Local Jobs Plan

Gold Coast Employment Region | QLD | October 2026

Workforce Australia Local Jobs (Local Jobs) is a program that creates partnerships between business and communities to meet local workforce needs, thereby improving employment outcomes. Local Jobs operates in all 51 Employment Regions in Australia.

Explore labour market insights for the Gold Coast Employment Region

Local Jobs Overview

Local Jobs Plan

Each Employment Region has a Local Jobs Plan which outlines the labour market challenges in the region and the strategies to address these challenges.

Job Coordinators

Each Employment Region has a dedicated Job Coordinator who leverages existing resources, supports local labour markets through structural adjustments and retrenchments, and creates opportunities for collaboration between business and communities.

Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce

Each Employment Region has its own taskforce that meets regularly with the Job Coordinator to develop an understanding of challenges in the region and implement solutions. The taskforce is comprised of representatives from the region.

Local Jobs, Local People Grant

The Local Jobs, Local People grant funds activities that help people into ongoing employment or training. Activities must support local labour market needs.

Local labour market challenges

- Construction and infrastructure employers require workers with trade qualifications, civil and rail competencies, licences, safety tickets, digital capability and supervisory skills. Workforce shortages, apprenticeship completion, limited industry experience among new entrants and the capacity of small and medium-sized contractors to recruit and train workers may constrain project delivery.
- Limited public transport to the northern Gold Coast industrial precinct restricts access to entry-level jobs, apprenticeships and shift work. Many workplaces are difficult to reach without a vehicle and driver licence.
- There is a skills mismatch between the available workforce and current employer requirements. Many candidates need stronger foundation, digital and employability skills, occupational licences or tickets, relevant work experience and an understanding of workplace expectations.
- There is sustained and overlapping workforce demand across construction and major infrastructure, health and care, tourism and hospitality, manufacturing and supporting supply chains.
- Health, care and community services face labour shortages. Qualification, registration, screening and placement requirements, combined with shift work and transport barriers, can delay entry into these occupations.
- Tourism and hospitality employers have difficulty attracting and retaining employees. Variable hours, seasonal demand, limited awareness of career pathways and the cost of living reduce the appeal of entry-level work.
- Manufacturing employers require a mix of trade, technical and production skills across marine, food and beverage, metal fabrication, construction products, biomedical and specialised manufacturing. Employers report shortages in fabrication, welding, engineering trades, maintenance, production operations, automation, quality systems and digital capability, while many job seekers and school leavers have limited awareness of modern manufacturing careers.
- Low unemployment, housing costs and cost-of-living pressures are changing the region's labour pool. Employers need to improve attraction and retention and draw from outside the region.
- Many unemployed people experience multiple and compounding challenges. Wrap-around support, trusted community networks, culturally safe services, employer capability and post-placement assistance are critical to helping participants enter and remain in sustainable employment.

Local priorities

Priority 1 – Build workforce pipelines for major construction and infrastructure projects

What are our challenges?

The Gold Coast and adjoining South East Queensland corridor have a substantial pipeline of transport, health, housing and Games-related infrastructure. Employers will need workers with trade qualifications, civil and rail competencies, licences, safety tickets, digital capability and supervisory skills. Smaller contractors may have limited capacity to forecast workforce demand, navigate training options or recruit and retain new entrants. Coordinated planning is required so local people can enter these projects and build careers that continue beyond a single contract.

How are we responding?

- We work with project owners, principal contractors, industry bodies and government agencies to maintain a forward view of workforce demand, project timing, occupations, licences and entry-level opportunities.
- We collaborate with peak bodies, for example, Construction Skills Queensland, training providers, unions and employers to develop pre-employment, apprenticeship, traineeship, higher-level skills and short-course pathways aligned to building, civil, rail, engineering and safety requirements.
- We connect Workforce Australia Employment Services Providers and community organisations with project recruitment and procurement pipelines early enough to prepare suitable candidates.
- We support employers to offer work experience, site exposure, mentoring, structured entry pathways and recognition of transferable skills for career changers.
- We promote opportunities for First Nations people, women, young people, mature aged workers, people with disability and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people, including access to culturally safe and inclusive workplaces.
- We encourage coordination across major projects to reduce workforce competition, support retention and create portable skills and employment pathways.

Priority 2 –Grow the health, care and community services workforce

What are our challenges?

The new Coomera Hospital will add significant clinical and non-clinical workforce demand, while vacancies remain across aged care, disability support, allied health, mental health, administration, cleaning, food services and early childhood education and care. Workforce supply is affected by qualification and placement requirements, registration and screening processes, shift work, transport, caring responsibilities and competition for experienced staff. The scale and timing of the Coomera Hospital creates an opportunity to coordinate education, training, placements and recruitment well before services commence.

How are we responding?

- We support industry such as Gold Coast Health, health and care employers, education and training providers and employment services to map occupations, qualifications, placement capacity and recruitment timeframes.
- We develop entry pathways into clinical and non-clinical roles, including health support services, administration, cleaning, food services, patient support, aged care, disability support and early childhood education and care.
- We support stronger links between vocational education, higher education, work placements, traineeships and employment so learners can move efficiently from training into local vacancies.
- We work with employers to improve attraction, induction, supervision, mentoring, career progression and retention, particularly for entry-level and underrepresented workers.
- We identify practical solutions to shift-work barriers, including transport, childcare, licence access and flexible training delivery.
- We promote transferable pathways between health, care and community services so workers can build sustainable careers as regional demand changes.

Priority 3 – Strengthen the tourism, hospitality and visitor economy workforce

What are our challenges?

Employers report persistent difficulty recruiting and retaining chefs, cooks, food and beverage workers, accommodation staff, supervisors, event workers and customer service employees. Seasonality, variable hours, limited awareness of career pathways, transport outside standard operating hours and competition between employers can reduce workforce stability.

How are we responding?

- We work with Experience Gold Coast, the City of Gold Coast, industry associations, major employers, training providers and employment services to coordinate workforce planning and recruitment activity.
- We co-design employer-led pathways that combine pre-employment preparation, practical training, work experience and direct recruitment into vacancies.
- We promote career pathways from entry-level roles into commercial cookery, operations, events, accommodation, attractions, supervision and management.
- We support targeted recruitment and industry events that give job seekers realistic exposure to workplaces, hours, expectations and progression opportunities.
- We work with employers to strengthen onboarding, predictable and sustainable hours, workplace culture, mentoring and retention.
- We prepare local workers and businesses for the workforce and service opportunities associated with major events and Brisbane 2032.

Priority 4 – Develop manufacturing capability and local supply chain opportunities

What are our challenges?

Manufacturers report difficulty attracting workers with trade, technical and production skills. Emerging technology and Industry 4.0 practices are increasing demand for digital literacy, automation, advanced equipment, quality assurance, maintenance, lean manufacturing and leadership capability. Small and medium-sized businesses also need support to participate in procurement and develop their workforce as they scale.

How are we responding?

- We collaborate with the City of Gold Coast, Regional Development Australia Gold Coast, peak bodies, industry groups, manufacturers, training providers and employment services to identify current and emerging workforce demand.
- We develop pathways into priority occupations including fabrication, welding, engineering trades, marine manufacturing, food production, warehousing, maintenance, production operations and technical roles.
- We support training in digital capability, automation, advanced manufacturing, sustainability, quality systems, workplace safety, supervision and lean practices.
- We connect local manufacturers and job seekers to infrastructure, hospital, housing, tourism and Games-related procurement and supply chain opportunities.
- We promote work experience, school-to-work pathways, apprenticeships, traineeships and career-change to improve awareness of manufacturing careers.
- We work with employers to improve attraction, diversity, progression and retention, with particular attention to underrepresented cohorts.

Priority 5 – Improve access, participation and sustainable employment outcomes

What are our challenges?

Low unemployment has reduced the pool of immediately job-ready candidates, while many Workforce Australia participants experience multiple and compounding challenges. Young people, First Nations people, mature aged people, women returning to work, single parents, people with disability and culturally and linguistically diverse people remain underrepresented even where employers have vacancies. Regional workforce growth will depend on creating practical, supported pathways that match participant capability with real jobs and help employers build inclusive workplaces.

How are we responding?

- We use the Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce, First Nations Steering Committee and industry networks to align employment services, employers, training providers and community organisations around regional workforce priorities.
- We use current labour market intelligence and Workforce Australia caseload insights to design place-based activities linked to verified vacancies and projects.
- We develop preparatory programs that build confidence, routine, language, literacy, numeracy, digital capability, employability skills, work health and safety awareness and realistic career knowledge.
- We support access to driver licensing, transport, childcare, work clothing, tickets, screening checks and other practical requirements.
- We encourage flexible and accessible training, workplace adjustments, culturally safe practice, inclusive recruitment and employer capability building.
- We support mentoring, workplace buddy arrangements and post-placement assistance for both participants and employers during the transition into work.
- We prioritise employment pathways that provide safe workplaces, sustainable hours, recognised skills, progression and a prospect of ongoing employment.
- We monitor outcomes and employer feedback so successful approaches can be improved, repeated and scaled across the region.

Want to know more?

- Contact: Jodi Brackenbury, Gold Coast Job Coordinator: Jodi.Brackenbury@localjobsprogram.org.au

Visit: Local Jobs or Workforce Australia

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and Elders past, present and emerging.