

FSO Workforce Plan Research Working Group

Terms of Reference

Background

Future Skills Organisation (FSO) is an independent, industry-led organisation established by the Australian Government to provide industry with a stronger, more strategic voice in ensuring Australia's vocational education and training (VET) sector delivers better outcomes for learners and employees across the finance, technology and business (FTB) sectors.

As a Jobs and Skills Council (JSC), we perform the following key functions within the national training system:

- **Workforce Planning:** Workforce planning is the FSO's strategic centrepiece, setting the context for everything else we do. The key objective of workforce planning is to address current and future workforce challenges, including skills gaps and shortages, in the finance, technology and business sectors.
- **Training Product Development:** Our approach to training product development is rooted in thorough workforce analysis, providing us with valuable insights. With a focus on ensuring high educational standards, our aim is to develop products that can be readily delivered by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).
- **Implementation, Promotion and Monitoring:** We work with industry, government and training providers to align training packages for learners, their delivery and outcomes, to industry needs. We map and promote career pathways in industry and ensure the right training is available to get people into in-demand jobs.
- **Industry Stewardship:** At the core of our approach lies active listening, comprehensive consultation, and prompt action. We continuously strive for improvement to facilitate faster entry into the job market for learners, equipping them with the right skills at the right time.

Industry engagement sits at the heart of the success of the FSO, including the ability to collaborate effectively with employers, unions, training providers, federal, state and territory government, the other nine JSCs and Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA).

Project Overview

Workforce planning is a core function of FSO. The Workforce Plan (WFP) provides a forward-looking picture of workforce challenges, trends and priorities across the FTB sectors, informed by data, research and wide consultation. The Workforce Plan Research Working Group (WFPRWG) will provide strategic guidance and expert advice to ensure that research activities undertaken in support of the Workforce Plan are robust, relevant, and aligned with sector needs. |

Working Group Purpose

The purpose of the Workforce Plan Research Working Group is to **guide FSO research priorities and responses to emerging workforce issues** identified through the Workforce Plan.

Relationship to other FSO Governance Groups

The Working Group forms one part of the broader governance supporting FSO's research program, which includes the Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC), responsible for endorsing priority research themes derived from the Workforce Plan, and the Dashboard Champions Working Group, which guides the development and adoption of FSO's data dashboards. The role of the WFPRWG is complementary but distinct.

Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC)

- SAC reviews Workforce Plan research priorities.
- WFPRWG provides expert advice and technical guidance on how best to investigate and address these priorities through research.
- SAC receives updates on research progress from FSO and may consider matters escalated from the WFPRWG.

Dashboard Champions Working Group

- Focuses on dashboard design, enhancement and adoption, ensuring data is accessible and useful for stakeholders.
- WFPRWG focuses on research questions, methods, interpretation and insights, rather than dashboard functionality.
- Groups may collaborate when research outputs feed into dashboards. |

Roles and Responsibilities

The Working Group has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Provide expert input into research priorities established through the Workforce Plan and endorsed by the SAC.
- Offer advice on research design, scope, evidence requirements and methodological

considerations for priority topics.

- Support FSO in ensuring its research is rigorous, sector relevant, and actionable for policy, training product development and workforce development.
- Help identify gaps and opportunities in existing evidence to strengthen FSO's insights capabilities.
- Attend Working Group meetings (two per year) and engage actively in discussion.
- Review research inputs, emerging findings and draft outputs as requested.
- Facilitate engagement with relevant networks, where appropriate.
- Support dissemination and communication of FSO research insights.
- Identify and manage conflicts of interest according to JSC Code of Conduct requirements. |

Structure and Governance

The Working Group will be governed by the following structure:

- Chair.
- Representatives with research and/or policy expertise relating to youth/ disadvantaged populations, employee perspectives, employer perspectives, VET provision, technology sector, finance sector, and state/territory perspectives.
- Additional experts may be invited based on relevance to specific research focus areas.

Members may participate as individuals (based on expertise) or as organisational representatives.

Meetings

Standard cycle

- **Two virtual meetings per year:**
 1. **February/March:**
 - Finalise the current Workforce Plan
 - Discuss and provide advice on research priorities for the next Workforce Plan cycle.
 2. **July/August:**
 - Review progress and outcomes from the previous Workforce Plan.
 - Confirm and prioritise research topics for the upcoming cycle based on emerging needs and insights.
- **Status updates** from FSO will be provided **every 2 months** during active research phases.

Due to the consultative nature of the Working Group, a quorum is not required for meetings to proceed, however, if you are unable to attend and would like to nominate a proxy, please contact Meeting Secretariat.

The Working Group's administrative functions, session facilitation, and coordination will be overseen by the FSO. |

Fees & Costs

Working Group members do not receive fees or reimbursements. Meetings will be held online to avoid additional costs. Any face-to-face meetings will be funded by FSO. WG members should allocate time to review materials outside of meetings.

Conflict of Interest

To ensure transparency, accountability, and the highest ethical standards, this term of reference aims to establish clear guidelines and procedures to identify, disclose, and appropriately manage conflicts of interest that may arise during any engagement, project, or undertaking within our organisation. By addressing conflicts of interest proactively, we strive to maintain the trust of all stakeholders and uphold the organisation's commitment to ethical conduct and sound governance.

Working Group members will be required to complete FSO's [Conflict of Interest Declaration](#) (in accordance with the JSC Code of Conduct) for recording on the FSO Conflicts of Interests Register.

Values

FSO core values are curious, ambitious, accountable and better together. Combined with base level professional principles of respect, inclusion and collaboration, the Working Group will reflect these values in how it conducts its business and works together as a team.

Code of Conduct

As per the JSC Grant Agreement, Working Group members are required to adhere to the JSC Code of Conduct.

Intellectual Property

Title in, and ownership of, all Foreground IP (i.e. IP that is created as part of FSO's work) will belong to the Commonwealth. Members of the Working Group will not be able to make any IP claim on any project or decision they take part in.

Privacy & Confidentiality

- The name, organisation, job title and stakeholder category of Working Group members will be published on the FSO website.
- Virtual meetings will be recorded for record-keeping purposes. Personal AI tools will not be allowed to join or be utilised in meetings.
- All Working Group member information will be used and protected according to the [FSO](#)

[Privacy Policy.](#)

- If a member wishes to remain anonymous, they can inform FSO, and only their organisation name will be published.
- Members must treat all discussions, recommendations, and advice of the Working Group as private and confidential unless permitted by FSO.

Declaration

To be completed once appointment is confirmed.

By signing this you agree to adhere to the:

Information outlined in this Terms of Reference document

- [JSC Code of Conduct](#)
- [FSO Conflict of Interest Policy](#) (and complete the [Conflict of Interest Declaration](#) if required)
- [Jobs and Skills Council Integrity Framework](#)

Acceptance of Terms of Reference

Signature

Print Name

Date: