



ACT
Government

FUTURE SKILLS FOR FUTURE JOBS

GRANTS PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Skills Canberra
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic
Development Directorate

January 2021



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Produced for Skills Canberra, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The ACT Government is committed to the continued development and growth of a highly skilled workforce in the Nation's Capital.

Australian Apprenticeships are a fundamental component of the vocational education and training (VET) system, providing the opportunity for people to be employed while they train, and to develop their competence in the workplace as they learn from employers with industry expertise.

The Future Skills for Future Jobs program contributes to growth in local jobs and economic recovery by encouraging Australian Apprenticeship commencements and new Australian Apprenticeship pathways to meet future workforce needs. Successful projects will specifically target occupations in demand, future growth industries, trade apprenticeships, cohorts identified for additional support and/or industries significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Future Skills for Future Jobs program also contributes to increasing the retention in, and completion of, Australian Apprenticeships and the ongoing employment of project participants through improving their employment foundation skills.

The ACT Government has committed \$990,000 in 2020-21, which includes funding provided by the Australian Government under the National Partnership on the Skilling Australians Fund (the National Partnership), to increase the number of Australian Apprenticeship commencements (including Australian Apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, pre-traineeships, and higher apprenticeships) in the Territory.

The *Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program Guidelines* are for group training organisations (GTOs) and registered training organisations (RTOs), businesses, employers and industry. They provide information on the process for submitting an expression of interest and co-developing a project plan for the Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program.

Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program

The Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program provides funding for innovative projects that promote market diversification and aim to increase the number of Australian Apprenticeship commencements and contribute to retention and completions.

Overview of process

Applications for funding will be received through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process. EOIs will be assessed in accordance with the Evaluation Criteria. EOIs will be shortlisted via a two-stage process followed by a co-development process with the ACT Government. Successful applicants will enter a Deed of Grant. The funding process is outlined in more detail throughout this document.

Step	Date
Program announced and Expressions of Interest open	11 January 2021
Expressions of Interest closes	18 February 2021
Notification of final funding outcome	19 April 2021
Project commencement	By 30 June 2021
Project conclusion	Up to 30 June 2023

2. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

In line with the focus of the National Partnership, projects must:

- > include industry partners, or be industry led
- > identify new pathway opportunities for Australian Apprenticeships
- > promote market diversification and productivity
- > contribute to achieving the ACT's targets under the National Partnership.

Projects should also align with one or more of the following Skilling Australians Fund and ACT Government priorities:

- > occupations in demand
- > occupations with a reliance on skilled migration pathways; and/or
- > industries and sectors of future growth including, but not limited to, the following priorities:
 - tourism
 - hospitality
 - health, ageing, and community and social services
 - engineering
 - manufacturing
 - building and construction
 - agriculture
 - digital technologies.
- > ACT-specific key sectors, including:
 - defence
 - cyber
 - renewable energy
 - space and spatial science
 - tourism.
- > trade apprenticeships
- > rural, regional and remote areas
- > targeted cohorts, including:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
 - people with a disability
 - youth at risk (aged 15-24 years)
 - long-term unemployed
 - mature-aged workers
 - women in trades
 - veterans.
- > industries and communities experiencing structural adjustment
- > industries significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. CO-DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

A co-development approach will facilitate collaboration throughout the project development and implementation stages, ensuring that projects effectively meet the program objectives and the needs of industry, while also addressing the ACT and Australian Governments' priorities for skills and workforce development more broadly.

Shortlisted applicants will work with Skills Canberra to co-develop the project plan for consideration by the ACT Government program delegate. This includes providing information and advice to support the project plan and facilitating connections with relevant stakeholders where appropriate.

4. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Expressions of interest may be submitted by individual businesses and organisations, including (but not limited to):

- > employers
- > industry associations
- > community organisations
- > GTOs
- > RTOs.

Expressions of interest should focus on projects that embody innovative approaches and collaborative models that result in increased Australian Apprenticeship commencements in the ACT. Project proposals will have a higher likelihood of success if they also clearly articulate how the project will develop participants to successfully complete an Australian Apprenticeship.

Expressions of interest should demonstrate:

- > evidence of demand for workforce skills by employers or industry
- > how the proposed activities are intended to lead to an Australian Apprenticeship pathway
- > how business (employers) will be involved in the project development and implementation
- > partnership or consortium opportunities that will support the project outcomes
- > how the intended project outcomes will be sustained into the future
- > a break-down of project costs
- > value for money.

Expressions of interest must also clearly define the project scope and milestones, which should not create dependency on ongoing government funding beyond the life of the project.

Where a project includes nationally recognised training, the RTO delivering the training must hold a Training Initiative Funding Agreement.

Expressions of Interest will be accepted between 11 January 2021 and 18 February 2021. Funded projects must commence before 30 June 2021 and conclude by 30 June 2023.

Note: Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program funding is available for projects that will support an increase in Australian Apprenticeship commencements. Funding for the delivery of Australian Apprenticeships training will continue to be available under the ACT Australian Apprenticeships User Choice Program (subject to the qualification and participant eligibility requirements).

The following will not be funded:

- > an applicant's existing services, unless the applicant can demonstrate additional outcomes
- > duplicate services that are already being delivered in the ACT
- > expenses incurred prior to signing the Deed of Grant
- > sustainability of an existing project or program funded through a previous Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program funding round or another grants program

5. AVAILABLE FUNDING

Funding of \$990,000 is available under the Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program in 2020-21.

The maximum amount of funding per expression of interest that can be sought is \$300,000. There is no minimum amount per expression of interest, and no limit on the number of expressions of interest an applicant can submit, providing they are for different project proposals or for specific services delivered by a partnering organisation or consortium.

Projects that seek the maximum funding amount will need to demonstrate a strong return on investment in the form of training commencements and contribution to successful completions.

Applicants are also encouraged to provide in-kind contributions to the project. In-kind contributions are not mandatory; however, they will be considered during the evaluation of the EOIs. This can comprise purchased goods and services (cash expenditure), other in-kind contributions (i.e. the value of the applicant's work time) or a combination of both. In-kind contributions must occur during the funded project and not prior. All applications will need to demonstrate that they represent value for money, regardless of any in-kind contributions.

The ACT Government will determine the number of projects to be funded based on the quality of responses received. Project funding allocations will be determined during the shortlisting process and may be adjusted by Skills Canberra, in negotiation with the applicant, during the co-development phase. Applicants cannot be guaranteed to receive their full requested funding amount for the project, even when their project substantially meets the criteria.

Note: The Evaluation Panel may recommend a proposed funding amount for a shortlisted project. This amount may vary from the total amount of funding sought in the expression of interest. It is expected that the total funding allocated to the project will be limited to that amount, however, adjustments to the proposed funding amount may be considered during the co-development process if required. The final funding amount will be subject to approval by the program delegate.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process requires an expression of interest from applicants, followed by an iterative project co-development process. The closing date for the expressions of interest is 5:00 pm on 18 February 2021.

Expressions of interest can be submitted online on SmartyGrants via <https://CMTEDD.smartygrants.com.au/202021FSFI>

As part of the evaluation process, EOIs will be shortlisted via a two-stage process followed by the co-development process and final funding outcome.

Stage One Shortlisting: All EOIs will be reviewed by an evaluation panel who will select a shortlist of EOIs to be invited to provide a brief presentation and accompanying questions and answers. EOIs that aren't successfully shortlisted will be notified at this stage.

Stage Two Shortlisting: Following the shortlisted project presentations, the evaluation panel will make a provisional decision on what projects will proceed to the co-development process and a recommended funding allocation. EOIs that are successful in this shortlisting stage will be notified of the proposed funding allocation before proceeding to co-development,

Final funding outcomes: Following the co-development process, Skills Canberra will provide the final project plans to the ACT Government program delegate for consideration and approval. Approved funding recipients will then enter a Deed of Grant with the ACT Government.

The timeframe for each stage in the evaluation process may vary depending on the nature of the EOIs received. Final funding outcomes will be confirmed by 19 April 2021.

Note: the shortlisting outcomes are not a guarantee of funding. The final project plan will be subject to approval by the program delegate within the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate.

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Expressions of interest and project plans will be assessed against the below evaluation criteria.

Organisational Effectiveness

1. Understanding of the industry sector and current and future workforce needs.
2. Understanding of the issues and factors impacting Australian Apprenticeship commencements within the industry locally and, if relevant, nationally.
3. A demonstrated capacity to engage with the target groups and build a collaborative approach with Skills Canberra and other stakeholders.
4. Demonstrated adherence to the *Work Health Safety Act 2011* and applicable regulations.
5. Staff capacity and capability to implement the project and specified activities.
6. Demonstrated capacity to make financial and/or in-kind contributions towards successfully achieving the objectives and requirements of the project.

Activity Effectiveness

1. Originality and innovation of the proposed activities in addressing program objectives.
2. Evidence of factors impacting Australian Apprenticeship commencements in the industry and how this gap can be addressed by the proposed activity.
3. Strategies to support successful completion.
4. Evidence supporting the likely effectiveness and sustainability of the proposed methodologies and strategies to address the program objectives.
5. Sound strategies to deliver tailored support in relation to identified social and economic inclusion groups.
6. Effective communication strategies for promoting activity and sharing outcomes beyond the direct parties involved.
7. Evidence that the proposed project design can effectively leverage the applicant organisation's identified financial and/or in-kind contributions, both during and beyond project implementation.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Once a project plan is approved (following the co-development process), successful applicants will enter a Deed of Grant with the ACT Government. The Deed of Grant will outline the requirements of the program and the funding conditions.

The project funding will be payable to the recipient against defined milestones, determined and negotiated during the co-development and grant negotiation phases, and reflected in the Deed of Grant.

For each approved project, the ACT Government will require:

- > the right of approval/consultation over major changes to the project scope, team, budget and the collaborating partners
- > the funding recipient to report on and acquit approved funds in accordance with the requirements specified in the Deed of Grant
- > permission for the Territory or its agents on reasonable notice to attend any premises where any funded activity occurs
- > the Recipient to participate in media interviews or surveys related to the Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program, as requested by the Territory.

Each approved project will also require a communication plan developed in consultation with Skills Canberra, including the following requirements:

1. Publications and marketing, excluding social media:

- a) All publicity, announcements and communications made to the community must include acknowledgement of the Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program as an ACT Government initiative.
- b) Any publications, promotional and advertising materials relating to the project must include:
 - i. the words: 'This project receives funding support from the ACT and Australian Governments through the Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program, under the National Partnership on the Skilling Australians Fund'; and
 - ii. the Real Skills for Real Careers logo available from <https://www.myskills.gov.au/more/resources/>.
- c) Funding recipients may use the ACT Government logo ('an initiative of ACT Government') in publications, promotional and advertising materials relating to the project pending approval of Skills Canberra. All requests should be made in writing to skills.projects@act.gov.au.
- d) The Recipient must participate in media interviews or surveys related to the Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program, as requested by the Territory.

2. Case studies:

- a) Funding recipients will facilitate the collection of participant case studies.
- b) Skills Canberra will compile a library of case studies and assist in promoting the case studies to industry and the ACT community via its website, Directorate social media channels, ministerial briefings and existing ministerial communication channels such as media releases and social media.

3. Media and Events:

- a) The Communication Plan will identify key media and events relating to project implementation and highlight opportunities for ministerial, media, school and/or ACT Government agency involvement.
- b) Funding recipients must provide at least 10 working days' notice to Skills Canberra of any events or media relating to funded projects and provide Skills Canberra with the opportunity to review media content prior to its release.
- c) Funding recipients must provide at least 15 working days' notice to Skills Canberra for any activities involving Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs). Skills Canberra will coordinate any ministerial or ACT Government invitations and involvement in funded project activities.

4. Social media:

- a) All social media posts relating to projects should include *#SkillsCBR* and *#RealSkillsforRealCareers*, and tag ACT Government where possible. This will satisfy the requirements of 1. (b) *Publications and Marketing*, for social media activities only.

9. KEY DATES

A summary of key steps and dates relating to the 2020-21 Future Skills for Future Jobs Grants Program is provided below.

Step	Date
Program announced and Expressions of Interest open	11 January 2021
Expressions of Interest close	18 February 2021
Notification of final funding outcome	19 April 2021
Project commencement	By 30 June 2021
Project conclusion	Up to 30 June 2023

10. CONTACT

If you would like to discuss your project or the program, please contact Skills Canberra on (02) 6205 8555 or email skills.projects@act.gov.au



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