

Media Release

Mr Danny Pearson MP

Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs

Minister for Finance



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PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST IN A FUTURE WITH AI

The Allan Labor Government is investing in jobs and skills to position Victoria as a national leader in the AI evolution.

Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs Danny Pearson today announced the Labor Government is driving the first plan of its kind in Australia to maximise the benefits of AI and ensure local workers are protected, not left behind.

The first steps include a \$5.5 million investment to become Australia's data centre capital. The Sustainable Data Centre Action Plan will leverage our critical assets – land, energy and talent – to unlock projects in the pipeline worth up to \$25 billion in potential capital expenditure.

We will use transport, energy and water usage data, including recycled water, to determine where data centres can be built sustainably.

We will also partner with our TAFEs to create the workforce needed to staff them – in construction, operations and digital – ensuring those jobs come to Victoria - and stay here.

We are also protecting existing jobs, with an \$8.1 million investment to upskill tech professionals to become AI specialists.

The Labor Government will target areas where the biggest impact will be felt, ensuring key workers can move into AI roles and become AI specialists in their current field.

Melbourne is already home to the largest cluster of AI firms in Australia, with 40 data centres already calling Victoria home. NEXTDC recently announced a \$2 billion digital campus at Fisherman's Bend, creating thousands of jobs in tech, AI, digital infrastructure, defence technology and advanced research.

Advancements in AI could generate up to \$30 billion in GSP over the next 10 years.

The Labor Government's AI plan will be guided by an AI Mission Statement with further details to be announced.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Economic Growth and Jobs Danny Pearson

"This is about creating jobs for Victorians – and protecting existing jobs by doing what we do best – educating and upskilling."

"We are delivering the first plan of its kind in Australia – and we're making sure our people are at the forefront."