

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Water



Wednesday, 11 June 2025

INDUSTRY PAVING THE WAY FOR HOUSING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

The Allan Labor Government is working with industry to lay the foundation for the Future of Housing Construction Centre of Excellence – a new national hub for training and innovation in the building sector – backed by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney today announced Melbourne Polytechnic has signed Memorandums of Understanding with construction and manufacturing leaders, peak bodies and TAFEs to co-design the Centre's operating model – ensuring training keeps pace with new technologies.

The Future of Housing Centre of Excellence will be the first national Centre of Excellence based in Victoria and will address critical challenges faced by Australia's housing construction industry by creating innovative training and skills development linked to Modern Methods of Construction (MMC).

It will ensure Victoria can continue to meet its growing housing and infrastructure needs by training the future workforce in modern construction technologies and increasing the pipeline of skilled workers.

Located at Melbourne Polytechnic's Heidelberg campus, the Centre will provide a national platform for skills development, workforce transformation and applied research.

Melbourne Polytechnic has established formal partnerships with PrefabAUS, Building 4.0 CRC, the Housing Industry Association, BuildSkills Australia, Tradeswomen Australia, Master Builders Association of Victoria and the Victorian Skills Authority.

The Centre will also model inclusive and sustainable training practices, promoting gender equality and environmentally responsible construction.

By strengthening workforce diversity and supporting structural change in the housing construction sector, with a strong focus on increasing the participation, retention and advancement of women, the Centre will help meet workforce challenges to address Australia's critical housing shortage.

The design of the Centre is expected to be finalised in late 2026, with the Centre to open in 2029. It will feature purpose-built facilities, cutting-edge equipment, and digital technologies, such as a holographic training suite.

The \$50 million Future of Housing Construction Centre of Excellence is jointly funded by the Allan and Albanese Governments.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

"We're proud to support Melbourne Polytechnic with the Future of Housing Construction Centre of Excellence – the first dedicated training facility in Australia focused exclusively on advanced construction courses."

"Industry collaboration and support for the Centre is crucial for students to get the skills they need to meet the needs of the future of housing construction in Australia."

Quotes attributable to Melbourne Polytechnic CEO Frances Coppolillo

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“Our industry partners are essential to driving innovation and ensuring the Centre delivers lasting impact for the housing construction sector and our communities.”

“The Centre is committed to enhancing workforce diversity and driving structural change in the housing construction sector, with a strong focus on increasing the participation, retention and advancement of women in training pathways and careers.”

Quotes attributable to prefabAUS Executive Chairman Damien Crough

“The national Centre of Excellence provides a real opportunity to embed digital skills and industrialised construction into our workforce. The centre will be a hub for innovation in future construction, showcasing Australia as a leader in smart building.”

Quotes attributable to Housing Industry Association Chief Executive (Industry & Policy) Simon Croft

“The Housing Industry Association welcomes the establishment of the Future of Housing Construction Centre of Excellence, which will provide an important platform for industry to learn and develop the skills that will shape the construction of our future homes.

“This investment to establish this latest Centre of Excellence in Melbourne focussing on MMC will play a vital role in equipping the construction workforce with the skills needed for the future.”

Quotes attributable to Master Builders Victoria CEO Michaela Lihou

“Master Builders Victoria welcomes this announcement as our industry looks to the development of new initiatives and skills to work alongside existing building practices, as we tackle the challenges of supporting Victoria's existing and growing, future building requirements.”

Quotes attributable to BuildSkills Australia CEO Brett Schimming

“Through this collaboration, BuildSkills will bring its expertise in workforce planning, training product development and industry engagement.

“The initiative presents a unique opportunity to transform construction efficiency, innovation, and sustainability while fostering inclusivity, workforce diversity, and strengthened industry collaboration.”

Quotes attributable to Tradeswomen Australia Group CEO Clea Smith

“The Centre represents the kind of bold, systemic change needed to tackle Australia’s critical skills shortages while addressing the deep gender imbalance in trades.

“By embedding equity and inclusion into vocational pathways from the outset, the Centre creates a real opportunity to transform the sector.”