

Local Jobs Plan

Townsville (includes Mt Isa) Employment Region | Qld | June 2023

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.



Explore labour market insights for
[Townsville \(includes Mt Isa\) Employment Region](#)

Local labour market challenges in the region

- Access to appropriately skilled and experienced individuals continues to be the focus of conversation across many sectors, this could pose a future threat to opportunities for youth and entry level individuals to access apprenticeship opportunities in cases where supervision requirements are required.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represented 9.28 per cent of the population in the Townsville Employment Region in 2021. 43 per cent of the total Workforces Australia Employment Services caseloads are made up of Indigenous persons. Educational attainment for the Indigenous population is low, with 57 per cent of the Indigenous population aged 25-64 having attained a Certificate III level qualification or above, compared with 75 per cent of non-Indigenous adults. Financial reasons were the most commonly reported barrier to studying for a qualification (20.4 per cent).
- Access to childcare challenges across the region include limited spaces available and long wait lists, causing parents and carers barriers when looking to enter or re-enter the workforce.
- The region has many outlying areas with no (or very limited) public transport. There are no suburban rail services within the Townsville Employment Region and public transport in Mount Isa, Charters Towers, Ingham and Burdekin is limited to taxis only.
- A greater reliance on private vehicles may act as a barrier, particularly for disadvantaged individuals who do not have a valid driver license or regular access to a vehicle.
- Limited learner driver supports available throughout the region and wait lists for driving lessons are impacting individuals' ability to gain the 100 hours required for licencing. Limited mentors to support available Learner Driver programs is also impacting the number of individuals able to access these services.
- Access to appropriate training is limited within the rural and remote areas of the region. Registered Training Organisations on the ground are minimal, with costs for face-to-face training needs excessive. Minimum numbers of requirements set by providers also limits opportunities for access to training.
- As of December 2022, individuals aged 15-24 years represented over 20 per cent of the total Workforce Australia Employment Services caseloads in the Townsville Employment Region. Having a significant amount of young people disengaged from education, work or training can negatively impact a community's economic growth and development. If left unchecked, youth disengagement can have serious social repercussions such as an increase in crime rates and long-term unemployment as they reach adulthood.

Local jobs and skills priorities and strategies in the region

Priority 1 – Maximising the benefits of existing Australian Government, Queensland Government, local council and community driven employment and skills initiatives and funding to address current labour shortages and skills gaps.

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Access to appropriate funding and programs to support current labour market needs can be a challenge with incompatible timeframes and appropriate initiatives available. The capacity and capability of key organisations able to deliver such programs differs across the region with limited access and awareness in some areas.

How are we responding?

- The Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce (The Taskforce) continue to work with key stakeholders to increase awareness and capability around opportunities to create immediate employment opportunities leveraging State and Federal Government funding initiatives.
- The Taskforce will provide input and advice to assist in identifying the range of training options and programs (full qualification, short course, skill sets) that are directly linked to current workforce demand in the region to provide individuals with a streamlined pathways to upskilling and reskilling information.

- Utilising the Taskforce and other key stakeholders, encourage and link individuals to recognise career paths and other development opportunities through open discussions, online webinars and Industry showcase events.

Priority 2 – Create pathways into major and growth industries within the employment region.

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Lead in time for projects to commence don't allow sufficient time to skill individuals for participation on upcoming projects particularly in areas of growth (e.g. hydrogen, renewables) where suitable training options are not yet available or suitably aligned to Industry needs.

Access to appropriate and affordable training is also limited within the rural and remote Local Government Areas of the region with minimal on ground Registered Training Organisations to provide appropriate, accessible and affordable training options for individuals.

How are we responding?

- Work with businesses and Industry groups to identify areas of growth and demand for the Taskforce to identify project opportunities and drive solutions to support entry level individuals to participate on major projects.
- The Taskforce will engage Workforce Australia Employment Services Providers to link frequently with Industry to understand needs of businesses to better prepare individuals for future employment through targeted events, Workforce Australia Network meetings and other collaborative opportunities.
- The Taskforce will work with Industry and local businesses to identify appropriate project opportunities that address current skills gaps and future workforce needs.

Priority 3 – Generating opportunities for Indigenous skills development; aligned to local business and industry needs, including through training, apprenticeships, traineeships, and improved digital literacy.

What are our challenges and opportunities?

The rate of unemployed Indigenous is still a major concern. Indigenous people experience more difficulty transitioning from education to employment, which negatively impacts their aspirations, confidence, mental health and motivation to engage in further education or to look for work.

How are we responding?

- Using the expertise of the Taskforce, develop and implement targeted appropriate skills and work experience approaches for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people leading to secure employment outcomes.
- Working with the Taskforce and Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, engage with businesses who report difficulties recruiting entry level staff and support their efforts to engage with and recruit First Nations individuals.
- The Taskforce will identify and collaborate with organisations to drive pre-employment assessment and customised training in order to prepare Indigenous individuals to become employment ready.

Priority 4 – Identifying pathways for young people to develop skills and be supported to access labour market opportunities, particularly through apprenticeships and traineeships.

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Having a significant amount of young people out of work can negatively impact a community's economic growth and development. If left unchecked, youth unemployment can have serious social repercussions such as an increase in crime rates and long-term unemployment as they reach adulthood.

Access to appropriately skilled and experienced individuals continues to be the focus of conversation across many sectors, this could pose a future threat to opportunities for youth and entry level individuals to access apprenticeship opportunities in cases where supervision is required.

How are we responding?

- The Taskforce will identify and work with appropriate organisations to design projects to engage young people into trade pathways leading to apprenticeships within high demand and growth industries.
- Develop a comprehensive database of locally available youth services, programs and enterprises that will help simplify the design of potential education, training and employment pathways that will address local needs.
- The Taskforce will negotiate and promote flexible models to teach job-oriented skills that will lead to engagement by local businesses.

Priority 5 – Brokering employment opportunities for mature age individuals looking for work through collaboration with local community support services, businesses, and training organisations.

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Mature age individuals face many challenges when looking to enter or re-enter the workforce. This can include a lack of current skills aligned to current labour market needs, declining physical abilities, lack of confidence and a lack of flexible work and training arrangements available.

How are we responding?

- The Taskforce will work with appropriate organisations to assist in developing flexible employment and training opportunities for mature age individuals to accommodate their needs.
- Coordinate a range of training options, especially short course and industry specific skill sets through the weekly Jobs, programs and Events Broadcasts.
- The Taskforce will identify skilling and re-skilling pathways to support mature-aged individuals into the workforce through their connections and members.
- Engage with individuals serviced via Online Employment Services and Career Transition Assistance programs.

Want to know more?

- Contact: Steph Nicolaou, Townsville (including Mt Isa) Employment Facilitator: stephnicolaou@localjobsfnq.com.au
- Visit: [Local Jobs](#) or [Workforce Australia](#)