



MEDIA RELEASE

Service Skills Australia is one of 11 industry skills councils funded by the Australian Government to support skills development. We represent a range of industry sectors including tourism, hospitality and events; wholesale, retail and personal services; and sport, fitness and recreation.

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Australia's Tourism and Hospitality industry has received nearly \$12 million for the implementation of an innovative workforce development strategy

The tourism and hospitality industry has been strengthened through the establishment of Workforce Futures, a new Workforce Development initiative worth \$11.8 million. The program funding has been provided through both industry contribution and from government through the National Workforce Development Fund. A true industry driven partnership approach has made this initiative a reality though the work done by Service Skills Australia (SSA) who manage the project.

As a national strategy, the initiative presents a practical approach to develop the local tourism and hospitality sector and is the result of collaborative action between industry and government.

The initiative is built around a national network of 100 industry Skills Advisors whose engagement facilitates an informed approach to target skills development within businesses. Skills Advisors are drawn from a partnership of industry associations. This network partnership, a coalition of industry, ensures both currency and depth of industry knowledge is provided to the market. The Skills Advisory Network whilst targeting tourism and hospitality businesses in remote, regional, rural and major population centres, also ensures the inclusion of businesses within the 8 Tourism 2020 "hotspots".

With \$6.035 million allocated to fund roll out the Skills Advisory Network (within hotspots and across the country) places businesses in the unique position of having fully funded access to industry specific workforce diagnostics. The diagnostic tools and the online platform to support the engagement process has been custom designed for the tourism and hospitality industry. The true value of the program is in the capability of Skills Advisors to contextualise and interpret information about a business and its staff at the individual business level. Recommended solutions, strategies and actions are truly bespoke responding to each business' own particular needs.

The Australian tourism and hospitality sectors are made up of a large number of small (including micro) and medium sized businesses. This results in a range of unique constraints, including operating hours, seasonality, and a vast geography, all contributing to make traditional methods of workforce development and training appear inappropriate and unresponsive to the needs of businesses. The Workforce Futures program enables tourism and hospitality operators of all sizes to access the specific workforce development requirements appropriate to their needs. It will also assist in identifying which current funded programs are best aligned to the business' needs through a unique integration of a data base capturing over 900 funded programs with the workforce diagnostic tool.



An added benefit of the Workforce Futures program is the specific provision of \$2.4 million through the National Workforce Development Fund and \$2.2 million from industry for targeted skills development. This will allow for the uptake of 1200 training places by businesses who participate in the Skills Advisory process.

Workforce Futures is now “open for business”, and thanks to our network partners 100 Skills Advisors are resourced, trained and on the ground ready to engage with tourism and hospitality businesses across the country.

Further information on the project can be found at <http://www.workforcefutures.com.au>

For further information please contact:

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