

Local Skills Solutions

Funding and application guide

Introduction

The Queensland Government recognises that supporting the training system and the growth of priority skills is important to elevating the Queensland economy, including that of regional, rural and remote communities.

The Local Skills Solutions program is a new initiative under the skills strategy to help address workforce issues related to skills and training in regional and community locations.

The program provides the framework to support local businesses and industry to have access to the skilled labour they need to be productive and grow, and for local residents to achieve secure and rewarding career pathways.

Local Skills Solutions will enable flexible training responses to meet the immediate skills priorities of employers and communities and promote the engagement of local stakeholders to work collectively to identify and address skills gaps.

This initiative will focus on local workforce challenges and develop and deliver suitable training solutions and outcomes informed by Regional Jobs Committees (RJC) and departmental regional offices.

The RJC will assist with identifying priorities for Local Skills Solutions projects, including targeted industries, locations, and priority student cohorts to be supported to participate in training.

[More information on the RJC can be viewed on the department's website.](#)

Overview and objectives

Through the Local Skills Solutions program, the department will support local and regional communities that may be facing skills challenges or changes to their economies and labour markets, including transitioning, new and emerging industries.

Collaboration between local employers, industry associations, community organisations and other relevant skills stakeholders is a key element of the program, with training to be delivered through a nominated Queensland Skills Assure Supplier (SAS).

Key aims of the program include:

- identifying gaps in vocational education and training (VET) service delivery, and developing local training solutions to address those genuine skills demands and gaps
- training projects based on co-design principles to ensure solutions are relevant, practical and responsive to stakeholder needs
- improving alignment of skills supply with the demand for workers (with communities determining the focus of training delivered)
- increasing engagement with VET by targeting employer participation in training projects
- supporting a pipeline of local skilled workers to deliver on key government priorities
- facilitating training pathways to secure, meaningful employment for priority student cohorts.

Local Skills Solutions is designed to complement and operate alongside Queensland's core VET programs.

Available assistance

The Local Skills Solutions program will fund flexible and tailored training project proposals that primarily deliver nationally recognised and accredited training.

The program will provide funding specifically for:

- alternative exit outcomes for Queensland Government subsidised training products (e.g. part qualifications), and/or
- amended student eligibility and restrictions to support access to Queensland Government subsidised training products
- non-accredited training that augments the accredited training solution
- a qualification or skill set not currently on the [Priority Skills List](#) (if supported by stakeholders and relevant data).

For eligible Queensland Government subsidised training products, refer to the [Priority Skills List](#) published on the department's website.

Who can apply for funding?

Applicant organisations must be located in Queensland, have an ABN and be registered for GST.

Eligible organisations include:

- industry peak bodies
- regional industry bodies
- economic development organisations
- group training organisations
- community (not-for-profit) organisations.

The applicant organisation must have a strong local presence including well-established community, industry, and employer relationships.

Eligible organisations are encouraged to submit a training project proposal as lead applicant on behalf of partnering stakeholders (e.g. local employers, businesses, and industry) and will be required to clearly identify all project partners in the application.

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and Skills Assure Suppliers (SAS) (except if they are the training arm of an eligible organisation) are not eligible to apply for funding. However, SAS providers are expected to participate as a project partner i.e. nominated by the applicant organisation to deliver the training.

Participant eligibility

Eligible participants under the initiative are existing workers, new entrants or job seekers in industries and enterprises throughout Queensland who:

- are aged 15 years of age or over
- permanently reside in Queensland
- are an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, or hold an eligible visa
- meet any additional eligibility requirements identified through the program.

Secondary school students, apprentices and trainees, employees of the SAS delivering the training and of government departments, agencies, and local councils, as defined in the Further Education and Training Act 2014, are not eligible participants under the initiative.

Project identification

Eligible organisations will identify suitable projects based on identified local skills needs and gaps that can be met through core VET Investment arrangements.

[Regional Jobs Committees](#) (RJsCs) may promote and raise awareness of the Local Skills Solutions opportunity through their local networks and can support the development of training project proposals (priorities) for the program based on analysis of economic and

labour market data, and local intelligence in relation to industry adjustments, emerging industries and local opportunities.

Each training project proposal requires a business case and itemised budget, prepared with the provided templates.

After regional office endorsement, proposals progress for final funding approval.

Approved applicant organisations must enter into a services agreement with the department, which outlines the funding terms and conditions, and includes key performance indicators.

Funding allocated must be fully acquitted after completion and any unexpended or surplus funds returned to the department.

Delivery locations

The program will be made available across Queensland.

Communities that have recently undertaken economic, industry or workforce planning activities, and have identified skills and training issues that are impacting on economic, business and employment growth in their region, will be considered a priority for funding under the program.

The department will seek to ensure an equitable spread of approved training projects throughout the state, with a focus on regional communities and locations outside the Greater Brisbane area, where access to training solutions is often more limited.

Level of funding

The department will pay the current applicable training subsidy (i.e. for the approved units of competency and/or qualification to be delivered), any location loading that applies, as well as consider additional costs as part of the assessment of planned budget expenditure up to the value of \$250,000.

The level of funding will be dependent on the type of training project proposed, including the project deliverables and duration.

Eligible costs

Awarded funds can only be spent on costs directly associated with delivery of the approved training project and related itemised budget.

Eligible activities and/or expenditure to support the project delivery can include:

- provision of face-to-face training delivery and assessment services
- provision of wraparound support (e.g. mentoring) and/or extra learning support for students
- travel, accommodation, and venue hire costs within the approved delivery location.

Funds cannot be used for:

- the purchase of significant assets (e.g. buildings or vehicles)
- existing staff member salaries/wages
- interstate and overseas travel

- ongoing business operational and maintenance costs such as utilities (e.g. gas, water, electricity)
- any other recurrent costs such as established positions within the organisation
- services delivered in-kind
- retrospective payments for expenses incurred, or for work undertaken, prior to funding approval
- fees for any activities or equipment provided by related parties, such as companies with common shareholdings or directorship with the applicant, and employees or immediate family of the applicant.

Funding from other sources must also be disclosed. To avoid duplication, funding is not available for the same services being delivered through other initiatives or programs.

Any third-party contributions must be specified and documented to enable clear consideration of all funding, resources and in-kind support provided.

Funding conditions

Submitted training project proposals must comply with the following conditions:

- training participants (students) must permanently reside in the approved locations (note: school students and adult prisoners are not eligible to participate in the program)
- a minimum of 60 per cent of training and assessment services must be provided through face-to-face delivery in the approved location
- the only foundation skills units of competency that may be delivered (in conjunction with eligible vocational qualifications) are selected units of competency from within the Certificate II Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways (FSK20119). All other lower-level qualifications and skill sets on the [Priority Skills List](#) are not eligible under the program
- third-party/sub-contractor delivery is not permissible. Exceptions may be considered following submission of a detailed business case (a template can be requested from the department) which clearly identifies the third parties and what specific training and/or assessment services each will deliver
- the program does not include funding for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), or a combination of RPL and credit transfer, where this represents the predominant activity.

Co-contribution fees

Under the Queensland Government's core VET programs, a contribution to the cost of training and assessment services is typically required by students and/or employers accessing subsidised training.

The fee may be paid on behalf of the student by a third-party unrelated to the SAS but cannot be paid or waived by the SAS.

This training co-contribution fee can form part of your project funding and be included under accredited training costs in the budget

More information

For more information on Local Skills Solutions phone 1300 369 935 or visit the website. **- add link when live**

Policy owner:	Investment Division
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Attachment 1: Assessment Criteria

Assessment criteria	How this will be assessed (but not limited to)
Eligible applicant organisation including capacity to manage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant organisation meets the eligibility criteria (including financial viability, a strong local presence, and well-established community relationships and connections to local employers and industry). The applicant organisation has relevant experience delivering similar projects and managing public funds. A suitable Skills Assure Supplier (SAS) has been identified to deliver the training (e.g. holds training product(s) on their departmental delivery schedule, has demonstrated strong student training completions under Queensland Government VET programs, and no significant compliance issues).
Why project is needed (workforce challenge and industry demand)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear rationale provided for the skills gaps, workforce challenges and/or barriers being experienced by local eligible participants/employers/industry (including if any recent workforce planning activities have been undertaken), and why existing government funded VET programs are unable to meet the skills need. Explanation of how the training project is based on collaboration and co-design with local stakeholders (e.g. employers, industry bodies and community representatives such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations where possible), including details of when and where consultation occurred and who was consulted. Detailed description of the training project lifecycle including scope, key activities and actions, deliverables, schedule (due dates) and milestones.
Outcomes (project and student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence to show how many local employers and students (including disadvantaged cohorts and/or priority population groups) will be supported to participate in, and benefit from, the training project; how local residents will be prioritised for training participation and employment opportunities. Clear description of how the training and assessment services will be tailored to each student's unique learning needs (e.g. inclusive practices, culturally sensitive) and support successful completions and outcomes. Tailored employer letters (two/three) that confirm genuine skills need and job outcomes (generic or form letters will not be accepted). Letters must contain employer details to enable contact by the departmental regional office.
Cost effectiveness / value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost per participant and expected outcomes represent fair comparative costs above the training subsidy and location loading paid (itemised budget supplied with supporting quotes if applicable). Level and nature of complementary funding and assistance from other sources including in-kind and direct contributions. Explanation of how the outcomes and impact of the training project will be measured including the lasting or ongoing benefit for the community.