

Training Priority Projects

Guidelines 2022-23

Released August 2022

1. Introduction

The South Australian Government invests in the state's vocational education and training (VET) system to skill South Australia's workforce for today and the future.

In 2022-23, Skills SA is supporting Training Priority Projects (TPP) that develop and pilot innovative delivery approaches and training products to address the unmet, specific or emerging skills need of industry sectors, regions and communities and achieve high quality outcomes for students.

Designed to complement existing government initiatives, TPP focuses on responsive, practical and sustainable solutions that address unmet training and skills need or market gaps. Projects may offer speed to market and facilitate opportunities to develop and pilot state specific training products and delivery approaches that improve training completions and employment outcomes for students.

Projects may involve workforce planning, delivery and/or development of accredited and non-accredited training, as well as micro-credentials, learner support services and project management activities.

1.1. Project streams

In 2022-23, there are two project streams:

- Priority projects
- Building innovation and capability projects.

In addition, Skills SA may commission discrete projects aligned to strategic purchasing objectives.



Stream 1: Priority projects

Priority projects support applicants to identify and/or respond to unmet training and skills needs or market gaps in regions and/or industry sectors and develop skills pathways for targeted groups of learners to improve training completions and employment outcomes for students.

There are two types of priority projects:

1. Skills and training priority projects, which focus on regions and/or industry sectors. See factsheet 1 for more information.
2. Learner pathways priority projects, which focus on targeted learners. See factsheet 2 for more information.

Stream 2: Building innovation and capability projects

Building innovation and capability projects support training providers to innovate and build their capability to achieve higher quality outcomes for students and respond to industry and community skills need. Projects will be supported up to a value of \$40,000.

For more information, see factsheet 3.

2. Who can apply

Applications are invited from:

- Non-government registered training providers with a Funded Activities Agreement (FAA) with Skills SA
- Education providers¹ or other organisations with training as a key focus of their business
- Organisations seeking to develop and/or pilot the delivery of a micro-credential.

Applicants must have a current Australian Business Number (ABN).

Submissions from consortia are highly regarded.

Different eligibility criteria may apply to project streams.

¹ An education provider is an organisation that provides education as a main function.

3. How to apply

Eligible applicants can apply at www.providers.skills.sa.gov.au/Apply/Accredited-training/Training-Priority-Projects

Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their proposal with a Skills SA consultant prior to applying:

- Call the Skills SA Infoline on 1800 673 097
- Email: skills@sa.gov.au

Applications may be submitted up to 30 June 2023, subject to available budget.

Generally, applicants will be notified of assessment outcomes within four weeks of lodgement. This timeframe is a guide and subject to change.

4. What can be funded

TPPs offer a flexible approach to what can be funded, provided there is a demonstrable connection to addressing the unmet, specific or emerging skill needs of industry sectors, regions and communities.

See factsheets for specific information about funding for each project stream.

4.1. What cannot be funded

Funding will not be provided for:

- preparation of project applications
- any project activities that commence **prior** to both parties executing the Funded Activities Agreement (FAA)
- student course fee contributions and pre-employment clearances, including medicals
- wage or accommodation/travel subsidies for learners or employees
- activities targeting school enrolled students
- capital infrastructure and/or assets purchases (for example: IT equipment, systems or software applications; buildings; vehicles)
- activities that duplicate existing funded services or supports (for example: Learner Support Services)
- projects that create dependency on ongoing government funding beyond the life of the project
- business as usual activities of existing stakeholders that are already being delivered or funded (for example: marketing, advertising, recruitment)
- accredited training delivered by TAFE SA².

Skills SA reserves the right to make exemptions to the above in the context of approved priorities relating to strategic training and skills development objectives.

Further information on participant eligibility, employer involvement, contracting and payment is provided in Appendix A.

² Applicant can seek to partner with TAFE SA for the delivery of accredited training, to be funded through TAFE SA's existing funding arrangements and which would not result in TAFE SA seeking additional funds from Skills SA. Please note that partnerships with TAFE SA must be endorsed by the authorised TAFE SA executive or delegate prior to application.

5. Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed on:

- past performance
- project design
- project outcomes
- sustainability
- value for money.

5.1. Past performance

Past performance of applicants will be considered where the applicant has received skills, training, or employment funding from the department in the past three years. This encompasses contract compliance and the achievement of past contracted outcomes.

For applicants with no performance history, the department will take a risk management approach, which may involve supporting a smaller scale project in the first instance.

5.2. Project design

The project design will be assessed to determine how it meets the needs of students, industry, regions and the South Australian VET market.

Assessment will consider the following:

- project activities are reasonable, realistic and will support the achievement of project outcomes
- value to students and/or industry, region and employers, is evident
- project duration and time are appropriate
- proposed budget is relevant to the project's purpose and commensurable to other similar projects (other project benchmarks will be considered).

See factsheets for more information about project design by project stream.

5.3. Project outcomes

Assessment will consider the outcomes the project will achieve, with a focus on skills development and pathways to further training and/or employment outcomes for students and aligned to the intent of the specific project stream.

Applications will need to outline how project outcomes will be demonstrated and measured.

5.4. Sustainability

This criterion focuses on how the project will contribute to building capability or generating longer term positive impacts on the state's VET system to skill South Australia's workforce.

Skills SA will assess that the project does not create dependency on ongoing government investment beyond the life of the project. For example, repeat projects will not be supported.

5.5. Value for money

Skills SA will consider the value for money for each application including issues such as project complexity, achievable outcomes and regional delivery.

Factors such as public value, demand, industry and employer contributions and fee for service market activity will also be considered.

Cost comparisons with other available funding and with similar funded projects will support value for money assessment.

Appendix A: General Information

1. Accredited training

Projects may include delivery of:

- any course or skill set on the [national register of VET](#), or
- micro-credential comprising accredited units [endorsed by the South Australian Skills Commission \(SASC\)](#), and/or
- up to five units of competency.

Training must align to project objectives and the demonstrated needs of students.

Accredited training must be delivered by:

- a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) that has the relevant courses and/or units on their Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) scope, and
- has a Funded Activities Agreement (FAA) with Skills SA, or
- TAFE SA (partnerships with TAFE SA must be endorsed by the authorised TAFE SA executive or delegate prior to application).

Funding for accredited training is per the [South Australian Vocational Education and Training Fee Framework](#).

1.1. Student eligibility

Unless otherwise stated, existing VET subsidy [eligibility and entitlement](#) applies. Access to exemptions under special circumstances also apply. School enrolled students are **not** eligible to participate in projects.

1.2. Upfront assessment of need

The upfront assessment of need (UAN) process is designed to help students have the best chance of success in completing their training. All prospective students must complete the UAN process prior to commencing any accredited training. This must be conducted by the training provider delivering accredited training. Information about the UAN is available on the [Skills SA website](#).

1.3. Learner Support Services

Students with complex needs are eligible to access Learner Support Services (LSS). LSS provides case management support to assist participants to address living, learning and transition issues that impact on retention, completion and transition to employment.

The training provider delivering accredited training must have an LSS agreement in place with an approved LSS provider to support eligible students. Information about LSS is available on the [Skills SA website](#).

2. Non-accredited training

Projects may include the delivery of non-accredited training, for example, endorsed micro-credentials that include non-accredited components, industry-specific and/or foundation skills training, particularly where there is clear alignment or mapping to accredited VET learning outcomes.

Funding for non-accredited foundation skills training delivery will reference pricing determinations supporting the South Australian Vocational Education and Training Fee Framework and be informed by budgets of similar funded projects.

3. Micro-credentials

Projects may include:

- development and piloting of micro-credentials for endorsement by the South Australian Skills Commission
- delivery of micro-credentials [endorsed by the South Australian Skills Commission](#), with a view to building sustainable delivery in the longer term.

Information about micro-credentials in South Australia is available on the [South Australian Skills Commission website](#).

4. Industry exposure

Projects that include training delivery should provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of the work environment and an opportunity to apply their learning in a real work context. Industry exposure improves workplace readiness and strengthens connection between vocational learning and employment.

Partnerships with industry and employers, and opportunities for exposure to employer expectations and workplace culture, through activities like workplace site visits or employer led workshops, should be factored into project design.

5. Contracting and payments

Successful applicants will be offered an FAA or an annexure, depending on their current funding arrangement with Skills SA. This will outline the payment structure and agreed project milestones.

If accredited training is part of a successful application, Skills SA will contract the training provider directly.

Payment for project activities will be made against agreed key milestones negotiated during contract development.

Detailed information on reporting requirements, marketing instructions and claims templates will be made available to successful applicants. Skills SA will liaise with successful applicants regularly as part of its ongoing risk and budget management strategy.

6. Project partners and third parties

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure roles and responsibilities of partners and third parties that underpin project delivery are monitored and managed; and that they understand how project outcomes and deliverables can be used by Skills SA.

7. Sharing project outcomes

Project applicants will grant a broad license to Skills SA to use project outcomes and deliverables, to share learnings and good practice, and procure new delivery models based on successful projects. This will be negotiated during contracting and may include the development of case studies and/or other materials accessible to the South Australian training and education sector.

Factsheet 1: Skills and Training Priority Projects

Skills and training priority projects address skills, training and workforce development needs at an **industry sector and/or regional level**. Projects are locally developed and customised to respond to specific unmet skill needs and/or technological, regulatory, structural or economic change.

Projects may focus on:

- **Training analysis** to identify skill needs or gaps and strategies to address in industry sectors and/or region
- **Training delivery** that addresses known skills or workforce needs, and/or to test training demand (including micro-credentials) with industry, employers and learners in industry an industry sector and/or region.

Training analysis

Projects focusing on **training analysis** use qualified workforce planning practitioners to develop an evidence base and produce a workforce training plan (or comparable document) that identifies the skills required to meet upskilling, reskilling or emerging **industry and/or regional** skill needs.

Projects will identify the delivery response(s) to address the skills and training needs, at occupational and Australian Quality Framework (AQF) level. This may include:

- courses available through the Subsidised Training List (STL)
- developing a state specific course (qualification, skill set or micro-credential)
- a new TPP to deliver the training required.

Training delivery

Projects focusing on **training delivery** will:

- address identified skills and training needs and gaps for industry sectors and/or regions with suitable responses, with a view to building sustainable delivery in the longer term and/or
- provide evidence of industry demand and ongoing need and/or appropriate delivery methodology for courses 1) not available on the STL, or 2) available on the STL but only under certain conditions, or 3) that respond to new skills areas where no accredited training product is readily available.

Projects will implement the findings of a training analysis focused project or respond to other independently developed workforce training plans or similar documents that include evidence of industry demand.

These projects enable providers to gather intelligence on whether students and industry value the course and the skills development it offers.

Learnings from projects will provide an important, evidenced based mechanism to inform the Skills SA purchase and investment planning process, including the STL, subsidy rates and LSS.

What can be funded

Funding for these projects may be negotiated for:

- engaging qualified workforce planning practitioners
- working with industry sectors and/or regional employers to identify current skill capability, capacity and gaps and future skills and training requirements
- developing a workforce training plan
- recruitment and selection of suitable participants for the project
- delivery of accredited training³, non-accredited training and micro-credentials
- supporting delivery in new geographical locations, including new or innovative delivery methods to support regional or remote learners
- coordinating training delivery across a region or group of organisations where the project involves a supply chain
- liaising and coordinating with employers and other project partners, including coordinating the delivery of contextualised training services
- additional services such as work placement mentoring
- provision of training related personal protective equipment for new entrants
- professional project planning and performance monitoring to support documentation of the model and evidence-based outcomes
- project administration, reporting and management.

Co-investment is expected from applicants and/or partners.

Assessment considerations

Applications for skills and training priority projects will need to provide:

- evidence of the specific skills needs of the region or industry sector, or methodology for identifying the skills required
- evidence that skill needs cannot be met through the STL
- evidence of partnerships, collaboration with industry and key stakeholders in the development, design and implementation of the project
- evidence the skills and training projects leads to further training and/or employment outcomes for students
- evidence of co-investment by participating organisations or industry partners
- description of how the project will deliver skill benefits for individuals, employers and regions.

³ Funding for accredited training is per the South Australian Vocational Education and Training Fee Framework.

Factsheet 2: Learner Pathways Priority Projects

Learner pathways priority projects support the development of pathways for **targeted learners** using innovative delivery methods, additional support and industry and community partnerships.

Projects will focus on learners who are:

- transitioning from Adult Community Education (ACE) or foundation skill course pathways, or
- not in the labour force, unemployed or at risk of unemployment⁴, or
- early school leavers⁵, or
- do not have non-school qualifications at Certificate III or above, or
- facing complex disadvantage in VET or the labour force.

Projects will have a learner-centred, responsive and flexible approach to meeting the needs of learners.

Projects may include delivery of a combination of courses, skill sets, units of competency and micro-credentials. Students are required to pay a student course fee contribution.

Projects must include individually customised student-centred transition plans based on a 'warm' referral principle to transition to further training and/or employment, and appropriate industry engagement such as industry visits and work placement for participants.

Learners engaged in projects should transition to higher level study or employment on project completion.

Projects connecting to other complementary Skills SA investment, such as ACE and subsidised VET courses, to drive improved outcomes and value for learners will be highly regarded.

What can be funded

In addition to the subsidy paid for training, funding will be available to implement successful strategies to engage and maintain student participation and to support qualification completion and transition to higher level VET or employment.

Funding may be negotiated for the following activities:

- recruiting and selecting suitable participants to undertake the accredited (and non-accredited) training identified in the training plan
- developing student centred transition plans
- industry visits and information sessions and preparing students for workplaces and employers to host workplace experiences

⁴ Risk of unemployment may include but is not limited to organisational changes that result in casualisation of the workforce, redundancies, etc.

⁵ An early school leaver is defined as a person that has ceased secondary school prior to SACE attainment at any age and does not have a non-school qualification.

- provision of training related personal protective equipment for new entrants
- project administration, reporting, management.

Assessment considerations

Applications for learner pathways projects will need to provide:

- clear identification of the target cohort of students and specific, evidence-based strategies to support successful project completion
- description of 'fit for purpose' training and development strategies that support learners in their skills, training, and employment journey
- evidence of partnerships with employers, industry and key local organisations to support promotion, recruitment and suitable support to the target cohort of students. This may be demonstrated through:
 - flexible delivery options (for example, co-locating training with other services)
 - integrating (not duplicating) existing community or industry support services to enable sustainable delivery approaches
 - building relationships with employers to ensure students can access appropriate work experience/placements
 - mentoring or targeted group support to promote completion and transition to higher level study and/or employment.

Factsheet 3: Building Innovation and Capability Projects

Building innovation and capability projects support training providers to innovate and build their capability to achieve high quality outcomes for students.

Grants will be supported up to a value of \$40,000.

Projects can include:

- developing new training products (including micro-credentials) and delivery approaches that demonstrably respond to demand, emerging skills need and evolving technologies and build training provider capacity and capability
- developing innovative training and assessment solutions for accredited courses that achieve improved training completions and employment outcomes for students and/or respond to unmet, specific or emerging industry need
- undertaking research or feasibility studies about Registered Training Organisation delivery to training analysis findings, to grow and support the South Australian training system's responsiveness.

These projects will contribute to the body of knowledge about industry needs and strategic growth areas and how these can be addressed with relevant training products and delivery.

Projects must involve partnerships and/or collaboration with South Australian employers, industry representative bodies, other training and education providers, professional associations, group training organisations, Australian apprenticeship support network providers and/or students.

Projects must be completed within 12 months.

What can be funded

Funding may be sought for the following activities:

- developing a course for accreditation with the Australian Skills Quality Authority.
- developing a micro-credential for endorsement by the [South Australian Skills Commission](#).
- developing innovative and contemporary approaches for delivery of accredited training, assessment and support services to increase commencements and completions and/or respond to unmet, specific or emerging industry need. This includes technology and digital solutions.
- developing language, literacy and numeracy resources for an industry context.
- developing training materials and learning resources for a course with limited or no delivery in South Australia, which are demonstrably required by South Australian employers.
- developing innovative methodologies for recognising work, life and learning experiences through recognition of prior learning, especially in workplace settings.

- purchasing skills and/or resources to develop internal capability in designing and testing training and/or service concepts, especially for entering and operating in regional or remote locations.
- exploring and identifying emergent skill needs in emerging or critical industries with low volume of demand for training services, with consideration of how solutions can be achieved through training delivery.
- undertaking feasibility studies on the development and/or adoption of new technologies to be incorporated into training delivery.

Assessment considerations

Applications for building innovation and capability projects will need to provide:

- articulation of how the project will improve the training provider's capacity and capability to deliver higher quality training, and grow and support the South Australian training system's responsiveness
- evidence the project will focus on new activities outside the applicant's business as usual activity
- evidence of partnerships and/or collaboration with industry and key stakeholders in the development, design and/or implementation of the project
- evidence that project activities will be led/undertaken by people with relevant expertise and experience
- identification of research methodologies that are congruent with the project aims and outcomes (where a project involves research).