Attachment A: ACT Community Services Industry Workforce Plan 2017-2020

Purpose

The ACT Community Services Industry Strategy 2016-2026 (Industry Strategy) identifies the need for a skilled workforce to meet the growing demand for services and provide more flexible and responsive client centred care. It promotes strategies which can support shared training programs and cross skilling of workers including upskilling of volunteers. Strategies aimed at attracting and retaining appropriately qualified staff are also to be considered which could include joint marketing campaigns and other resource sharing initiatives.

Two key outcomes to be achieved through the Industry Strategy relate to the development of a workforce plan:

- *Community Services in the ACT have a Workforce Plan to support the recruitment and retention of individuals with the skills and abilities to meet current and future needs.*
- *Community Services in the ACT employ professional and highly skilled staff and volunteers who are committed to providing quality services. Retention rates are high and staff are supported with recognised training programs and flexible work environments.*

This Community Services Industry Workforce Plan focuses on goals and actions to grow, strengthen and sustain the workforce to pursue the vision outlined in the Industry Strategy:

An inclusive, equitable and sustainable Community Services Industry will:

- *deliver quality services to create more connected communities which will support vulnerable individuals and families to be empowered and to fully participate in their communities and to take charge of their own future*
- *undertake community development to create social value, build social capital and improve living conditions*
- *put the needs of our clients and communities at the centre of everything we do*
- *be a trusted voice on the needs of our communities with a strong evidence base that will shape policies and engage in social planning for the Territory and its regions.*

This Workforce Plan will ensure the following actions identified in the Industry Strategy are progressed:

Industry capability improvements

- Sector Development and Innovation Fund

Enhancing governance and leadership

- Support industry-wide collaboration

The level of impact of the actions outlined in this Workforce Plan is contingent on other key actions across the Industry Strategy priority areas being undertaken simultaneously as outlined below:

Industry capability improvements

- Common ICT infrastructure and quality systems

Exploring sustainable adaptive models to grow

- Greater funding certainty
- New approaches to procurement

Research, planning and evaluation

- Community needs assessment
- Outcomes measurement framework
- Industry profiling

An Industry-led workforce plan

The actions outlined in the table on the following page were identified by the industry through the development of the Industry Strategy, the Joint Community Government Reference Group, the Industry Strategy Steering Group and an industry-wide consultative workshop on 2 June 2017. The actions have been captured under four themes:

- Grow the workforce to meet current and future needs
- Improve retention of the current workforce
- Strengthen capability and career development
- Cultivate leadership and succession planning

The initial actions under each theme will be monitored and refreshed as actions are implemented and reviewed, and as the workforce changes and grows. This will ensure that the plan remains dynamic and relevant as the Community Services Industry adapts to community expectations and changes in the operating environment. The plan recognises that workforce development projects already underway (eg within funded programs, peak bodies or led by employers) will contribute to activity under the themes outlined above. Existing knowledge, resources and opportunities for collaboration will be considered as actions are scoped in more detail.

Where to from here?

The Industry Strategy Steering Group (Steering Group) will oversee the implementation of the actions set out in this plan, working in collaboration with consumers, unions, community organisations, government and the VET and higher education sectors. As an industry-led Steering Group, membership will include service providers, funders, consumers and unions alongside ACT Government representatives. The Steering Group members and chair are appointed annually by the Joint Community Government Reference Group.

Stay Connected

The themes and actions identified in this plan are a first step in implementing the Industry Strategy. The Industry Strategy and related material is available via the ACT Community Services Directorate website http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/hcs/community-sector-reform. This Workforce Plan outlines a collective approach to grow, strengthen and sustain the community services workforce in the ACT. The next step is to make it happen with support from all stakeholders.

If you would like to know more about the Workforce Plan and/or want to contribute to its development and implementation, please email: industrystrategy@act.gov.au

ACT Community Services Industry Workforce Plan 2017-2020

Actions

ACTIONS (The actions identified below have been identified as activities that are foundational, capacity building or specific actions, this category affects their priority for implementation. See the briefing paper for further information regarding the categorisation)	**Foundation Action**	**Specific Action (2017-18)**	**Capacity Building Action**
Grow the workforce to meet current and future needs			
1.1. Identify current and future workforce requirements	✓		
1.1.1. Collect and analyse relevant data to provide the industry with a regular workforce observations and trends report to support workforce planning	✓		
1.1.2. Review workforce characteristics and needs and align to Community Needs Assessment	✓		
1.2. Articulate, promote and facilitate entry points to working in the sector	✓		
1.2.1. Establish minimum standards for entry/core skills required for various roles in the sector, including specialist roles	✓		
1.2.2. Create and/or articulate clear entry points across sub-sectors and from other industries into the Community Services industry	✓		
1.2.3. Develop and implement a Communication Strategy to promote the work and opportunities available in the ACT Community services Industry		✓	
1.2.4. Improve Industry knowledge of the variety of ways volunteers can support the mission of community organisations		✓	
1.2.5. Establish a consistent approach to the evaluation of recognition of prior learning and experience for employment	✓		
1.3. Engage and develop connection of employers with VET and higher education providers			✓
1.4. Improve placement opportunities and support			✓
1.4.1. Develop student placement resources for employers		✓	
Improve retention of current workforce			
2.1. Develop Industry-wide good practice guide for retention, with a particular focus on different strategies for different cohorts within the workforce		Action for 2018-19	
2.2. Develop agreed framework and tools to support on-boarding, peer support, supervision, coaching and mentoring		✓	
Strengthen capability and career development			
3.1. Develop tool to map the pathways across a career and across the sector	✓		
3.2. Review existing workforce development programs in order to plan to reduce gaps and increase access			✓
3.2.1. Enhance capability development available in the sector to meet the needs of people in various roles across the sector and in various stages of career progression			✓
3.2.2. Develop the capability of employees and volunteers through accessible, fit for purpose learning and development opportunities (both formal and on-the-job)			✓
3.3. Build Capacity in mainstream organisations to work with people and communities who experience marginalisation or have complex needs			✓
3.4. Develop organisations' capacity to backfill workers while on training or leave (ie scope the establishment of a relief pool)		✓	
Cultivate leadership and succession planning			
4.1. Develop and implement strategies to support knowledge transfer		Action for 2018-19	
4.2. Develop an approach to identify key and emerging leaders in the Industry			✓
4.2.1. Create a scholarship opportunity to identify and provide support for leaders in the industry to access formal training, structured coaching or mentoring and peer networking		✓	
4.3. Fund access to leadership development opportunities		✓	
4.4. Align leadership practice with Industry Strategy Vision and Values		✓	
4.4.1. Develop a toolkit for boards around achieving the Industry Strategy vision		✓	