



Australian Government



National
Careers
Institute

2021-23 Strategic Plan

National Careers Institute

[NCI.DESE.GOV.AU](https://nci.de.se.gov.au)

[YOURCAREER.GOV.AU](https://yourcareer.gov.au)

Executive Director's foreword



Navigating the changing world of work can be intimidating at the best of times. The National Careers Institute (NCI) was created in 2019, to provide school leavers, people returning to the workforce after a break, those wishing to update their skills and anyone contemplating a career change. With the best advice available on the education and training they need to pursue their career aspirations.

Irrespective of age or career stage, every Australian should have the opportunity to pursue education, training and employment that matches their skillset, goals and ambitions.

We know that people who receive career development support are twice as likely to find work¹. The NCI provides all Australians with access to accurate and authoritative information to inform career planning, through our yourcareer.gov.au. In-person career support is also available to youth (aged 15-24) through our school leaver support program.

The NCI's partnership grants program has awarded over \$4 million in funding to twelve organisations who will work collaboratively to improve career outcomes and create education and training pathways aligned to the needs of employers. Strengthening the links between education and employment leads to better responses to skills shortages and smoother labour market transitions².

There is no single pathway to a successful and enjoyable working career. It is not uncommon for career paths to change directions several times over the course of their working lives. For people entering the workforce for the first time, to those wanting to upgrade their skills, to those considering a career change, the NCI provides the information they need.

I look forward to working in partnership with our stakeholders, industry, employers and those who use our services, to deliver information and support to enable all Australians to realise their goals and pursue their career aspirations.

Tiffany Blight

Executive Director

National Careers Institute

¹ *Effectiveness of career choice interventions: A meta-analytic replication and extension* (2017), by Susan C. Whiston, Yue Li, Nancy Goodrich Mitts and Lauren Wright

² *A Skilled Workforce for Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth: A G20 Training Strategy* (2010), International Labour Office – Geneva

Introduction

2021-23 National Careers Institute Strategic Plan

A strong and effective career services system is critical to the economy and to helping prepare people for the workforce of today and the future. Australians need reliable information and career guidance services to effectively navigate the changing world of work and build productive, sustainable and fulfilling careers.

The Strengthening Skills: Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System described careers information as 'a confusing maze'. Users struggled to find the information they need to make informed choices about their education, study and work pathways leading to skills mismatches, wasted course subsidies and poorer outcomes for individuals.

The NCI will support Australia's education, training and employment systems by serving as the authoritative and trusted source of careers information. The vision of the NCI is to be Australia's recognised, central careers body, simplifying and strengthening Australia's career development system, to address a fragmented and difficult to use career information and services landscape.

Our mission is to drive up the quality and coverage of career guidance, including improved accessibility of information about education pathways and employment outcomes, to ensure that people are maximising their workforce potential, including directing people towards jobs in demand. We work closely with the National Skills Commission (NSC) to provide Australians with information about the labour market, workforce changes and emerging skills needs.

The NCI maintains an agnostic approach to career pathway selection by providing a range of different careers options and simplifying how someone can follow through with their learning pathways of choice. We recognise the VET sector is not widely understood and there are many misconceptions surrounding the benefits and opportunities that an individual can gain by completing a VET qualification. Through our targeted programs and promotional activities, the NCI is assisting people to better understand how VET qualifications can lead to successful, meaningful and professional careers. This will enable people to have the information they need, to make an informed decision about their preferred career pathway.

In seeking to drive positive change across the Australian careers sector and the broader economy, we partner with a wide range of stakeholders including industry, employers, as well as federal, state and territory governments.

Our governance arrangements

The NCI operates as a non-statutory, independently identified entity within the Department of Education, Skills and Employment. A Ministerial Charter governs our work and outlines the role, functions and accountability arrangements. The Charter and this Strategic Plan detail how we deliver our services and how our performance is measured.

An Advisory Board provides independent, expert advice to guide the strategic direction of the NCI. The functions and responsibilities of the Advisory Board are described in the Charter and the Advisory Board's Terms of Reference.

There are three levels to NCI's Strategic Plan.

- Strategic Impact Areas – long term areas of focus to embed systemic change.
- Strategic Objectives – outlines how we work to influence our strategic impact areas.
- Strategic Priorities – one to three-year activities the NCI is currently implementing.

Our focus – Strategic Impact Areas

The NCI will drive substantive and embedded change in four key areas:

- Support **informed and confident consumers** to navigate the education, training, skills and employment supports they need to develop their careers.
- Encourage Australians to engage in **lifelong learning and skills development** across their careers.
- Contribute to **skills for industry and the economy** through a better skilled workforce by making sure people know where jobs and skills demand are now and in the future.
- Contribute to building a more **consumer focused careers service system**, connecting supports in ways that work best for users.

How we work – Our Strategic Objectives

The NCI's objectives outline how we operate:

- **We inform** – Strengthen careers data, information and support to enable individuals to more effectively manage and develop their career.
- **We connect** – Foster partnerships between individuals, industry, employers, schools, career advisors and career influencers to encourage information sharing, collaboration and best practice across the careers sector.
- **We promote** – Promote careers and skills development by driving awareness of career information and services, learning and working pathways so that individuals are informed to better navigate their career options.

2021-23 Strategic Priorities

NCI plays a leadership role in the careers sector and supports opportunities to promote education, training and career pathways for people of all ages and stages.

The NCI strategic priorities over the next one to three years are outlined as follows:

1. NCI services are tailored to all ages and stages underpinned by the latest data and research.

- 1.1. Research the impact and influence of career life stages, behaviours and design information and digital tools to support people at their moments of career choice.
- 1.2. In partnership with the NSC, and other trusted sources, develop targeted information to help support people of all ages and stages of their career.
- 1.3. Build a comprehensive understanding of different cohort segments including vulnerable groups and regionally based people to develop targeted information and support.
- 1.4. Enhance NCI's presence in the community-based activities such as participation in careers exhibitions and job fairs across Australia.

2. Recognise and promote the benefits of a career through vocational education and training.

- 2.1. Promote the benefits of VET and the Government's broader VET initiatives through the NCI's promotional channels.
- 2.2. Implement the VET Information Strategy, promote the Australian VET Alumni program and deliver an enhanced Australian Training Awards.

3. The NCI is recognised as providing authoritative and accurate career information and services that lead to improved career decision making.

- 3.1. Deliver innovative career development services and connections for people at all stages of their careers through the NCI Partnership Grants program.
- 3.2. Deliver qualified career support services.
- 3.3. Work collaboratively with states and territories to promote career services from across Australia and assist people to navigate their local options.
- 3.4. Develop and implement an NCI Strategic Communication Framework, to ensure the benefits of career guidance is known and understood.

4. Create user-centric and personalised technology solutions for careers information.

- 4.1. Enhance the Your Career website by building additional data driven features and content.
- 4.2. Consolidate careers websites to create a seamless journey for people seeking careers information.
- 4.3. Improve the My Skills website to help people compare courses and training providers, make informed choices about VET, and develop a new secure registered training organisation (RTO) Portal.
- 4.4. Enhance the training.gov.au website to ensure the national register of RTOs and training courses are available to support VET professionals.

5. NCI supports industry and employers with careers and skills information that enables them to proactively attract and support their workforce for the jobs of today and the future.

- 5.1. Partner with industries and employers to promote career pathways based on demand, growth and skills forecasting.
- 5.2. Enhance Your Career with tools and information that supports employers to undertake proactive workforce and skills planning.
- 5.3. Work with Commonwealth, state and territory governments to connect people with study, training and job opportunities for in-demand industries.





6. The NCI delivers an evidence-base to inform the careers sector and advance career development in Australia, and to measure the NCI's impact.

- 6.1. Develop a careers research agenda to inform best practice career guidance and share these insights with the sector through the NCI clearinghouse.
- 6.2. Undertake user research and collect data to understand the preferences, behaviours and attitudes of people who interact with our products and services.
- 6.3. Provide career guidance leadership and policy throughout the careers sector.
- 6.4. Develop and implement a reporting framework that measures the NCI's impact.

Measures for Success

The NCI delivers services and supports that help inform peoples decisions about education, training and career pathways. We also work with partners across the careers development system and Australian industry to build capability and improve access to evidence-based information and advice.

The NCI will measure its success in the four Strategic Impact Areas. They relate to opportunities and challenges facing Australia's economy and labour market in the future.

Strategic Impact Areas	Measures for Success
 <p>Informed and confident consumers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People have better access to timely and relevant information about career options and associated education and training pathways. • Individual decision-making about careers is more informed and people have increased confidence in navigating diverse career pathways.
 <p>Lifelong learning and skills development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging challenges or priorities are identified, and the sector has an evidence base to inform continuous improvement of careers services. • Best practice in careers development is visible and recognised.
 <p>Skills for industry and the economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry and employers strategic workforce needs are informed and defined through agreed partnerships and information sharing. • People are connected with study, training and job opportunities for in-demand industries in collaboration with Industry and Government.
 <p>Consumer-focused service system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively monitor and aggregate careers data, research and best practice to drive evidence-based advice to government and service system participants. • Innovative approaches to careers development are delivered by a range of partners and service system providers seek continuous improvement.

Contact us

- Contact us at nci@dese.gov.au
- To find out more about our work, visit www.nci.dese.gov.au
- For career information, visit YourCareer.gov.au