

Local Jobs Plan

Somerset Employment Region | QLD | December 2024

Workforce Australia Local Jobs (Local Jobs) is a program that supports tailored approaches to accelerate reskilling, upskilling and employment pathways in response to current and emerging local workforce needs.

Local Jobs elements

Local Jobs Plan

The Local Jobs Plan sets out the skills and employment challenges and priorities of the region, and associated strategies that will drive the design and implementation of activities to be implemented to address these challenges.

Employment Facilitators

Employment Facilitators and Support Officers support the delivery of the program by bringing together key stakeholders including businesses, employment services providers, higher education and training organisations.

Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce

Each Employment Region has its own Taskforce. Representatives include local stakeholders who have demonstrated experience in upskilling, reskilling, and an ability to represent, connect and collaborate with others in the region to meet labour market needs.

Local Recovery and National Priority Funds

The Local Recovery Fund supports projects that meet the priorities identified in the Local Jobs Plan. The National Priority Fund provides funding for innovative local solutions to address structural barriers to employment.



Local labour market challenges in the region

- Satisfying demand for skilled labour for construction projects in preparation for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic games. A \$7.1 billion infrastructure program will reshape some of Queensland's most significant venues and precincts, many of which are located in the Somerset Employment Region and include the Mill Precinct in Petrie, the Athlete village in Hamilton, the Brisbane Aquatic Centre in Chandler and Suncorp stadium.
- Continuation of stage 3 and 4 of the Cross River Rail project.
- Meeting demand for workers in the health and community care sector and in residential aged care facilities.
- Satisfying demand for entry level workers in regional growth industries including manufacturing, food services, retail and accommodation.
- Identifying accessible transport options to mobilise workforces in the Deception Bay and Bribie Island areas of Somerset Employment Region.
- Aligning the recruitment and retention of Australian apprenticeships and traineeships with projected regional skills and labour shortages and areas of future demand. Target cohorts include youth, First Nations people, women, mature age and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD).

Local jobs and skills priorities and strategies in the region

Priority 1 – Promote the engagement and retention of Australian apprenticeships and traineeships

What are our challenges and opportunities?

- The Somerset Employment Region is experiencing a shortage of qualified tradespeople to meet current and projected workforce demand.
- There are multiple large, long-term infrastructure projects underway or scheduled to commence in the region requiring skilled labour.
- There are opportunities for both skilled workers and those entering the workforce in construction, manufacturing, security, health services and social care, tourism, hospitality, transport and logistics.
- The cost of living is having a direct impact upon the uptake and retention of Australian apprenticeships and traineeships. As a result, the necessity to secure an immediate higher hourly rate is outweighing the longer-term aspiration of having a trade qualification.
- Eligible apprentices and trainees may have access to interest free loans for cost-of-living assistance and employers may be eligible for wage subsidies and financial assistance over the duration of the apprenticeship.
- Many employers recognise that requiring a driver's licence and having access to private transport is limiting their pool of applicants. As a result, there is an increase of employers who have relaxed this expectation and are making alternative arrangements to pick up apprentices, trainees and labourers from designated pick-up points.

How are we responding?

- Continuing to engage with local businesses and industry to identify their employment requirements and promote the benefits of hiring apprentices and trainees through various forums and activities, including direct engagement with businesses.
- Promoting apprenticeships and traineeships to align with projected skills shortages, including areas of future demand in the region.
- Informing potential apprentices, employers and stakeholders of incentives such as wage subsidy programs available through state and federal government funded initiatives.
- Promoting new and existing programs that form entry-level pathways into apprenticeships and traineeships.

- Hosting events that promote current and upcoming projects where there are employment opportunities emphasising careers via traineeship and apprenticeship pathways.
- Using and showcasing real life, relatable examples of successful personal stories to stimulate stronger uptake of apprenticeships and traineeships, including women working in non-traditional careers and trades to inspire and encourage women to consider broader career opportunities.
- Engaging with Australian apprenticeship support services to support new and existing programs and explore strategies to increase uptake and retention rates.
- Promoting current employment opportunities in emerging initiatives such as Net Zero and cyber security to Australian apprenticeship support services, Workforce Australia Employment Services Providers and stakeholders.
- Promoting and raising awareness of employers who have successfully adopted flexible approaches to transport issues, to encourage other employers who are having difficulty in recruiting due to licencing and transport expectations.

Priority 2 – Facilitate and support participation in training and employment opportunities for First Nations people

What are our challenges and opportunities?

First Nations people are under-represented in the region's workforce. Opportunities exist to support greater inclusion of First Nations people in the local labour market and provide more equitable access to skilling and employment pathways.

How are we responding?

- Working collaboratively with community, First Nations organisations and local industry to identify suitable and sustainable employment opportunities for First Nations participants.
- Building awareness between stakeholders of the existing suite of programs and services to support First Nations people.
- Supporting and encouraging collaboration in the co-design of wrap-around services to local First Nations people, including support to successfully transition into sustainable employment.
- Working with local stakeholders to support them in the delivery of culturally appropriate training and support across various industry sectors.
- Promoting identified positions to Jobs Council members.
- Building awareness of local support services, including First Nations and traditional owner groups and mentors, who can provide culturally appropriate support to help individuals experiencing challenges to employment, together with the provision of follow up support once employed.
- Working with First Nations groups and agencies to support meaningful and culturally safe employment for First Nations people and to enable local First Nations organisations to support their community.
- Showcasing and celebrating First Nations businesses within the region to encourage and inspire individuals.
- Working with industry and relevant stakeholders to encourage building cultural competency within businesses to increase opportunities and improve retention of First Nations people.

Priority 3 – Increase employment pathway opportunities for target cohorts, including women, mature age, youth and CALD

What are our challenges and opportunities?

- Many businesses are adjusting their recruitment practices to attract a wider range of individuals and there are opportunities to support employers to widen their pool of potential applicants.
- There is a high percentage of people on the caseload without a driver's licence and reliable transport.
- Some areas within the region do not have well connected public transport. This in turn can impact start and finish times and hinder access to employment opportunities.

How are we responding?

- Continuing to work closely with employment services providers to understand the nature of participant challenges in a rapidly changing labour market to provide timely, localised support.
- Continuing to work with businesses with current or future labour demand to assist in the design of tailored employment pathways for each cohort and develop entry-level skills programs.
- Working with and encouraging local businesses to promote the benefits of having a diverse workforce.
- Connecting employers to supports and resources in the region including wage subsidies, cultural training and disability education.
- Promoting mature age opportunities including apprenticeships, traineeships and Career Transition Assistance to help mature age people participate in the workforce.
- Assisting to connect individuals interested in self-employment to programs such as the Self-Employment Assistance program.
- Working with local CALD groups to better understand the unique nature of the challenges faced by each community and identify ways these challenges can be overcome.
- Continuing to highlight the positive contribution of women in the workforce and the career possibilities open to women by showcasing success stories of women in non-traditional industries.
- Providing support and resources to employers who may be having difficulties retaining young workers by sharing best practices and connecting them with local employers who successfully employ, develop and retain young people in their workforce.
- Providing employers with access to mental health training and resources to better understand and support young people in their employ who are impacted by mental health challenges.
- Incorporating driving lessons and license funding assistance into pre-employment projects.
- Working with local stakeholders to such as the PCYC, Braking the Cycle, Murris on the Move and Tribe to identify opportunities for driving assistance.
- Promoting Workforce Australia to employers, stakeholders and the wider community.
- Continuing to work closely and collaboratively with local businesses, industry, government, schools and stakeholders and represent young people in the region with the aim of establishing a community investment committee to progress sustainable opportunities for youth in the workforce.

Want to know more?

- Contact: Kim Dawson, Somerset Employment Facilitator: employmentfacilitator@somersetlocaljobs.com.au
- Visit: [Local Jobs](#) or [Workforce Australia](#)