

Local Jobs Plan

Wimmera Mallee Employment Region | VIC | October 2024

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 the [Wimmera Mallee Employment Region](#)

Local labour market challenges in the region

- Youth unemployment in Wimmera Mallee remains high compared with the overall unemployment rate for the region. Young people represent a significant percentage of the region's Workforce Australia Employment Services caseload.
- First Nations and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience significant challenges in connecting with, and remaining engaged in education, training and employment opportunities.
- Mature Age individuals experience multiple challenges to securing and retaining employment opportunities in a competitive market and are more likely to experience long-term unemployment if challenges are not addressed.
- Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) individuals in Wimmera Mallee may experience unique challenges in accessing training and employment opportunities that match their skillset and needs.
- Transport challenges continue to pose a significant barrier for individuals as there is limited public transport in the region. Individuals without a driver's licence or their own reliable transport do not have access to job and training opportunities.
- There is a lack of employees entering or remaining in vital roles such as early childhood education and care, aged care, personal care and disability services. Rural towns in the region are disproportionately affected compared with the rest of the state. A portion of principle primary carers are unable to return to work due to the shortages of childcare placements.
- There are shortages in industries such as construction, transport and logistics, manufacturing and processing, mining and agriculture. Occupations such as technicians and trades workers, labourers, machinery operators and drivers are in high demand. Workforce shortages for skilled workers including managers and professionals in various occupations also remains high for the region.

Local jobs and skills priorities and strategies in the region

Priority 1 – Youth unemployment

What are our challenges and opportunities?

Young people in the region face multiple challenges and experience increasing disengagement. Young people who do not transition into work or training upon leaving school are likely to become or remain disengaged. As the demand for entry-level and skilled workers grows, there are opportunities to broker employment for young people in the care sector, as well as industries with in-demand occupations such as trades work, labourers, machinery operators and drivers. There is also opportunity to engage young people in further education and training to meet the future demand for skilled workers.

How are we responding?

- Identifying solutions to increase youth engagement in education, employment and training opportunities.
- Collaborating with Transport Victoria's P21 and L2P programs to support youth to access driving mentoring and obtain a driver's licence.
- Collaborating with Workforce Australia Employment Services Providers, Transition to Work Providers and Apprentice Connect Australia Providers to promote apprenticeship and traineeship pathways as sustainable employment outcomes that meet labour market needs.
- Engaging with stakeholders to maximise the benefits of existing Australian, state and local government programs and business support.
- Developing and/or supporting pre-employment engagement programs that build aspirations and capacity for individuals (age 15 to 25) to undertake first time employment, particularly in the care sector and other in demand occupations.

Priority 2 – First Nations Peoples

What are our challenges and opportunities?

The unemployment rate for First Nations people in the region tends to be higher than non-Indigenous people, with First Nations people showing a trend of remaining on employment services caseload long-term unless challenges are strategically addressed. The labour market is sometimes viewed as inaccessible by First Nations people who may also face additional challenges such as being an early school leaver, or mature age. There is opportunity to collaborate with First Nations peoples within the region to create innovative and culturally appropriate solutions to identify and address complex challenges to employment.

How are we responding?

- Collaborating with First Nations community leaders to develop employment and training initiatives that are relevant to the current needs and aspirations of First Nations People.
- Collaborating with Transport Victoria's P21 and L2P programs to support individuals to access driving mentoring, and address challenges in obtaining a driver's licence.
- Engaging with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to ensure First Nations people are provided with training opportunities that are culturally appropriate and meet the labour market needs of the region.
- Providing necessary support and resources to ensure individuals can take advantage of employment and training opportunities and co-designing projects to reduce challenges with input from Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations and First Nations leaders.
- Advocating for increased opportunities for First Nations people with organisations and industry to maximise opportunities.

Priority 3 – Mature age individuals

What are our challenges and opportunities?

There is a high proportion of mature-age residents in the region who experience challenges to employment. Addressing these challenges requires a tailored approach to ensure information and employment services are accessible to this cohort. Challenges include low digital literacy, identifying and promoting transferrable skills, difficulty accessing training and arranging flexible work opportunities compatible with individual's needs and family dynamics. Opportunities exist to support participants into appropriate training and employment and fill industry and skills shortages.

How are we responding?

- Enhancing the link between existing programs and generating employment opportunities for mature aged participants.
- Identifying skills gaps by collaborating with stakeholders and utilising local knowledge.
- Coordinating and promoting training options including accredited qualifications, pre-accredited training, short courses and micro-credentials with RTOs to expedite job readiness in industries that are experiencing growth and a shortage of skilled labour.
- Collaborating with support services to address challenges to literacy and numeracy and integrate opportunities for participants to address digital and alpha numeric literacy while developing skills relevant to local employment opportunities.

Priority 4 - Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) persons

What are our challenges and opportunities?

There is a high proportion of CALD residents in the region. Challenges include the need to create inclusive and ongoing employment and training opportunities, improve English language skills and self-confidence and create avenues for networking and information sharing to ensure labour market access is possible. A tailored approach is required to prepare participants for job readiness, by addressing challenges and supporting participants into in-demand roles, as well as training and skill building opportunities.

How are we responding?

- Identifying skills gaps for CALD groups by collaborating with stakeholders and utilising local knowledge.
- Coordinating and promoting training options including accredited qualifications, pre-accredited training, short courses and micro-credentials with RTOs to expedite job readiness in industries that are experiencing growth and a shortage of skilled labour.
- Collaborating with support services to address challenges to learning English, as well as literacy and numeracy, to integrate opportunities for participants to address digital and alpha numeric literacy while developing skills relevant to local employment opportunities.

Priority 5 – Critical minerals and industry skills shortages

What are our challenges and opportunities?

To meet short-term and long-term employment opportunities, we will require a skilled regional workforce for the emerging workforce shortages and exponential growth planned in new industries, including critical minerals, known as mineral sands projects, renewable energy industries, the care sector, construction, transport and logistics, manufacturing and processing. Collaboration with industry will be required to understand emerging workforce requirements across different skill levels and occupations to ensure local participants and complementary business stakeholders are well positioned to capitalise on the expected growth.

How are we responding?

- Collaborating with RTOs and education providers to coordinate training options including short courses and micro-credentialing to expedite job readiness for these industries and connect individuals to Vocational Education and Training (VET) pathways, as well as apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities.
- Supporting the ongoing development and promotion of a cross-border industry taskforce as a central communication point and strategic planning body to address cross-border mineral sands workforce needs, as well as planning for, and reducing the impact of labour shortages in the agriculture and horticulture workforce.
- Partnering with stakeholders to leverage existing Australian, state and local government programs.
- Connecting individuals with upskilling and training to ensure they have an opportunity to access major project employment opportunities in the region and meet labour market demands.

Want to know more?

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Visit: [Local Jobs](#) or [Workforce Australia](#)