.
- \$8.3 million Paving the Way - the First Nations Training Strategy released.
- Partnership with Engineers Australia and Consult Australia to maximise employment opportunities for migrant engineers in Queensland.



Workforce attraction and retention

- \$20 million Workforce Connect Fund. \$12.5 million for 16 projects targeting 4,400 employers and 20,000 workers under the first funding round.
- Queensland Care Consortium established to strengthen the health and community services workforce.
- 38 tradespeople are studying to become teachers through the Trade to Teach pilot.
- \$30 million Clean Energy Workforce Roadmap released.
- 269,000 ad clicks and 50 million impressions of the Let's Protect Respect campaign promoting respect and support for apprentices and trainees to support completions.



Local solutions

- Partnership with Local Government Association of Queensland to build workforce capacity in 24 rural and remote areas across Queensland and support 750 participants.
- More than 3,500 apprentices and trainees have benefited from the increased travel allowances since 1 July 2022.
- Jobs Queensland partnering with regions to develop 'Grow Your Own' workforce plans and initiatives. Projects are underway in Cairns (maritime, marine and aviation), Wide Bay (forestry), Bundaberg (food and beverage manufacturing) and Far North Queensland (water).



School to work transitions

- Gateway to Industry Schools program expanded to include hydrogen, with 2000 students across 32 schools to participate in a new hydrogen project.
- School to Work Transitions program provides tailored solutions to support post-school outcomes for students at risk of not transitioning successfully from school to support 500 students per year for three years. At 31 December 2023, 13 S2WT projects have commenced assisting over 800 students.
- Regional School Industry Partnership Managers appointed and operational across Queensland.



Skilling Queenslanders now and into the future

- Development of a new vocational education and training (VET) strategy for Queensland to better guide investment and provide quality VET access across Queensland.
- \$2.9M funding round of the micro-credentialing program to provide increased access to industry-supported short courses. Through the first round there are 17 projects covering 12 industry areas.
- Almost 250 Queenslanders provided a head start into a trade a career through pre-apprenticeships, from backgrounds traditionally not strongly represented in construction, engineering, and hospitality apprenticeships.

CASE STUDY

Queensland-based Tubie Fun gets ready to grow

As small businesses grow, there are certain stages that each business goes through. Each stage brings different challenges that can impede growth. It can help to have someone to provide professional advice, and connect you with resources, initiatives, and support from government.

Stacey and Anthony Phillips are the proud owners of Tubie Fun, a Capalaba family business specialising in producing high quality products for children requiring feed tubing. The business began following their experiences in supporting their youngest son Callum who from birth has lived with several diagnoses. The business has grown from being a small home-run operation to a small business operating from a commercial premises with a growing client base.

To help grow the business, Tubie Fun was able to access the support of an Industry Workforce Advisor, a Queensland Workforce Strategy initiative.

Industry Workforce Advisor Eleanor Crosby worked with Stacey and Anthony to develop a workforce plan and connect them with financial support through the Workforce Connect Fund. A HR Support grant of up to \$5,000 was made available to Tubie Fun for specialist human resources services. The funding has helped the business develop critical policies, procedures, agreements, and work instructions that have enabled Tubie Fun to manage risk, grow in a considered way and take on additional staff to meet growing demand for their product.

“Working through a workforce plan made me more comfortable to expand by taking on new staff—it became something much more strategic.”

— Stacey, Co-Owner and Founder, Tubie Fun

“Tubie Fun was in the right place for growth, but they didn’t have a plan to on how they would do that or know what their next steps would be. Any growing small business can benefit from the advice of an Industry Workforce Advisor. Our role is to guide businesses through workforce planning, and make connections with other services, funding and resources. Industry Workforce Advisors are there to support the spirit of small business.”

— Eleanor Crosby, Industry Workforce Advisor, Australian Computer Society

Find out more about the Workforce Connect Fund and the HR Support Grants at desbt.qld.gov.au/employment/workforce-connect-fund



SUPPORTING KEY INDUSTRIES

The Queensland Workforce Strategy is supporting and building upon a broad range of initiatives across the Queensland Government focused on supporting industries to meet current and future workforce needs. Key examples include:

Energy

- Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan
- Hydrogen Industry Workforce Development Roadmap 2022-2032
- Queensland's Clean Energy Workforce Roadmap
- Two new regional transmission and training hubs.

Manufacturing

- Advanced Manufacturing 10-Year Roadmap, Action Plan and Skills Implementation Plan
- Women in Manufacturing Strategy
- Manufacturing Skills Queensland
- Beef Processing industry – workforce attraction strategy.

Education

- Trade to Teach pilot program
- Turn to Teaching Internship program
- Various additional Teach Queensland initiatives and activities
- Queensland Early Childhood Workforce Strategy 2023–27
- Development of a new vocational education and training (VET) strategy.

Resources

- Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan
- Queensland Future Skills Partnership
- Queensland Critical Minerals Strategy.

Healthcare and social assistance

- Development of the Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032
- Communities 2032 Strategy
- Establishment of the Queensland Care Consortium.

Engineering, technology and digital

- Queensland Quantum and Advanced Technologies Strategy
- Our Thriving Digital Future – Queensland's Digital Economy Strategy
- Digital Professional Workforce Action Plan
- First Nations Digital Careers Program.

Construction and infrastructure

- State Infrastructure Strategy and the Productivity and Workforce Roadmap
- QBuild Apprenticeships

Agriculture

- Queensland Agriculture Workforce Network and the Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance
- Queensland Agriculture Industry Workforce Plan 2022-2027
- Next Gen Ag (incorporating the Agribusiness Gateway to Industry Schools Project)
- Development of the Queensland AgTech Roadmap 2023-2028.

CASE STUDY

Revving up Queensland's transport workforce – Enhanced Car2Bus project

Transport and logistics is one of many industries experiencing high workforce demand. Some of the biggest challenges facing employers include the initial attraction of workers.

A new project funded through the Workforce Connect Fund is adding much needed horsepower to the bus and coach industry's attraction capability. The Enhanced Car2Bus project provides participants with an existing car licence the opportunity to expand their technical and employability skills and acquire their Medium Rigid Truck Licence (an entry requirement for the industry) through an enhanced experiential training and virtual reality solution. The program is connecting job seekers, community-based organisations, and industry. The program is rolling out across Cairns, Townsville, and Southeast Queensland, and is delivered by MEGT Australia and Major Training Group. Employers like Kinetic – the largest bus operator in Australasia – are excited by the program and its potential to provide a workforce solution.

“The labour market in Australia is incredibly challenging. The licencing programs we've been able to do as part of the Workforce Connect Fund have really helped to attract a new group of participants that perhaps wouldn't have thought about taking up a role as a bus driver in the past.”

– Matt Campbell, Chief People Officer, Kinetic

An initial phase of the Car2Bus project in 2023 showed promising and early success with 30 per cent of new drivers recruited by Kinetic in South-East Queensland coming through the program. Of the participants in the program, 30 per cent are women with the majority successfully completing the program and becoming qualified bus drivers. The Workforce Connect Fund expands this work.

“The Enhanced Car2Bus program is supporting 300 people get a future-proofed job in the industry. Through our partnership with Major Training, the program is available in Cairns, Townsville and South East Queensland, and will give a much needed boost of readily available talent to the industry.”

– Melissa Bradford, Workforce Connect Fund Manager, MEGT Australia

The enhanced project will target non-traditional workers such as returning carers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and migrant workers.

Find out more about the Workforce Connect Fund at desbt.qld.gov.au/employment/workforce-connect-fund



CASE STUDY

Reimagining Workforce 2023

Labour market conditions present an opportunity to reimagine how businesses and workforces do things. To address current workforce demands, we need to fully harness the skills and capabilities of every possible Queenslanders.

The Queensland Government hosted the Reimagining Workforce 2023 event on 17 May 2023 in Brisbane to support employers to rethink employment practices, embrace innovation and grow a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

More than 500 people registered to attend face-to-face and via livestream. Highlighting the event was 2022 Australian of the Year and disability advocate, Dylan Alcott AO who inspired the audience and spoke of the opportunity available to employers and challenged them to raise their underlying expectations around people with disability including the skills, capabilities, capacity and experience they possess.

The event also featured a panel session with leading workforce innovators that have successfully reimaged their workplaces to address their workforce challenges and three concurrent masterclasses that delved into the real actions businesses and organisations can take to reimagine their workforces.



Key masterclasses ideas

Mastering the art of attraction

- Connect with other businesses to better understand how to keep skilled workers in a sector
- Tap into available government programs and support to assist in making the changes needed
- Identify strengths within your business (e.g. sustainability, values and culture) and use these to attract and retain staff.

Embracing workforce differently

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

Ideas into action – supporting your business

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

GET INVOLVED

With the support of our delivery partners, the Queensland Government is helping employers address workforce challenges and support Queenslanders to transition into good jobs.

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

Share your ideas and success

The Workforce Collaboration Hub on LinkedIn is providing a platform for sharing ideas and tips on how to successfully tackle workforce challenges and capitalise on workforce opportunities. Join the workforce collaboration hub



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



