

NATIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FUND

Quick reference guide for applicants

The National Workforce Development Fund (NWDF) is an Australian Government program that helps businesses to identify and address their workforce development needs. Under the NWDF businesses are able to apply for funding to support training their workers in areas of identified need. The program aims to help businesses lift their workforce capacity, provide Australian workers with the opportunity to increase their skills through formal training and assist areas of the economy where skilled workers are needed the most.

The NWDF forms part of the Australian Government Skills Connect initiative and is designed to link industry to funding for whole-of-workforce planning and development.

Available funding

Funding of \$700 million is available through the NWDF from 2011-12 to 2015-16. The National Workforce and Productivity Agency is responsible for determining the industry sectors, regions and groups that will be prioritised for funding. For information about the priorities for funding in 2012-13 go to the NWDF website at: <http://www.awpa.gov.au/national-workforce-development-fund/national-workforce-development-fund.html>

A fair proportion of funding will be available to support delivery in regional areas. This is expected to be at least population share or 32 per cent.

Partnerships with industry

The NWDF uses a partnership approach, where Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) play a key role in administering the program. ISCs will assist businesses to identify their training needs, select a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to address these needs and monitor the implementation of successful projects. This will ensure training proposals are driven by the needs of your business and allow you to decide what, how, where and when the training will be undertaken.

Participating businesses will contribute to the cost of training. The level of Australian Government support is based on the size of the business with additional support provided for smaller businesses:

Size of full-time equivalent workforce	Australian Government contribution (%)	Participating organisation contribution (%)
1 – 99 (small)	67	33
100 – 199 (medium)	50	50
200 and above (large)	34	66

Who can apply

- Enterprises
- Professional associations, industry bodies and other lead agents representing a consortia of enterprises
- Employment service providers

Eligibility

Training will be provided to existing workers and new workers, including unemployed job seekers who will be employed after completing the training. To be eligible for training, an individual must:

- not have previously completed the qualification they are applying for under the NWDF,
- be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident of Australia or a humanitarian refugee,
- be 17 years of age or over,
- satisfy course pre-requisites (such as adequate literacy and numeracy) to effectively undertake the training, and
- meet any licensing requirements for relevant qualifications.

Volunteers and those employed in the general government sector in Australian, state and territory government departments are not eligible for funding.

Training requirements

Training must be either a nationally endorsed qualification or a Training Package skill set recognised under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

For new workers these qualifications can include Certificate II, III, IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma. For existing workers these qualifications can include Certificate III, IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma. Workers undertaking training in a skill set must already hold a qualification at a Certificate III level or above.

How to apply

If you are interested in applying you should first contact an Industry Skills Council (ISC) that is relevant to the industry you are operating in. See www.isc.org.au to find the contact details of all ISCs.

Applications are submitted to an ISC using an on-line application form available from TED Online at <https://tedonline.deewr.gov.au>. Applications for funding are now open and may be submitted until all funding available for the financial year has been allocated.

An application for funding must include a costing justification. Value for money is one of the criteria that will be used to evaluate applications.

Applicants are encouraged to include a training needs analysis and workforce development plan with their application. A workforce development plan should outline the skills your employees have now, where you want your business to go, and what you need to do to get there. For more advice on how to create a workforce development plan contact your relevant ISC.

To find out more

Further information about the National Workforce Development Fund can be found at: www.innovation.gov.au/nwdf. You can also email: nwdf@innovation.gov.au. If you have a whole-of-workforce need visit Australian Government Skills Connect at: www.skillsconnect.gov.au

Please contact Australian Government Skills Connect by email to: skillsconnect@innovation.gov.au or phone 13 38 73 between 8.00 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday.