

Victorian Budget 2023/24



The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Minister for Industry and Innovation

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Training and Skills
Minister for Higher Education

Tim Pallas MP
Minister for Trade and Investment

The Hon Natalie Suleyman MP
Minister for Small Business

The Hon Danny Pearson MP
Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC

Tuesday, 23 May 2023

DOING WHAT MATTERS FOR VICTORIAN JOBS, SKILLS AND WORKERS

Every Victorian deserves a good, stable job with a decent wage.

And no government in Australia has created more jobs than the Andrews Labor Government – with almost 440,000 more Victorians in work since the height of the pandemic, underpinning our economic recovery.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* keeps doing what matters for Victorian jobs and skills, with \$738.6 million to help more Victorians get the training they need, back in-demand industries to give employers a pipeline of highly-skilled workers, grow our manufacturing and innovation ecosystems and improve safety in the workplace.

We're investing \$186 million to expand subsidised training including greater eligibility for Free TAFE, so more people can embark on a great career or re-train into growing industries.

Free TAFE has been a game-changer across the state, with more than 137,000 students saving \$340 million in fees since we began the program in 2019.

Just like we promised, we have removed the once-per-lifetime limit on Free TAFE courses for a number of training pathways, so workers can return to TAFE to upskill once they've moved into their desired careers, building highly-skilled workforces where they're needed most.

The Building Better TAFE Fund will make sure students have the best facilities to train in, close to home – with \$170 million to build new TAFE campuses in Melton and Sunbury, deliver a disability and student services hub at the Gordon TAFE in Geelong, upgrade the Community Health and Learning Hub at Bendigo Kangan Institute in Castlemaine and establish a TAFE Clean Energy Fund as we bring back the SEC.

The Clean Energy Fund will back students, workers and industries across the state – at Federation TAFE in Ballarat, TAFE Gippsland in Morwell and South West TAFE in Warrnambool.

An extra \$90.5 million will meet the demand for subsidised vocational training across the system and a further \$90 million will be directed to TAFEs to provide priority skills, job placement support, improve student wellbeing and to maintain high-quality workforces.

We're also making sure our TAFE courses provide the most up-to-date learning experiences, with \$3.8 million to review and update curriculum and assessment resources right across Victoria's TAFE network.

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Apprentices play a critical role in our skilled workforce, and a new \$4 million mental health training program will ensure they get the support they need. This will focus on young men, especially in the construction industry which has a high rate of suicide, young women and members of our LGBTIQ+ and culturally diverse communities who can face extra pressures establishing their careers.

We'll further support apprentices and trainees to succeed with \$1.5 million to establish and deliver the Apprenticeship Taskforce. This builds on the important work of Apprenticeships Victoria and Apprenticeships Support Officers in championing the fair treatment of all apprentices and trainees.

Since mid-2020, Jobs Victoria has placed more than 52,000 Victorians in secure work – and an investment of \$35 million will support it to target vulnerable jobseekers experiencing entrenched disadvantage – particularly those in priority locations.

The future of advanced manufacturing is *Made in Victoria* – and we'll back our plan to grow skilled jobs and cement Victoria as Australia's manufacturing engine room, with \$36.2 million for local businesses to expand and boost productivity including through providing R&D grants to drive discoveries that will benefit our economy.

We'll work to increase Victoria's capability to secure key defence sector supply-chain projects with a \$4 million investment, so our state can benefit from record national and global opportunities – and the jobs they create.

We'll provide more support for Victorian women launching startups, with a \$5 million boost for LaunchVic's Alice Anderson Fund to support 70 women-led startups by 2025.

We'll put Victorian workers and local jobs first with \$2 million to support the rollout of the Fair Jobs Code, which came into effect in December 2022 – making sure suppliers and businesses benefiting from government contracts or grants meet strict requirements to provide safe and inclusive workplaces.

We're also backing Ethical Clothing Australia with \$4 million to ensure that as our local textile, clothing and footwear manufacturing sector grows, companies are doing the right thing by their workers.

International trade and investment are key drivers of our state's economic growth – creating local jobs, boosting local manufacturing and providing new opportunities for local businesses to expand.

We know that every dollar we invest in our global trade and investment network returns \$40 to the Victorian economy.

We'll maintain Victoria's position as a key global investment destination, investing \$20 million into the International Investment Attraction Fund to attract global companies to create local jobs, alongside the \$12 million *Boosting Victorian Exports* program to help Victorian companies enter global markets and grow our \$50 billion export sector.

Alongside London and Boston, Melbourne is one of the world's leading cities when it comes to medical research – and we'll be the first place in the Southern Hemisphere to manufacture lifesaving mRNA vaccines at population scale. We're boosting mRNA Victoria's critical work with an investment of \$12.3 million.

We will also work hard to attract the world's most talented workers by bolstering our skilled migration program with a \$3.1 million boost.

Small businesses are at the heart of our vibrant multicultural precincts. We'll invest \$17 million to boost local jobs with revitalised cultural hubs in Box Hill, Chinatown, Dandenong, Oakleigh, Elsternwick, Footscray, Richmond and other key locations, support local multicultural trader groups and provide scholarships to train 500 staff to support small business in multicultural precincts.

Gig economy workers have some of the least secure jobs in the country, often with next to no support from their employers. We're making sure the 350,000 gig economy workers in Victoria have the support and advocacy they deserve, with \$9 million for the Australian-first Gig Worker Support Service.

We're also making sure that every Victorian worker receives every cent of the wages they're due – not letting dodgy employers take advantage of workers, with \$6.7 million for Wage Inspectorate Victoria to continue its important work investigating underpayment claims and running important education campaigns.

Every Victorian worker deserves to come home safely at the end of the day – and the construction sector is over-represented in tragic workplace accidents and injuries. We're keeping the promise we made to make building sites safer, with \$24.1 million to hire 20 specialist inspectors and create a new dedicated inspectorate within WorkSafe.

Supporting more than 50,000 jobs across Victoria, there's never been a better time to find work on Victoria's Big Build. We're helping more women into the construction sector, with \$2.4 million to break traditional gender barriers and create great new career opportunities.

Quote attributable to Minister for Industry and Innovation Ben Carroll

"We're doing what matters for Victorians – putting local jobs first and investing in Victorian businesses and workers to make sure Victoria is the best place to do business."

Quote attributable to Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney

"TAFE is training Victorians for jobs now and for the future – we're backing more Victorians to get the skills they need for careers in in-demand sectors, and building better TAFEs right across the state."

Quote attributable to Minister for Trade and Investment Tim Pallas

"Bringing dynamic companies to Victoria creates jobs, and helping our exporters reach new markets has the same effect. Our investments drive growth and expand opportunities for Victorians – and we'll keep doing what matters for them."

Quote attributable to Minister for Small Business Natalie Suleyman

"We're backing the small businesses that sit at the heart of communities – revitalising our multicultural precincts, supporting traders' groups and creating local jobs."

Quote attributable to Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC Danny Pearson

"Too many construction workers are injured on the job – we're taking action to make building sites safer and hold irresponsible employers to account."