Workforce Skill Set Fund FAQ

Frequently asked questions regarding applications for a grant.

Where can I access the recording of the Workforce Skill Set Fund Information Session?

The Department of Education and Training delivered two 60-minute information sessions about the Workforce Skill Set Fund and the process for lodging an Expression of Interest.

A recording of the information session can be found on the Workforce Skill Set Fund website here.

APPLICATIONS

When must applications be submitted?

The Workforce Skill Set Fund is a rolling fund. Applications can be submitted at any time throughout the year.

Potential applicants are invited to make an expression of interest here

For applications lodged by 30 November 2021, the Department commits to completing the application assessment by the end of January 2022.

For applications lodged any period after 30 November 2021, the Department commits to reviewing applications within 6 weeks.

What information must I include in my application?

Please refer to the application guidelines which can be found on the Workforce Skill Set Fund website here.

Can I submit more than one application?

Yes, eligible providers can make more than one application. Each application will be judged against the eligibility criteria.

If I am proposing skill sets with different industry partners will each proposal require its own discreet application?

Yes, separate applications are expected to be submitted by a lead provider for each skill set aligned to an industry partner. If a lead provider partners with more than one industry partner to develop and deliver a single skill set, then only one application is required.

WHO CAN APPLY?

Who can be apply?

The lead applicant must be a training provider that currently holds a Skills First contract with the Department.

Can a not-for-profit apply for funding?

A not-for-profit can partner with a Skills First contract holder to deliver a skill set.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Are there specific eligibility criteria for this fund?

Yes, there are five things that the Department will consider as part of an application assessment.

1.   Industry Needs and Impact (30 per cent)

2.   Training Delivery Capability, Capacity and Approach (30 per cent)

3.   Student Attraction and Retention (15 per cent)

4.   Cost to deliver, value for money and sustainability (15 per cent)

5.   Evaluation and Outcomes (10 per cent)

Please refer to the guidelines under heading Eligibility on the Workforce Skill Set Fund website here. All applications will be assessed by the Department of Education and Training against these five program criteria.

If my submission is not successful, can I submit a revised application?

Yes, you will be provided with a high-level summary outlining why your applications was not successful.

BUDGET

What proposals are not eligible under the Workforce Skill Set Fund?

Funding will not be considered for:

- proposals that create an ongoing liability for Government
- proposals that are deemed more suitable for consideration under the Department's other funding programs e.g. Regional and Specialist Training Fund or Workforce Training Innovation Fund

- business as usual costs included in the "course overheads fees".

Is there a cap on the amount requested for each application?

No, there is no cap on an application request.

What are the total funds available under the WSSF?

The Workforce Skill Set Fund will provide $4.5 million per year with an overall total of $13 million over three years.

What kind of budget do I need to provide?

A budget is required as part of the application, as well as a rationale demonstrating the proposal represents value for money.

The budget template can be accessed on the Workforce Skill Set Fund website here.

A copy of the budget template is also provided as part of the Workforce Skill Set Fund online application. Each line item of expenditure and income will be considered by the assessors, so please ensure the budget is explained clearly.

Can I apply for funding that supports the development of training and assessment resources?

Yes, you can. The Workforce Skill Set Fund supports the development of quality training and assessment resources to provide the best learning outcomes to the learner.

INDUSTRY CO-CONTRIBUTION

How do co-contributions work?

The requirement for a co-contribution has been included to demonstrate industry investment in training. It is expected that the co-contribution will be proportional to the funding project request.

A co-contribution may be a financial contribution to offset costs. It could also be non-financial and include items such as providing equipment, a work site, materials, and subject matter expertise.

Can industry co-contributions include wages for participants undertaking the training?

No, the cost of a wages for a participant undertaking the training is not part of the training delivery cost, and therefore cannot be counted as a co-contribution.

SKILL SET STRUCTURE

How many units of competency can I include under a Stream Three skill set?

Skill sets may consist of a single unit, or combinations of units.

Can my application mix streams i.e. some accredited units plus a non-accredited one?

If the skill set proposal includes a mix of some accredited units and non-accredited units then it should be submitted as a proposal under Stream Three.

Who will own the intellectual property of training developed?

It is expected that contracts will require an intellectual property (IP) licence be provided to the Department to enable us to share training materials.

Is there an expectation that successful pilots will be included on the Funded Skill Set List?

Successfully piloted skill sets will be considered for inclusion on the Funded Skill Set List (FSSL) where it fulfils the FSSL criteria and demonstrates demand.

Successfully piloted Stream Three skill sets that include non-accredited elements will be expected to be tracked towards accreditation.

Learner Requirements

Can the learner be new to the workplace, or can they be existing employees?

It is expected that most proposals will involve learners new to the workplace. However, there may be situations where a learner can be an existing employee.

A skill set may be designed to meet requirements for entry into an industry or workforce and be a pathway to a full qualification. Alternatively, there may be a regulatory change, or introduction of technology that requires upskilling of existing employees in a particular industry.

It is expected that the applicant articulates the reasons for the choice of learner as part of their proposal.

Are programs aimed at secondary school students eligible under this initiative?

No, this initiative is not targeting students enrolled in secondary schools.

Entry Requirements and Pre-requisites

What is the difference between a pre-requisite and an entry requirement?

A pre-requisite is specified when the learner must be assessed as competent prior to completing a subsequent unit.

An entry requirement can include a range of conditions including age, licenses, completion of a specific unit or a qualification.

Can we mandate entry requirements for learners?

Skill sets aimed at an industry licence or accreditation must identify all of the requirements of that licence or accreditation (including any possible entry requirements such as minimum age) and explain how learners can readily attain the desired outcome.

If your proposal uses a skill set defined in a Training Package you are required to meet any entry requirements specified.

If you are creating a skill set using units from a Training Package and/or accredited training or from existing units and non-accredited components, then it is important to limit entry requirements to what is essential for successful completion of the training.

What detail do we need to provide regarding entry requirements?

Where entry requirements are identified, a rationale must be provided and expressed in terms of competency or licensing requirements.

You should also clearly identify where any entry requirements are set by your RTO and are not an entry requirement of the training product you develop for each Stream.

Refer to Section Four - Training Package Products Policy as guidance.

Can learners be made to complete pre-requisites if I develop a Stream Three Skill Set?

Pre-requisite units must only be used where essential to achieving the subsequent competency. It is important to identify any pre-requisite and co-requisite units, and the sequence of delivery and assessment.