



November 2024



Toowoomba Jobs and Skills Expo ignites local job market

The recent Toowoomba Jobs, Careers and Skills Expo proved to be a tremendous connector – linking job seekers with real employment and training opportunities while bringing together key players in the local jobs market.

More than 2,000 local job seekers turned out for the expo, with many undertaking on-the-spot interviews and, in some cases, securing jobs.

The expo's 100 stallholders included ready-to-hire local employers, registered training organisations, industry associations, and community-based groups offering jobs, training, and support options.

Additional support on the day ranged from resume writing assistance to free professional attire to help job seekers dress for success in their interviews.

Event organisers put the spotlight on accessibility and inclusion, making interview facilities, shuttle bus transport, and a translation station available.

Stallholders praised the high levels of job seeker engagement and networking opportunities, which demonstrated the expo's effectiveness in connecting talent with employers and the broader jobs and training network.

While the 2024 jobs and skills event calendar has come to a close, you can still start planning your 2025 career elevation with a visit to our website. [Get more training and career information.](#)



Schools' Gateway program to grow future workforce

Thousands more school students will pursue careers in priority industries with the agreements for 10 Gateway to Industry Schools programs extended to 2028.

Funding of \$8.48 million will support the extension, demonstrating the Queensland Government's continued commitment to partnering with Queensland schools and employers to build future workforces in priority industries.

The 12 Gateway to Industry Schools program industry areas are:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Aerospace



Far North Queensland champions workforce diversity

Centacare Far North Queensland is leading the way for workforce diversity, helping migrants secure meaningful employment and thrive in the local workforce.

Through the Diverse Queensland Workforce program, Centacare Far North Queensland targets work-ready migrants or refugees (including temporary visa holders with necessary work permits), and international students aged 18 years and over who are unemployed or underemployed.

The service can also connect employers with local migrants, refugees and international students looking for work.

- Agribusiness
- Building and construction
- Community services
- Health
- Hydrogen (until Jan 2026)
- Information and communication technology
- Minerals and energy
- Screen and media
- Tourism and hospitality
- Renewable energy (until Jan 2026).

For more information on the Gateway to Industry Schools program, please visit qld.gov.au/gateway-schools.

Take Alex (*pictured*), who successfully received employment assistance through the program.

"With the help of the Diverse Workforce program run by Centacare I was able to quickly find work, and now I am fitting out refugee housing."

For over three years, Centacare has provided essential support, training and job placement services, ensuring people like Alex can quickly find work and contribute to a strong, diverse economy.

Up to November 2024, the Diverse Queensland Workforce program has supported over 2,200 migrants.

Learn more about the [Diverse Queensland Workforce program](#).

2025 School Leaver's Guide is out now!

The Queensland [2025 School Leaver's Guide](#) to jobs and training provides helpful information and resources for school leavers, senior students and those who provide them advice.

From exploring careers to finding low-cost training pathways and employment support, the guide has it all. Designed for online use, the guide can be used individually or as an interactive in-class tool.

[GET THE GUIDE](#)

New blueprint for the nation's VET workforce

The Australian Government released the [VET Workforce Blueprint](#) in October 2024.

The blueprint is a five-year continuous improvement model for Australia's vocational education and training (VET) workforce, with three key goals, eight opportunities and fourteen actions.

The blueprint's aims are:

- **growing the workforce** by increasing the number of people entering the VET workforce pipeline to ensure long-term supply of staff, including teachers, trainers and assessors
- **retaining and developing the workforce** by supporting and building workforce capability to ensure a sustainable, highly skilled and quality VET workforce

- **understanding the workforce** by developing a data collection on the VET workforce and undertaking occupational mapping and research to better understand the roles and pathways across all VET contexts.



As part of the National Skills Agreement, Australian, state and territory governments will work together to deliver action under the blueprint and tackle long-standing challenges within the sector.

Nationally led actions include:

- occupational mapping for the VET workforce
- implementing a workforce data strategy
- conducting ongoing research on workforce issues
- reducing compliance and administrative burdens.

To ensure the blueprint is responsive to needs, it will be reviewed regularly. [Read more.](#)



Neurodiversity program boosts retail workforce

The Australian Retailers Association is providing meaningful employment to neurodivergent people and people with disability through the [Retail Ready and Able \(QLD\)](#) program.

Since July 2023, over 200 job seekers have been supported, with 40 per cent securing employment. The initiative has been instrumental in skill development, confidence-



Skills support bolsters participation and inclusion

The [Brisbane Disability and WorkAbility Expo](#), held earlier this month, highlighted the importance of skills support for people with disability.

Through the Queensland Government's [Skills Disability Support](#), Skills Assure Suppliers are provided specialised technology and support services to assist students with disability to gain nationally recognised skills and qualifications as a pathway to employment opportunities

building, and the promotion of inclusive hiring practices.

Retail Ready and Able (QLD) participant, Rebecca (*pictured*), embarked on a journey to transform her career. On the first day of placement Rebecca inspired the Rivers management team with her infectious energy and determination. It didn't take long for her skills to shine and her potential to be recognised, and she was offered permanent part-time employment just one day into her work placement.

The Ready Retail and Able (QLD) program, funded by the [Workforce Connect Fund](#), is dedicated to fostering diversity, positioning the retail sector as leaders in inclusiveness.

According to the Diversity Council of Australia's most recent Inclusion at Work Index, workers in diverse teams are:

- 4 times less likely to leave their job in the next 12 months
- 10 times more likely to be innovative at work.

By leveraging Skills Disability Support, training organisations can enhance accessibility, improve outcomes for students with disability, and align with best practices in inclusivity.

[Learn more.](#)

Mentor helps shape cultural shift for women in manufacturing

Mackay HR Manager [Kristin Dee](#) (*pictured*) is supporting 1st and 2nd year female apprentices through Manufacturing Skills Queensland's Women in Trades Mentoring Program. An initiative of the Queensland Government, the program also supports small business to elevate their workplace gender equality plans, offering mental health inductions, and mentoring skills development.



"We have seen a cultural shift with increased representation of women in male-dominated industries, and we are seeing businesses really embrace this change and incorporate flexibility and reduce gender biases, but we still have a long way to go," Kristin said.

"As a mentor, I have already met some truly inspiring women and I feel privileged to be a part of such an incredible program."

Kristin is encouraging other women to join the manufacturing industry.

"World class technologies are driving huge growth in this region and there are many roles needed to ensure industry success and that will include women in trades," she said.

"I encourage women considering a career in manufacturing to take part in work experience and career days to see all the roles on offer."

Expressions of interest are open for the next round of the program commencing February 2025. Applications to be mentors or mentees will close 17 January 2025.

[Apply here](#) or for more information visit [Manufacturing Skills Queensland](#).

Connecting students with clean energy careers

Check out the new STEM Futures: Clean Energy and Careers education program for students in Years 7 – 12.

Designed for secondary school teachers, the program is a suite of lessons bringing together Science, Technology, Design and Maths to explore renewable energy and profile the exciting clean energy careers that await students.

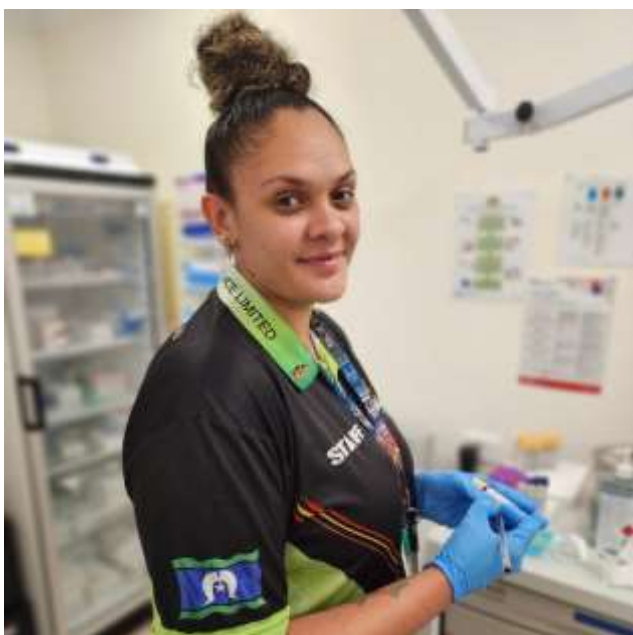
The program has been developed by Cool.Org with support from the Clean Energy Council, for the Queensland Government as a key action of [Queensland's Clean Energy Workforce Roadmap](#).

Access on [STEM Futures: Clean Energy and Careers | Cool.org](#)

First Nations trainees join health frontline in Far North

Two First Nations trainees, Aliyah Motlap (*pictured*) and Keisha Brennan, have completed a Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care, paving the way for impactful careers with Mamu Health Service Limited in Far North Queensland.

Through a partnership with Health Industry Training Queensland, Mamu Health Service offers culturally tailored training and support, empowering First Nations trainees to lead health and wellbeing initiatives in their communities.



Despite early challenges—including adapting to new responsibilities and managing cultural obligations—both women received comprehensive guidance, including housing support, enabling them to thrive in their training.

Now employed at Mamu, Aliyah works as a health worker, while Keisha supports the finance team.

Reflecting on her journey, Keisha shared:

"I am proud to have achieved a qualification that allows me to serve my people and contribute to a healthier future."

This success story highlights the power of culturally inclusive training to build skills, confidence and careers in vital community roles.

The Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care is delivered by [Skills Assure Suppliers](#) and is subsidised by the Queensland Government.



Film industry buffs, get screen-ready!

Screen Queensland's [Film Intensive Script to Screen \(FISS\) program](#) offers emerging film professionals, writers and storytellers looking to build job-ready skills in Queensland's growing film sector.

Supported by the Queensland Government's [Workforce Connect Fund](#), this program equips participants with practical expertise in areas like camera operation, costume, lighting, production and locations.

Guided by experienced industry professionals, participants will also receive industry credits and be part of short film productions through a series of workshops and intensives.

A minimum of 10 places are reserved for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and applications are encouraged from individuals from other under-represented backgrounds.

The program will be held in Cairns and Brisbane in 2025. Registrations close Friday, 29 November 2024.



HR support fosters rural and remote workforce growth

Faced with recruitment and onboarding challenges for his landscaping business, Outdoor Solutions Queensland's Markus Mueller sought the support of Horticulture and Agriculture [Industry Workforce Advisor](#) Kym Wessling.

By partnering with Kym, Markus developed a targeted workforce plan and secured the HR Workforce Connect Grant. This allowed him to build a cloud-based HR system that:

- streamlines HR processes
- improves employee access to resources
- enhances onboarding with engaging video content.

The Industry Workforce Advisor program, funded by the Queensland Government, supports businesses across the state, especially in rural and remote areas, with expert guidance and resources to address workforce challenges. Connect with an [Industry Workforce Advisor](#) today!



Empowering neurodiverse talent

Autism Queensland's Neurodiversity Works Program is transforming workforce inclusion for neurodivergent individuals, including those with autism and ADHD.

Funded by the [Workforce Connect Fund](#), this program supports both employees and employers with tailored guidance and education.

The program provides assessments, education on autism and neurodivergence, and guidance on inclusive recruitment practices.

The Neurodiversity Works Program champions diversity by building employer confidence, offering practical support, and identifying neurodiversity leaders within organisations to promote long-term workforce inclusion across Queensland.

Learn more at [Neurodiversity Works | Autism Queensland](#).



Building Women's Careers Program

The Australian Government has launched a new \$55.6 million [Building Women's Careers Program](#).

Actively promoting gender equality in non-traditional industries, the Building Women's Careers Program aims to enhance women's access to training and job opportunities in construction, advanced manufacturing, clean energy and digital technology.

The program includes a \$50 million grant opportunity divided into two streams:

- industry/sector-led partnership projects
- community-led partnership projects.

More details of the Building Women's Careers Program, including guidelines, can be found at [Department of Employment and Workplace Relations](#).

Applications close 4.00 pm AEST Monday, 2 December 2024.

Awards

Queensland nominees ready to shine at the Australian of the Year Awards

Four exceptional Queenslanders have been nominated for the Australian of the Year Awards 2025. Recognised as inspiring role models for community, state and nation, this year's nominees include:



Left to right: Claire Smith, Geoffrey Smith, Dr Bronwyn Herbert, Dr Katrina Wruck.

Australian of the Year

[Geoffrey Smith](#) – Co-founder, Australian Spatial Analytics, where 80% of employees are neurodivergent, with 61% previously long-term unemployed.

Senior Australian of the Year

[Dr Bronwyn Herbert](#) – Social worker and scholar, finished her PhD on intergenerational homelessness at the age of 90.

Young Australian of the Year

[Dr Katrina Wruck](#) – Scientist and First Nations knowledge advocate, her work in converting mining by-products is a possible foundation for reducing global contamination.

Australia's Local Hero

[Claire Smith](#) – Founder, Wildlife Rescue Sunshine Coast, the first dedicated, volunteer-run, 24-hour wildlife rescue service in Queensland.

We wish all the nominees the greatest of success for the awards. [LEARN MORE](#)

Excitement builds for the 2024 Australian Training Awards

This month, six of Queensland's 11 finalists for the Australian Training Awards gathered in Brisbane to prepare for the national final, which will be held on 6 December in Canberra.



Image: Queensland nominees l-r Atong Koot, Rebecca Hoffensetz, Harry Roberts, Tessa Wallace, Rhonda Woolla and Chelsea Bostock.

Queensland Training Awards (QTA) individual winners Harry Roberts, Tessa Wallace, Atong Koot, Rhonda Woolla, Chelsea Bostock, and Rebecca Hoffensetz took part in workshops on media, branding and professional development. These sessions have equipped them to share their inspiring training success stories on the national stage.

Four QTA winners in the organisation categories are also finalists in the ATAs.

We send our best wishes to — Gunggandji-Mandingalbay Yidinji Peoples Prescribed Body Corporate Aboriginal Corporation, On the Job Training, Palm Island Digital Service Centre and Riviera Australia.

Additionally, congratulations to Mim Davies who is a finalist in the direct-entry category.

Each of Queensland's finalists, who represent different skill sectors and regions that are contributing to this state's fantastic training system, will be mixing with amazing finalists from across the country.

Wishing all six QTA winners the best of luck. Read more via the [Australian Training Awards website](#).

Nominations for the 2025 Queensland Training Awards will open soon, don't miss the chance to submit an [expression of interest](#)!

Celebrating innovations for Women in Digital

The 2024 [Women in Digital Awards](#), held late October, recognise the exceptional women making waves in the tech industry.



Image: Roisin O'Neill, Head of _nology and Alix Winter, Executive Director at the Department of Trade, Employment and Training.

This year's "Digital Workforce: Skills for the Future" award was awarded to [_nology](#), a standout tech training and talent provider, dedicated to bridging the digital skills gap with an inclusive and innovative approach.

Their graduates — 61% women and non-binary, 79% career changers — are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to shape a resilient tech workforce.

As the winner of the Digital Workforce award, [_nology](#) exemplifies a commitment to building a future-ready, skilled and diverse workforce.

Congratulations to [_nology](#) and all finalists who are advancing inclusivity and innovation across the digital sector in Australia!

Stay connected and informed!

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The Queensland Government respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and seas from across Queensland.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the state.

This email was sent by the Department of Trade, Employment and Training
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