

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business



Friday, 5 March 2021

ENGAGING INDUSTRY TO HELP BUILD VICTORIA'S DIGITAL WORKFORCE

The Andrews Labor Government is working with industry to identify the digital needs of Victorian businesses in the lead-in to the launch of the \$64 million Digital Skills and Jobs program.

Member for Mount Waverley Matt Fregon led an industry roundtable today – on behalf of the Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford – where representatives shared their views on the demand for digital skills.

The Digital Skills and Jobs program will provide a cost-effective approach to developing digital talent and building digital capability within Victorian businesses while driving economic recovery and jobs growth.

Over the next four years, the program will recruit 5,000 mid-career Victorian workers whose jobs have been affected by the coronavirus pandemic to transition into digital careers.

Findings from the roundtable discussion, which included ANZ, Carsales.com and Zendesk, will help shape the design and delivery of the program to ensure it benefits businesses in the short and long term.

Applications for round one will open in late April with candidates expected to start training mid-year. Victorian businesses of any size with digital recruitment needs are encouraged to join the program, with digital internships expected to commence around September.

As part of the *Victorian Budget 2020/21*, the Labor Government is investing \$626 million to boost the state's digital infrastructure and skills.

In 2019, Deloitte forecasted that Victoria would need 33,000 technology workers over the next five years. This program aims to respond to the strong and growing demand for people with the digital skills for jobs such as software developers and programmers, data analysts and cyber security specialists.

Mr Fregon will champion the program alongside Minister Pulford and brings 20 years' experience as an IT professional and business owner to this role.

Businesses can get more information and register their interest in joining the program at business.vic.gov.au/support-for-your-business/grants-and-assistance.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy Jaala Pulford

"The Digital Skills and Jobs program will be a game changer for Victoria and will significantly grow our digital workforce."

"Co-designed with Victorian businesses, the short courses and industry placements will equip workers with the skills and experience to transition into a digital career."

Quotes attributable to Member for Mount Waverley Matt Fregon

"For this program to be successful, it must be designed and delivered in partnership with industry."

"By ensuring it delivers value to businesses, we will create opportunities for both workers and employers, and help to drive Victoria's economic recovery."

Media contact: Stephanie Hobbs 0429 275 437 | stephanie.hobbs@minstaff.vic.gov.au